

Signs of the Times

AND ORIENTAL WATCHMAN

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Why Did God Permit Sin?

BY G. A. HAMILTON

THE Bible tells us that God sees the end from the beginning. Isa. 46 : 9, 10. Many at once perceive that He foresaw the fall of man; that He knew that most men would live wicked lives; that death

and sickness and misery would fill the world; and that the vast majority of men would suffer a terrible doom in the lake of fire. They reason that He foresaw all this terrible sequel and yet He made man. They ask,



THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, WESTMINSTER

"How is He a God of love?" He did not have to make man, why did He do so?" This question is being asked with increasing frequency as the claims of the gospel are presented. Infidels gloat over it and flatter themselves that they have hopelessly discredited the Christian religion, and many honest people are perplexed about it.

It is clear that God did foresee the ruin of our race. In 1 Peter 1:18-20 we learn that our redemption is effected through the precious blood of Christ who verily was fore-ordained *before* the foundation of the world. God not only foresaw the entrance of sin, but made provision to rescue man from it. God could undoubtedly have made a sin-proof universe. That multitudes of other worlds besides our own support life is certain. Of this earth the Lord declares, "He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited." Isa. 45:18. Then are the other worlds made in vain, uninhabited, lifeless, dead? No! They are teeming with life, for God is not a God of the dead but of the living.

However, it is obvious that God could have made all the worlds; clothed them with vegetable life in its most lovely forms; filled them with every kind of insect, bird, fish, and animal; and sin would never have marred the fair handiwork of God. We know that the degree of happiness that a creature can experience depends upon its position in the scale of creation. The more highly organized it is, the more happiness it is capable of. If we compare an earthworm and a dog we see at once that the dog is far ahead in both particulars. But "God is love." He delights in the happiness of His creatures. He saw that it was possible to create a much higher order of beings, capable of infinitely greater happiness, and His great heart of love longed to create them. To accomplish this they must be so highly endowed as to be able to comprehend and appreciate moral principles; beings who would love and obey God because they delighted in the matchless glory of His character and the perfection of His requirements. These noble beings must therefore have splendid mental endowments, also free moral agency, so that they could know the unspeakable joy of doing right from choice; and they were to be honoured by being formed in the image of God and not that of any of the lower animals, that they might have an additional band of fellowship with their Maker.

To make such beings and grant them the power to do right from *choice*, involved giving them the power to do wrong if they should so choose; and God foresaw not only that someone *might* do so, but that someday someone *would* do so, and use all his great powers to work evil instead of good.

Ages ago, before a world swung in space, the Father and the Son had a mighty counsel about the creation of the universe. The possibilities of bliss involved in the creation of rational beings, the fearful risk, the dreadful fall, were all considered. The nature of the rebellion; how sin would manifest itself; that one of God's glorious covering cherubim would be the first to question the Creator's love and wisdom (Eze. 28:13); the rebellion he would excite among the holy angels; their expulsion from heaven; the fall of man; the miseries of our race,—all were foreseen. God saw that in the rebellion His character would be called in question. He would be represented as a tyrant who enslaves His people, and His laws as harsh restrictions which rob them of their rightful liberties. The rebel leader would claim to be able to set up a better government in which the happiness of all would be his one great object. Isa. 14:12-20.

What could be done? Would the destruction of the first sinner provide a remedy? No, for many unfallen beings would be filled with doubt and alarm; the rebel's charges against God would seem to have a just foundation; disaffection would only spread the faster, and peace and joy be banished from the courts of heaven. Alas, must the glorious purpose of God in creating rational beings fail because no way could be found to deal with sin when it should appear? Thank God, divine love and infinite wisdom provided a plan.

The one purpose of God in creating men and angels was to pour out upon them the boundless riches of His love and to fill them with infinite joy. It must be shown that His laws are the outworking of that love for the blessing and protection of His people, and that obedience to His holy requirements is the only path of peace and joy. When sin should appear it must be allowed to develop and manifest its true nature. Then God would demonstrate to all the universe His character by one supreme matchless manifestation of love. He would show that His happiness is bound up in the happiness of His people. But at such a cost! Divine

ove and wisdom could devise but one manifestation of that love adequate to destroy the power of sin. *God would give his only begotten Son to die for the sinner. On the Cross of Calvary* all should read in characters that would never be forgotten throughout eternal ages, "*God is Love.*" There would be found the science and song of the universe; there the power that would banish sin forever, and make it possible to fill the vast domain of God with holy, happy, free moral agents, who will never sin, for they *know* that "*God is love.*" No other power but the power of love could avail to destroy the power of sin. The mystery of Godliness must destroy the mystery of iniquity. Amazing love! How could God make men and angels at so great a cost?

We may well believe that God hesitated long before he consented to allow His beloved Son to give His precious life for the guilty, for God saw it all,—that His Son must come down to this dark world of sin; be placed in the power of men inspired by demons; abused, mocked, spat upon, scourged, and crucified. His life of poverty, sorrow, and humiliation, and his cruel death, were all foreseen. When we reflect that God, (to whom all time is as the present), beheld His beloved Son bowed, crushed, and bleeding, under the awful weight of the sins of the world; that He heard the agonized prayer addressed to Himself, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me;" that He saw Him expiring upon the cross under the dreadful burden of guilt, and heard His heart-broken appeal, "My God, my God, why

hast thou forsaken me?"; we feel overwhelmed in the presence of such infinite love. How could He endure to see His only begotten Son suffer such awful woe that men and angels might be created to enjoy eternal life in His presence?



The Lord through Isaiah declared of Jesus, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." Isa. 53: 11. To Jesus the joy of bringing many precious souls unto glory was worth the infinite price that must be paid. The same is true of the Father.

Not without a struggle did He pronounce those fateful words, "Let us make man in our own image." (Gen. 1: 26) Divine love triumphed. As God looked down the ages and saw the unnumbered worlds teeming with holy, happy beings; as He beheld them lifting their hearts and voices in praise and adoration to Him who was the source of all their joy; as he beheld those who would be delivered from the cruel yoke of sin by the riches of His grace loving as only those to whom much is forgiven can love, the die was cast, the decree went forth, and Jesus spoke the mighty words that brought a universe into being,—a universe that should, after one sublime lesson that "God is love," remain loyal, holy, and supremely happy forever.

The Spirit looking forward to the great climax on Calvary declared, "The counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech. 6: 13. Yes, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," John 3: 16; and Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us. Eph. 5: 2. God gave his Son and the Son gave himself.

Our world is the only one that has ever fallen. Jesus left the ninety and nine safely in the fold, and came to rescue the *one* lost sheep. Through the gift of Jesus the other worlds were to be kept from ever going astray. The plan of salvation was made so broad that Jesus would both save the lost and confirm the unfallen in their allegiance to their Creator. Jesus was not to die again and again as sin should break out from time to time through the ages. We doubt if God would ever have created rational beings at so terrible a cost. "What do ye imagine against the Lord? He will make an utter end, affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1: 9.

Through the angels God is in constant communication with the other worlds. All heaven is watching with the deepest interest the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Says the apostle, "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and unto angels, and unto men." 1 Cor. 4: 9. Before sin entered, the inhabitants of heaven knew little of its awful woe. Only by faith in God's word did they understand something of its cruel power.

Satan himself, when he began to criticise his Maker, knew not where his course would lead him. When the controversy began

between Christ and Satan, many loyal angel looked on with inexpressible apprehension. They could not fathom Lucifer's purposes. He seemed to have a zeal for God. He expressed himself as deeply solicitous for the welfare of the angels, and anxious to improve the government of Heaven. His arguments seemed plausible, yet they felt that God must surely be right. While they retained their allegiance, they did not clearly understand the issue, and watched the development of the controversy with intense interest.

Our world is the battle-ground of the supreme conflict of all time between good and evil. Christ is fighting to secure for untold millions eternal life, eternal bliss; Satan to spread ruin and death everywhere. But now through the gift of Christ the mask has been torn off, and Satan's character and work are made clear. All can see the issue. Through the Church "the manifold wisdom of God" is being made known "unto the principalities and power in heavenly places;" "according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus." Eph. 3: 10, 11; "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in Him." Eph. 1: 10. "For it pleased the Father, . . . having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; . . . whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Cor. 1: 19, 20.

The controversy is nearly over; God in love and justice offers a free pardon to every soul. "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden," is the Divine appeal; "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life," is Heaven's pathetic lament. "And the Spirit and the Bride say come, . . . and let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Ample provision has been made for all, but it is sad indeed that all will not accept the gracious invitation. If God could have His way not one would be lost. But because a few refuse salvation bought for them at so great a price, should God stay His hand? Should He therefore deny eternal life in unutterable bliss to the countless millions of the righteous? Would that be love? Would that be justice? No, indeed! And God is a God both of love and justice.

Very soon "Every creature which is in

heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall be heard saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. 5:13.

Dear reader, God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He is asking you to-day to join in that glorious chorus and share the bliss of heaven with the redeemed. He has paid an infinite price that you might be there, and His heart is yearning to welcome you, for "God is love."

The New Theology and Barbarism

A RECENT issue of the *Sunday School Times* reports some very terse utterances made by Oliver W. Van Osdel, D. D., concerning the "New Theology." Dr. Van Osdel's utterances upon the topic are worthy of more than passing consideration, and are as follows:—

"The new theology has the 'Made in Germany' mark upon it. The pathos of the present distress lies in the fact that not only the politicians and the militarists, but also the preachers and theologians refuse to see that German theology stands back of German militarism and conditions it. If the churches in England, Scotland, and North America had entered the conflict against German rationalism fifty years ago, as loyalty to Christ demanded, this most destructive and hideous of wars could never have occurred. But instead of this they welcomed it and took it to their very hearts, as though it were an angel from heaven; and now, having sown to the wind, they reap the whirlwind. The new theology has led Germany into barbarism, and it will lead any nation into the same demoralization.

"The new theology belittles our Lord Jesus Christ. It takes away His supernatural birth, His deity, His resurrection, and His atonement for sin. These great truths, and the power of Christ to regenerate and miraculously change men, have Christianized the barbarous, and brought the wonderful changes wrought among the heathen. Reverse the order, take away the Bible as the word of God, tell men they do not need the blood of Christ and the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and you lead the civilized back to barbarism. This is no idle fancy, but is being demonstrated before our eyes today.

"And yet men who masquerade as scholars and teachers in our universities and theological institutions are blind to the facts before us, and engage, to the extent of their ability, to take away from men sin's only remedy and the world's only hope. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' How long will it be before our churches arise and shake off the Germanized teachers of the new theology, who are untaught by history, uninformed in science, ignorant of the Bible, and unregenerated by the Holy Ghost?"

Among these new theologians are some who are loudly proclaiming that the teaching of so plain a Bible doctrine as the second coming of Christ itself should be suppressed. These men virtually deny the miracles of Christ, and therefore would, of course, deny the greatest of all miracles, conversion itself. Their teaching is the most insidious infidelity that has ever been foisted upon the world, and we should be on guard to know the Bible for ourselves.

For You to Read

Pick up your task in the morning with eager hands, and in the evening it shall return to you a sweet calm. No work that comes to you to be done is too insignificant for you to do; whatever task is sent to you is meant that your hands should do it, for there are no other hands in the world that could do it half so well. Then take up your work with a glad heart; be gentle in your sayings, earnest in your doings, and honest in your relations to all men and women. Inspiration will come to you and life will be altogether beautiful.—*Selected.*

What the Y. M. C. A. Does for Your Boy

"I'm standing alone against this squad, and must have help soon or I'll fall sure. I can't stand the spirit of that bunch, nor listen to its conversation and keep clean much longer. Every one of them is older, some twice as old, and they have secretly planned among themselves to get me to the house of a harlot 'to make a man of me.' My God! Can't you fellows help me in this crisis?"

He was but a boy just passing eighteen. Almost frantically he clutched the secretary of the Y. M. C. A. in a Southern cantonment. It was the cry of one who fears he is lost in a black night of storm.

Hungry men had crowded into the building that night. On their boots they had carried the damp sand of the camp streets. In their hearts they had hidden the tempest of unfinished battles. Now, after a strong appeal for clean living, the stream of men had gushed out into the darkness, leaving the great room in disorder, soiled and littered.

Having found a sympathetic listener, eagerly the mere boy continued to pour out his story. He had as fine a home in the North as any man. The day he was to leave it, his mother had taken him into her room alone.

"Son, let me get your eye," she said, putting both of her hands on his shoulders. "There, I'm looking you straight in the eye. It breaks my heart to see you go. I'm not afraid of bullets or rigid military discipline. I'm proud to have my boy give his life for our country, but I fear most the awful moral conditions. Can you come back if God permits you to return, as clean as you are now? When you do return, we'll come into this room to stand as we are now. You will not need to tell me if you are clean—I'll see it in your eye. Can you keep clean, my boy? Can you do it for your mother?"

His eyes blurred with tears; he had promised. Then when she had given him a pocket Testament and urged him to read a part of it each day, assuring him that it would help him to keep clean, he marched away with his head held high, and with high

resolves in his heart, knowing that her prayers would follow him.

"What about that Testament? Used it any?" queried the secretary.

"Just once, and the bunch was so mean, and talked so filthy that I've never opened it again when anybody was around. Of course there's not much chance to be alone."

"You must begin where you left off that first night, if you would live clean," challenged the secretary. "No matter how abusive the squad is, no matter how foul they make the air, can you exert enough manhood to carry out the promise made to your mother more than five weeks ago?"

"I'll keep my promise or die," answered the homesick boy with fervour. After they had prayed together the two parted.

It was late when the crusader reached his tent. The squad had preceded him. Some were in their bunks, others were undressing. The boy's heart almost stopped beating as he heard their lewd songs and profanity. In that atmosphere he must go. If he kept his promise, opening his Testament, he must read from it in spite of all their abuse.

Setting his teeth, spurred on by his promise, by the thought of the secretary in the Association building praying for him, and by the conviction in his own heart, he lighted his candle, and, putting it on the edge of his bunk, began to read. Almost immediately a well-aimed shoe, flying across the tent, knocked over the candle. He re-lighted it, but again it was put out, this time by a big fellow in the middle of the tent, who was pulling off his khaki shirt, and who spoke in such a personal, lewd way that the young man almost gave up in despair. He did not know what he had read, but he did realise that he was fighting the battle of his life, meaning victory or defeat.

"If I quit now, if I show yellow, it's my finish," he thought. So quietly and patiently he replaced his candle and continued reading. The talking grew less and less. One by one his tent-mates fell asleep. Soon all was quiet, and the boy on his back was still

reading from Matthew by the light of the little candle. He finished seven chapters before sliding out of his bunk onto his knees to gratefully offer his thanks and to pray for every man in that tent.

The secretary's heart went out to him as he heard of his heroism the next evening.

"Can you repeat the process tonight?" he asked.

"Sure! If I got through the first night, I can the second, and third, and so on."

Again the two prayed before saying good-night. This time it was a prayer of real thanksgiving as well as a petition. For ten successive evenings the young man came to the Y. M. C. A. to recount his experiences of the evening and the day before, and to stiffen his courage. Then one night he told his

friend, "I haven't said a single word to any man about clean speech and clean living. But I have guarded my own tongue, and each evening read my Testament, and prayed for the men. Now four others are reading their Testaments, and the others are putting the soft pedal on the swearing when we are around."

Later these five formed a Bible study group with all but one of the squad as members of it. Gradually profanity was almost unknown in the tent. The day before the regiment was to be transferred, the secretary asked the young victor, "Can you look your mother in the eye when you go home?"

"Thanks for your standing by me," he answered, "I can look anybody in the eye."
—*Melbourne's Manhood.*

"Boys, We Don't Have to Come Back"

A STORM was raging off Cape Hatteras. At the life saving station signals of distress were received. A ship had foundered and was being torn to pieces on the treacherous Diamond Shoals.

Captain Pat Etheridge, in command of the station, at once got ready the self-bailing life boat, which is fitted up with mast and sails as well as oars. Every moment the storm grew worse. The wind and the waves were violent. The order came to launch the boat, but the crew hesitated. They had risked their lives in a hundred brave adventures, but now they paused. They looked at the hungry sea, and then off to where the breakers thundered on the shoals. Truly it was the most terrible storm they had ever witnessed. How foolish it seemed to them to launch the boat! One of the men said:

"Captain Pat, it's no use with that wind. We can launch the boat, we can reach the ship, but we can never come back." There was silence for a moment, but for the wailing of the storm, and then Captain Pat said thoughtfully, "Boys, we don't have to come back."

The crew caught the inspiration of their captain, and as one man they launched the boat. They reached the ship, took off the survivors, and, the wind changing a point or two in their favour, after nine hours of most heroic toil they reached the station.

The captain's words, "Boys, we don't have to come back," are now repeated all along

the line of American life saving stations on both coasts, wherever deeds of bravery are necessary to save the lives of men.

Even so Christ, the "Captain of your salvation," counted not his life dear unto himself. As He hung upon the cross they mocked Him saying, "He saved others; himself He cannot save." Matt. 27: 42.

Yes, he did save others, and he will save us if we but enter the life boat that He has launched for our salvation. He gave His life, but now He lives, a glorified and risen Saviour. How true are the words of Christ which say, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." Mark 8: 35.

What am I doing to rescue perishing souls? "Boys, we don't have to come back."

—*B. A. Meeker.*

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."—Prov. 16: 32.

"There is nothing better in all the world than the love of God for his children, and the love of his children for one another."

Humility is not so much to think meanly of one's self as not to think of one's self at all.

True Education

BY H. S. PRENIER

I shall use a couplet of texts: 1 Corinthians 2: 2—"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," and 1 Corinthians 8: 1, 2—"We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

In the Twentieth Century New Testament the latter reference is even clearer.

"We are aware that all of us have knowledge. Knowledge breeds conceit, while love builds up character. If a man thinks he knows anything, he has not yet reached that knowledge which he ought to have reached."

Here we have two kinds of knowledge introduced. There are two words in the Greek translated knowledge, *gnosis* and *epignosis*. *Epignosis* is defined as, full, thorough, accurate knowledge; we would use the term "True Education."

It is surprising the number of times Paul uses the word in his prayers and benedictions. We may only notice one example. Romans 10: 1, 2. "Brethren my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."

There is no denying the fact that those men had knowledge, but how much clearer the Greek makes this text. "They have a zeal of God, but not according to full, thorough, accurate knowledge."

We have named and defined,—now to illustrate. I shall use the two greatest, most highly educated men in the Bible, Moses and Paul, as the extraordinary examples of the two kinds of knowledge, the knowledge that breeds conceit, followed by the kind that builds up character.

Moses had been adopted from infancy as a son of Pharaoh's daughter. Educated in the universities of Thebes and Memphis he reached the highest intellectual rank in Egyptian greatness. He had bound up in

him all the powers, qualities and faculties of a crown prince, field marshal, and university professor. His change of attitude and self sacrifice are recorded in Hebrews 11: 24-27. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible."

Paul is the best educated, the most scholarly of all men in the New Testament. Next to Jesus Christ he is the greatest man the world has ever seen. Think of his mental acquisitions, the educational heights he had surmounted in things ethical and divine. The wisdom of the ancients was supreme in his day. The acme of world wisdom had been reached. The philosophies of his time were weighed in the balance of his inspired judgment and found wanting, so in an outburst of spiritual fervor he could say:—"I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

His first impression of Christ was on the occasion of the stoning of Stephen. Acts 7: 54-8: 1. "Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." "Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city and stoned him." And as those stones kept raining down upon his defenseless head, tearing his face and eyes and breaking the bones, he, a bleeding mangled mass, dropped slowly to his knees and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And Saul was consenting unto his death. Those last words of Stephen haunted

the young man, Saul, day and night. They were the echo of the words that fell from the pale quivering lips of the Son of God. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

A little later we find him stretched out on the dusty Damascus road crying out to Jesus, "What wilt thou have me to do?" We next see him let down the side of the city wall of Damascus to flee for his life. And after all his Jewish rabbinical learning in the schools of the crowded centers of population he goes to the desert to spend three years in his post graduate work. He, like Moses, takes his highest degree in the wilderness. He says, "I conferred not with flesh and blood;" no, alone with the Spirit on the dread Arabian desert waste.

Here is a man whose education was equivalent to Ph.D., D.D., L.L.D., who felt his need of three more years of True Education. What a commentary for those who feel that they have learned enough!

Paul was a Jew, of the tribe of Benjamin, confirmed to the religion of his fathers: a Pharisee of the Pharisees, of the strictest sect of the Jews. He knew all the ceremonies and requirements of Pharisaical law. A Hebrew of the Hebrews. He spoke the Hebrew tongue and was acquainted with all the Hebrew customs and manners.

Educated in the Hebrew metropolis, Jerusalem, he was fortunate to sit at the feet of Gamaliel and other learned doctors of laws. He was graduated as a Rabbi, and what was more remarkable because of his youth, he became a member of the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court.

He was a deep student of all the Jewish literature, tradition and Cabalistic studies, and yet he could subordinate all he knew, relegate

all he had gained, "Determined not to know anything, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." What self abnegation!

He could say: "Among the Greeks, I was a Greek." He was previously educated in a Greek centre, Tarsus, a Greek university town. Associated with the keenest minds he was familiar with Greek greatness and Grecia's genius of the sensual.

Paul remains in Arabia three long years revising his theology, studying the Messianic prophecies and their fulfilment. Then he retires into Asia Minor for another nine years of seclusion, practically unknown to the world until Barnabas seeks him out in a Cilician town. It was not until fourteen years after his conversion that he dared go out to superintend a missionary trip for himself.

The secret of his patience and long-suffering was Christ and the story of the cross. Paul was a free born citizen, a Roman



THE STONING OF STEPHEN

among Romans. As a missionary he is familiar with Roman law and world efficiency, proficient in Latin, possessing the culture and refinement of a Roman courtier. We find him before Felix, Governor Justus, King Agrippa and his Queen, and Nero the Great, Cæsar of the world. Not any glitter and tinsel, nor outward adorning of Roman luxury and royalty that he saw, could eclipse his all absorbing purpose.—"To know Jesus

Christ" better—and to finish His work.

Two years in his own hired house in Rome in touch with Caesar's own household. He might become internationally great if he would renounce his religion. But Oh! the self submission of Paul. He determined to know no other but Christ and the Cross.

Peter speaks of Paul's epistles as containing some things hard to be understood. Paul was a master mind with masterful spiritual insight and as he wrote to the many nationalities of the sublime and the infinite he reveals to us the deepest and most inspirational philosophy ever written. The Pauline theology is the grandest the Spirit through the human mind has ever produced.

How small, how puny we look beside this giant of faith and action! Every ounce of energy, every fibre of his being, consecrated to finish the work. The year he was ordered killed by Nero (A. D. 68) Florus was battering at the walls of Jerusalem, followed successively by Cestus Vespasian and Titus; and in A. D. 70, only two years after Paul's death, the city of Jerusalem was captured, the Jews were slaughtered or

scattered, and the city and temple buried. Finish the work meant to finish the world, the Jewish world. Witness the world to-day!

The civilization and culture of Central Europe is found to be but hollow mockery. Education is honeycombed with pernicious nechsism. Divine Education is on the scaffold and the knowledge that breeds conceit sits enthroned.

We must needs go home by the way of the cross,

There's no other way but this;
We shall ne'er get sight of the gates of
Light,

If the way of the cross we miss.
We must needs go on in the blood-sprinkled
way,

The path that the Saviour trod,
If we ever climb to the heights sublime,
Where the soul is at home with God.
Then let's bid farewell to the way of the
world,

To walk in it never more, . . .
Oh! 'Tis sweet to know, as we onward go,
The way of the Cross leads Home.

The Minister of the Sabbath Church

Passing along a street in South Africa one day, I heard a gruff voice behind me say, "Molo Umfundisi." I turned to find a grey beard old Kaffir following me. On greeting him, he asked,

"Are you the minister of the Sabbath church?"

"Yes," I replied, "if you like to put it that way," as I felt rather amused.

"I want to know how you manage it," he said.

"Manage what?" I asked.

"I will tell you," he went on, "I have a brother who has been a very wicked man. More than half the time he is not sober. I have lived near him for the last forty years, and have never known him to be different. A few weeks back I heard that he had joined your church. Knowing him as I do, I felt that something must have happened, as I have not known him to do anything of this kind before. I was so pleased that I made up my mind that I would give my brother a treat, knowing what he liked. I invited him to come down on Sunday, and I bought him some coffee, tobacco, brandy, also Kaffir

beer. Umfundisi, imagine my surprise when my brother refused to partake of any of these things. 'No,' he said, 'I have given myself to the Master, and He does not want me to do these things any more.'"

After a pause the old man continued, "I was alone with my brother, and I could not at first believe him. So, I pressed these things upon him. Still he would not touch them, but turned his back and walked out. "Umfundisi," the old man repeated, "How do you do it?"

"Well," I said, "Vosloo, who does your brother say he has given himself to?"

"To the Master," he repeatedly quietly.

"You must not ask me how is this done," I said, "You must ask the Lord, for He knows all about it. I can only tell you that He is able to do as much for you or anyone else who will come to Him."

About a month later I buried the old man referred to in this conversation, in baptism. The Sabbath previous to the baptismal service we had the lesson in the Sabbath-school of the healing of the cripple at the Gate

Beautiful of the temple. That man had been bound forty years. Do you think, friends, that man lying at the gate of the temple was a greater prisoner than the old Kaffir bound in the bonds of his debauchery

and sins a lifetime—a slave to passions hereditary and acquired? Ah, no. The age of miracles is not past. Praise God for his mighty power today to "save to the uttermost."—*E. W. H. Jeffrey.*

Is Christianity a Failure?

THERE is a farce Christianity in the world to-day,—a form of godliness, without power in the individual life. If what a man has makes him no different from his unchristian brother, he does not have Christianity. To a Bible Christian, Christianity is a living verity in the life. There is no theory, dogma, or creed about it. A theory of Christianity has no more salvation in it than any other religion. Bible Christianity must throb in the brain. It must thrill in the heart. It must be the impulse of every action. It must become the personality. It must become flesh! Christianity is the ten commandments — demonstrated — in every thought, word, and action in the individual.

Suppose I wish to purchase an automobile. Before investing my money in the machine, I will want to see it run up a forty per cent grade on high gear. Then when plunging toward a high precipice down a steep decline I will want to see it instantly stopped. If, with a powerful engine, the clutch works going up hill, and the brakes work going

down, I am convinced that it is the machine I want,—one that can stand the test. Any machine can run on the level. Neither am I so interested in the catalog that may describe the working parts. I want to see it work.

So with Christianity. With the power of the living God and the grip of the gospel, a man can be carried over any mountain of trouble with a smile upon his face. Or he can be kept from falling in temptation by the brakes of the gospel. He is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24. Any religion can carry a man along on the level with the crowd when the way is smooth. But when the way goes hard we need the supernatural power of real Christianity. Neither are we much concerned with dogmas, creeds or catechisms that may describe the working parts of Christianity. We want to see its power demonstrated in the life. We want to see the thing itself.

—*B. M. Heald.*

The Real Test of Worth

The faultiest measure of honour is fame, and the least token of right is popularity. Majorities do not make moralities. The majority is as often wrong as right. Neither might nor majority makes right. Self-respect is better than popularity with others; and the approval of Christ worthier than all honour men can give. After Christ's approval, the next highest thing is the approval of one's own soul. There is no higher law for one's life than the law of one's own soul, save God's law: and in the last analysis, his is but the more perfect rescript of the one law in our souls. Perfect moral self-respect is one with Christ's approval.

So once more, such a one as desires true worth is not concerned with ruling and governing others. His kingdom is what he is, not what he has; what he can do in himself, rather than what he can have others do for him. His kingdom is in ruling himself, and he aims at self-mastery. So he keeps his body under, and brings it into subjection; so he casts down false ideals, and leads every thought into captivity to Christ; so he takes hold on the sympathies and emotions, in order that, at last, he may be sovereign in every faculty and power of his life, and use them all to the attainment of worth and blessedness and right character.—*Messer.*

Church and State Uniting

WHAT shall be done after the war, with the problems arising? is a question that is receiving as much discussion today, perhaps, as any one other outside of the war itself. A recent half-column article in the *San Francisco Bulletin* has the caption, "Vatican Takes Up Plans for After War." The article is written by Henry Wood, United Press staff correspondent. The opening sentences of this article are:—

"In preparation for the great 'after the war' task of re-establishing the entire world on a basis of permanent peace, the Vatican is pursuing a steady policy of resuming and establishing diplomatic relations with as many countries as possible. By being in direct and official contact with all of the leading nations of the world the Vatican hopes to be in a position to lend aid and influence to those of the United States and allied belligerents who, with the close of the war, will assume the leadership in attempting to render impossible for all time to come a similar catastrophe."

Then the article proceeds to say that "already the Vatican has met with marked success in its efforts." Attention is called to the fact that shortly after the opening of the war diplomatic relations were resumed between England and the Vatican, and that also a papal nuncio was accepted at Constantinople by the Ottoman empire. Then full diplomatic relations have been established with Portugal, and relations have been entered into between the Vatican and China and Japan. Following this, Mr. Wood affirms in his article, "In this way the Vatican is already in official relation with various nations representing all of the principal religions of the world."

Mr. Wood also declares that diplomatic negotiations are under way between the Vatican and Switzerland, and it need not be surprising to hear their success announced at any moment. He also states that "one of the dearest projects along this line which his holiness is declared in competent circles to

have at heart is to see the apostolic delegate at Washington raised to the position of a papal nuncio or papal ambassador."

And Mr. Wood adds that "the lead which England and other Protestant, to say nothing of Mohammedan and Buddhist, states have taken in establishing diplomatic relations with the holy see would not make this step on the part of the United States, it is pointed out, any great departure from previous custom."

Mr. Wood's article concludes with this significant paragraph: "There seems every likelihood that at the end of the war the Vatican will be in a position to lend its influence in an official and effective manner towards establishment of a permanent world peace, and towards settlement of the various humanitarian questions that the 'after the war' period is certain to bring."

The leaders in the federated Protestant world are quite as active as the leaders of the Papal church in studying the problems that will arise out of the war, and they are offering many suggestions as to what should be brought about. We are indeed in serious days, and it is well that we study the problems that confront us in the immediate future. But should we not study these problems in the light of God's prophetic word? And as we study them, do we not see clearly its warnings against a mighty religious combination—a combination that the prophecy seems to indicate will be world-wide and embrace more than one religion?

Do not the warnings of history as well as the warnings of revelation raise a mighty voice against the experiment of uniting religion with the state? It is not the mere fact that all the various religious elements of the day are seeking to combine that constitutes the danger, but the further fact that they are seeking to combine in a political way so as to control the power of state. True religion is not carried forward by the force of state machinery. Said Jesus, "My kingdom is not of this world." And the inspired apostle says, "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not

war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.)" 2 Corinthians 10: 3, 4.

"The powers that be are ordained of God;" and it is necessary that the state should use force, but not so with His church. Physical

force is no part of the church's armor. It is to persuade and to lead men to Christ. In grappling with the problems that follow the war, will men listen to the clear voice speaking through God's word, or will they again make the fatal mistake that has been so oft repeated in history?—*Selected.*

Prevention and Treatment of Influenza

To Prevent Influenza:

Keep warm. Wear sufficient and proper clothing.

Insist on getting plenty of sleep.

Sleep in rooms with fresh air.

Eat regularly of good, substantial food, but do not overeat. Eat laxative foods.

Drink very freely of cold water.

Secure proper elimination.

Regard every cold as serious and go to bed.

If you feel ill and have a little fever go to bed at once.

Avoid wet feet.

Avoid worry or excitement.

Avoid large gatherings of people.

Avoid contact with anybody sneezing or coughing.

Avoid contact with anybody suffering from the disease.

Avoid taking cold, as this predisposes to an attack.

Do not use alcoholic beverages.

Do not use public drinking cups.

Do not use patent medicines and so-called cold cures.

Do not fear the disease.

The Treatment in Influenza

Every case of influenza should be treated as serious even though the symptoms are slight.

Have plenty of fresh air in the sick room.

Take a dose of Epsom salts or castor oil at the onset of the disease.

Drink water every hour.

Eat fruit and a light diet of cereals, soups, toast, etc.

Keep cold compress constantly on the head.

Use cold irrigations of the bowels if necessary to reduce temperature.

Give a sweating treatment, such as a hot leg pack or hot foot bath with fomentations to the chest and abdomen followed by tepid sponge as often as necessary to keep the temperature below 102 degrees.

Stay in bed as long as you have a fever and for four days after the fever has disappeared.

If caring for one sick with the disease wear constantly a gauze mask over the nose and mouth.

—*Mary W. Paulson, M. D.*

A Pause in the Prayer

IF I should die 'fore I wake," said Donney, kneeling at grandmother's knee, "If I should die 'fore I wake—"

"I pray," prompted the gentle voice, "Go on, Donney."

"Wait a minute," interposed the small boy, scrambling to his feet and hurrying away downstairs. In a brief space he was back again, and dropping down in his place, took up his petition where he had left off. But when the little white-gowned form was safely tucked in bed, the grandmother questioned with loving rebuke concerning the interruption.

"But I did think what I was saying

grandmother; that's why I had to stop. You see, I'd upset Ted's menagerie and stood all his wooden soldiers on their heads just to see how he'd tear around in the mornin'. If I should die 'fore I wake, why—I didn't want him to find 'em that way; so I had to go down and fix 'em right. There's lots of things that seem funny if you're goin' to keep on livin', but you don't want 'em that way if you die 'fore you wake."

"That was right, dear; it was right," commented the voice, with its tender quaver. A good many of our prayers would not be hurt by stopping in the middle of them to undo a wrong.—*Wellspring*

THE RELIGIOUS BAROMETER

Church Union

"It is stated that the Church of Scotland has frankly determined on union and is leaving nothing undone to remove on its side all possible obstacles.

"Steps have been taken in China for the closer union of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches.

"The recent Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had overtures before it calling for the organic union of all the evangelical Churches of America. The following resolutions were enthusiastically adopted:—

1. That we, the Commissioners to the 130th General Assembly now in session at Columbus, Ohio, do declare and place on record our profound conviction that the time has come for organic Church union of the Evangelical Churches of America.

2. That this Assembly hereby overtures the national bodies of the evangelical communions of America to meet with our representatives for the purpose of formulating a plan of organic union.

3. That the Assembly's Committee on Co-operation and Union be authorised and directed to designate the place and time, not later than January 1st 1919, for the above-named convention; to prepare a suitable invitation; to fix the ratio of representation and appoint the delegates of our body; to prepare a tentative plan of organic union for presentation, and to attend to all necessary arrangements.

"We have just come from the Ministers' Conference at Tranquebar where the same longing for unity showed itself in a very remarkable way. . . . Eleven different Missions were represented at this conference."—*Union Church Herald*.

"Say ye not a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. . . . Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." Isa. 8: 12, 13, 16.

AND where we love is home—
Home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts;
The chain may lengthen, but it never parts.

Romanism in America

"It would seem that the old axiom, 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,' should immediately be painted in big letters on the wall of the Senate chamber in Washington. Recently the Senate in all seriousness passed a joint resolution requesting the President to issue a proclamation urging the people of this country to pause for one minute each day and repeat a Roman Catholic prayer to the Virgin Mary. . . .

"The evident purpose of the instigators of the project is to foist upon the American people of all denominations and creeds a Roman Catholic prayer and thus bring the church of Rome daily to their minds."—*Masonic Chronicle*.

HEALTH AND TEMPERANCE

Smoking

Dr. Fisk quotes a British army doctor, the author of a text book used in American army medical schools, as saying, "Smoking should be forbidden (on the march), because it causes thirst, tremor, and rapid heart, muscular relaxation, loss of visual acuity, and shortness of wind."

Influenza and the Undertakers

The oldest firm of undertakers in Bombay, a firm established so far back as in the year 1844—say that since the establishment of their business they have never had such large numbers of orders night and day as received during the recent epidemic. During the whole existence of the firm the total number of orders recorded for a day and night never exceeded 9 and this was the figure reached in the worst days of the plague. Whereas during the last three weeks or so the total number of orders received from Christians during a twenty-four hours, even went up so high as 18. From the classes of orders it was evident that the mortality was the heaviest amongst the poor.—*Christian Patriot*.

A Lasting Peace

It is clear that if the peace which has become the first interest of a bleeding and devastated world is to be something more than a breathing space, or a passing interlude, we cannot be content with a mere repainting of the map. Nor must our reconstruction concern Europe alone. We must aim at setting up a world-wide peace partnership, of which all the civilised communities will be members on a level footing, with equal rights and reciprocal duties."—Mr. Asquith, in an interview with a representative of the *Observer*, in 1917.

Signs of the Times

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POINTED PARAGRAPHS

Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, the world renowned and world respected evangelist, said before the "Bible Conference on the Return of Our Lord" in Philadelphia, that "every leading evangelist in the world is a pre-millenarian." That is to say, all the leading evangelists—men who, as a rule, believe and teach a whole Bible—are clear in their conviction that the second coming of Christ will take place before the millennium. The popular notion concerning a millennium of peace and righteousness on earth cannot be sustained by the Bible.

For the most part, the "itching ears" germ is from the breath of the pulpit. The preacher first discards sound doctrine and takes up with some new thing. Then he begins to preach these new-fangled things, in order to create a market for his wares. Nine times out of ten, the preacher goes wrong doctrinally first, and then sows the seeds of error in the minds of the people.—*World and Way*.

We need more of the evangelistic spirit—more of the spirit which reaches out and lays hold of men for Christ. . . . Some men would have us believe that a new gospel is needed, as though we could have a new Christ. Some seem to consider the methods of the apostolic age obsolete. To counteract such ideas and to overcome such a spirit we need not so much articles, discussions, and conference resolutions, as new evidences of the reality of the great facts and forces which hold your life and mine; new demonstrations in each community that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto the salvation of every man that believeth, no matter how hardened his condition may be; new demonstrations of the power of the Holy Spirit, showing that he is just as able to shake mightily whole communities to-day as in the days of Peter and John; new demonstrations that the Word of God is the word of God, that it has dynamic power, that its truth sets men free; new demonstration that prayer is still able to remove mountains and that faith is the victory that literally overcomes the world.—*John R. Mott*.

"THE longer we live in this world," says Edward W. Bok, "the more we become convinced how little we know. The people most humble in their opinions are generally the best educated. It is an art which only a few learn,—to be reticent of our own opinion when every one around is expressing his,—yet this is one of the attributes of the well educated. Silence often speaks louder than speech."

Queen of the World

"THE mother, in her office, holds the key
Of the soul; and she it is who stamps the
coin
Of character, and makes the being who would
be a savage,
But for her gentle cares, a Christian man;
Then crown her queen of the world."

Go not my friend, into the dangerous world without prayer. You kneel down at night to pray, and drowsiness weighs down your eyelids; a hard day's work is a kind of excuse, and you shorten your prayer, and resign yourself softly to repose. The morning breaks, and it may be you rise late, and so your early devotions are not done, or are done with irregular haste. No watching unto prayer! wakefulness once more omitted; and now is that reparable?—We solemnly believe not. There has been that done which can not be undone. You have given up your prayer, and you will suffer for it. Temptation is before you, and you not ready to meet it. There is a guilty feeling on the soul, and you linger at a distance from God. It is no marvel if that day in which you suffer drowsiness to interfere with prayer, be a day in which you shrink from duty. Moments of prayer intruded on by sloth can not be made up. We may get experience, but we can not get back the rich freshness and strength which were wrapped up in those moments.—*Fredrick W. Robertson, D. D.*

— Important Notice —

As many of our subscribers are aware, this magazine is but one of a series of the same name published in different parts of the world. All stand for the same principles, and herald the same message of the nearness of our Lord's return. The first of the series, published in California, U. S. A. now has a circulation approximating seventy thousand copies weekly.

Believing it to be to the advantage of our subscribers in India, we have decided to devote our attention to the circulation of this American edition of the *Signs of the Times*, discontinuing our Lucknow publication after the February issue.

We appreciate the support you have accorded to our

magazine in the past, and solicit a continuance of your interest on behalf of the new arrangement.

The subscription price of the American *Signs of the Times*, which is issued weekly, is Rs. 4/8/- per annum, post free. We therefore propose to supply one copy of it for every copy of the Lucknow magazine which remains due on your subscription. If you are already subscribing to the American paper, or if you do not care to continue your Lucknow subscription on the basis suggested, we shall be glad to refund in cash the balance remaining due to you.

We shall appreciate an early notification of your wishes.

The Publishers

— Final Notice —

With reference to our notice in the January issue (appearing again above) regarding the discontinuance of this publication, we beg to remind you that this is the last issue, and that unless we receive your definite request to the contrary, we shall continue your subscription with the American *Signs of the Times*, supplying copy for copy.