

THE Present Truth.

"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth."—St. John 17: 17.

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THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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—FOR—

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MY SUPPORT.

"Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe." Psa. 119: 117.

I LEAN upon no broken reed,
Nor trust an untried guide;
I know Him, and He knoweth me;
He walketh by my side.

I hold His hand as on we walk,
And He still holdeth mine;
It is a human hand I hold,
It is a hand Divine.

"Hold thou me up" is still my cry,
As o'er the rugged road
Of this my pilgrimage I move,
That leads me nearer God.

—Horatius Bonar.

General Articles.

"Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of My lips shall be right things." Prov. 8: 6.

SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

"YE shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee." Those who honour God by obedience to all His requirements are free to eat and rejoice before the Lord, and He Himself, as an unseen guest, will preside at the board. That which is done for the glory of God should be done with cheerfulness, with songs of praise and thanksgiving, not with sadness and gloom. Would that all who profess to be the children of God, who profess to keep His commandments, might bring thankfulness and rejoicing into the service of Christ. Nothing is more grievous to God than for His children to go constantly mourning, covering the altar with tears. He says by the prophet Malachi, "And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that He regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand."

Our God should be regarded as a tender, merciful Father. The service of God should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise. It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to take part in His work. As the people of God meditate upon the plan of salvation, their hearts will be melted in love and gratitude. When they were lost, Christ died to save them; through the gift of the Son of God, provision has been made whereby none need perish, but all may have everlasting life. God would not have His children, for whom so great a salvation has been provided, act as though He were a hard, exacting task-master. He is their best friend, and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them to bless and comfort them, and fill their hearts with joy and love. The Lord desires His children to take comfort in His service, and to find more pleasure than hardship in His work. The Lord desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things.

The children of God are called upon to be representatives of Christ, showing forth the goodness and mercy of the Lord. If they but revealed His goodness from day to day, barriers would be raised around their souls against the temptations of the evil one. If they would keep in remembrance the goodness and love of God, they would be cheerful, but not vain and full of carnal mirth.

The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Jesus says, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto My Father; for My Father is greater than I." "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

When we go mourning, we leave the impression upon minds that God is not pleased to have us happy, and in this we bear false witness against our Heavenly Father. Satan is exultant when he can lead the people of God into unbelief and despondency. He delights to see us mistrusting God, doubting His willingness and power to save us. He loves to have us feel that the Lord will do us harm by His providences. O let the attitude of doubt be changed! Christ in the Old Testament is the same as Christ in the New Testament. His commands and promises are identical. When He charged His people of old to rejoice before Him, it was for our comfort as well as for theirs. Happiness that is sought only from selfish motives, outside of the path of duty, is ill-balanced, fitful and transitory, and when it is over, the soul is filled with loneliness and sorrow. But when we engage in the service of God, the heart should be aglow with thanksgiving; for the Christian is not left to walk in uncertain paths, he is not left to vain regrets and disappointments. If we do not have the pleasures of this life, we may still be joyful in looking to the life beyond. Let us never doubt God. He made us, He loves us, and in one rich gift poured out all heaven for us; and "He that spared not His own son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

God knows our wants, and has provided for them. The Lord has a treasure-house of supplies for His children, and can give them what they need under all circumstances. Then why do we not trust Him? He has made precious promises to His children on condition of faithful obedience to His precepts. There is not a burden but He can remove, no darkness but He can dispel, no weakness but He can change to power, no fears but He can calm, no worthy aspiration but He can guide and justify.

We are not to look at ourselves. The more we dwell upon our own imperfections, the less strength we shall have to overcome them. We are to render a cheerful service to God. It is the work of Satan to present the Lord as lacking in compassion and pity. He misstates the truth in regard to Him. He fills the imagination with false theories con-

cerning God; and instead of dwelling upon the truth in regard to the character of our Heavenly Father, we fasten our minds upon the misrepresentations of Satan, and dishonour God by mistrusting Him and by murmuring against Him. When we act like culprits under sentence of death, we bear false witness against God. The Father gave His only begotten and well-beloved Son to die for us, and in so doing He placed great honour upon humanity; for in Christ the link that was broken through sin was reunited, and man again connected with Heaven. You who doubt the mercy of God, look at the Lamb of God, look at the Man of Sorrows, who bore your grief and suffered for your sin. He is your friend. He died on the cross because He loved you. He is touched with the feeling of your infirmities, and bears you up before the throne. In view of His unspeakable love, should not hope, love, and gratitude be cherished in your heart? Should not gladness fill your service to God?

Satan ever seeks to make the religious life one of gloom. He desires it to appear toilsome and difficult; and when the Christian presents this view of religion in his own life, he is, through his unbelief, seconding the falsehood of Satan. We dishonour God when we think of Him only as a judge ready to pass sentence upon us, and forget that He is a loving Father. The whole spiritual life is moulded by our conceptions of God; and if we cherish erroneous views of His character, our souls will sustain injury. We should see in God one who yearns toward the children of men, longing to do them good. He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. All through the Scriptures, God is represented as one who calls, woos by His tender love, the hearts of His erring children. No earthly parent could be as patient with the faults and mistakes of their children as is God with those He seeks to save. No one could plead more tenderly with the transgressor. No human lips ever poured out more tender entreaty to the wanderer than does He. O shall we not love God, and show our love by humble obedience? Let us have a care for our thoughts, our experiences, our attitude toward God; for all His promises are but the breathings of unutterable love.

THE 1260 YEARS OF PAPAL SUPREMACY.

THIS period is denoted by the following expressions, "a time and times [or two times, Greek] and the dividing of time," "a time, times, and half a time" (meaning the same thing), "a thousand two hundred and three-score days," and "forty and two months." Dan. 7: 25; Rev. 12: 6, 14; 13: 5. As these expressions are applied to prophetic symbols in chains of prophetic symbols,

they denote symbolic time. A time, two times, and half a time, would be three times and a half; and according to ancient use of the term "time," three times and a half would mean three years and a half. Dan. 4: 26, 33, etc. As the year among the Jews consisted of 360 days, this would make 1260 days. Forty-two months would also bring us the same result; for, according to the Bible, there are thirty days in one month (see Gen. 1: 11, 24; 8: 3, 4, etc.); and forty-two multiplied by thirty would make 1260. Again, the expression, "a time, times, and half a time," is shown to be synonymous with 1260 days. Rev. 12: 6, 14.

When does this period of 1260 year-days commence, and when does it end? In Dan. 7, it is applied to the little horn that arose among the ten horns of the fourth beast, and before whom three of those horns were to fall, or to be "plucked up by the roots." Verses 7, 8, 19-25. This fourth beast is the fourth universal kingdom (verses 17, 24), which is acknowledged to be the Roman Kingdom or Empire. The ten horns represent the ten kings, or kingdoms, which arose in, and broke up, the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. (See verse 24; Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," etc.) The little horn was to arise after the ten horns (verse 24), and it was to arise after three of the ten original kingdoms of Rome should fall or be plucked up. According to history, this is just when the Papacy arose.

Before the Papacy could arise as a power ruling Rome politically as well as religiously, through its representative, the Pope, the three kingdoms which were opposed to Papal supremacy had to be overcome. Those were the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths. The Heruli were plucked up in Italy by Theodoric, the king of the Ostrogoths, in 493. The Vandals of Africa were overcome by Belisarius, the general-in-chief of the army of Justinian, in 534. Finally, in 538 Belisarius plucked up the Ostrogoths at Rome, after a desperate struggle of about one year, thus exalting to spiritual supremacy the head of the Catholic Church in Rome. And it was in 538 that the prosperous career of the Pope as a priest-king began. (See Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;" *Dictionnaire General de Biographie d' Histoire*, etc., by M. M. Dezobry, Bachelet, etc.)

From 538 the Pope was to have a prosperous career of 1260 years, at the close of which there was to be a change in his history. To 538 add 1260, and you will have 1798. And what took place in 1798? Thiers' "French Revolution" and any history treating fully the events of the close of the last century, will tell you that in that year, Berthier, a French general who had aided La Fayette and Washington in gaining the American independence, took the city of

Rome, made Pope Pius VI. a prisoner, and led him captive into France, where he died the next year.

Frequently, while passing through Southern France, I have stopped in the city of Valence, Drôme, and visited its cathedral built in the eleventh century, and have, by the permission of priests, before the altar in that cathedral, put my hand on the bust of Pius VI., who died in that city. Under the bust is a fine polished cenotaph (marble monument), containing the heart and bowels of Pius VI. While in Valence, I gathered from a history of the department of Drôme, France, written by a Roman Catholic mayor of Valence, who had been a contemporary of Pius VI., the following facts:—

Pius VI. dwelt in this ancient Government Hall, which to-day is so dilapidated, during his captivity of 1799. The garden, in the form of a terrace, may be seen from a part of the city and from the valley of the Rhone. The scenery is magnificent, and it is said that when Pius VI. appeared on this terrace for the first time, he exclaimed, "*O bella vista!*"—"O! the beautiful view!" He died in this hall the 29th of August of the same year, 1799, aged eighty-two years.

There exists in the cathedral a monument of white marble, that was reared in 1811, by order, and at the expense, of the imperial government, in memory of this pontiff, whose heart and entrails it contains.

The body of Pius VI. was embalmed, and was first placed in a cave dug expressly for it, in the city of Valence, and a monument was put over it; but it was afterward returned to Pius VII., and taken to Rome under the care of the cardinal Spina, archbishop of Genoa. The city of Valence has since reclaimed the heart and entrails of the pontiff; these were sent to it from Rome, and they rested in an ardent [illuminated] chapel of the church of St. Appolinaire, until the erection of the monument raised in the same church in memory of Pius VI., with great solemnity, the 25th of October, 1811. The consecration was effected by Mr. the cardinal Spina, assisted by Messrs. Bécherel, Bishop of Valence, and Périer, Bishop of Avignon. Mr. Bécherel had the following [Latin] inscription placed on this monument:—

*Sancta, Pii le Sexti redunt
Præcordia Gallis:
Roma tenet Corpus;
Nomen obique sonat.
Valentiae obit 29 Aug. An. 1799.*

A literal translation of which is: "The holy entrails of Pius VI. are returned to the French: Rome possesses his body; his name resounds in all places. He died at Valence the 29th of Aug., 1799."

As I stood upon the very ground on which so important a prophecy had been fulfilled, such feelings of awe and gratitude came over me, that words are too faint to express them. "Here," I exclaimed, "are visible traces of God's glory, wisdom, and power in the fulfilment of His word." Never before had the prophecies concerning the Papacy seemed so forcible to me. As I read in Catholic authors such expressions as the following: "He went into captivity;" "He died in captivity," my mind reverted to the following prediction concerning this very power: "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." Rev. 13: 10. As I saw that in 1798, at

the close of the period of prosperity assigned to the Papacy, Pope Pius VI. lost his temporal power, and that though his successor had had some of that power restored to him, yet it could be said that the temporal power gradually decreased, until its last vestige was taken away by Victor Emmanuel, at the time of the last struggle between the Germans and the French, I saw special significance and wonderful fitness in the following words of Daniel: "And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Dan. 7: 25, 26. His dominion, or temporal power, is all gone; therefore the end must be imminent.

As a wise providence would have it, in all the history of the popes, we find no pope whose end is marked with such individuality, such special, such wonderful events, as is that of Pius VI. Who can say that God did not aid in shaping the closing events of the career of this pope, to meet a prophecy that was to be a glorious beacon light, in whose bright rays the honest seeker after truth in the last days would see clearly and unmistakably that the King of glory was soon to take the kingdom?

D. T. BOURDEAU.

THE BITTERNESS OF UNBELIEF.

M. RENAN, the brilliant French author and infidel, in his youth was gladdened by the hope and joy of religious faith. He grew wise, however, with that wisdom of men which is foolishness with God, and turning from the Bread of Life prefers to break his teeth against a stone. What a hymn of despair is the following utterance of his:—

"We are living on the perfume of an empty vase. Our children will have to live in the shadow of a shadow. Their children, I fear, will have to subsist on something less."

This is only surpassed in awful sadness by the exclamation of the lamented Professor Clifford, out of the Egyptian midnight of his professed atheism:—

"We have seen the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven to light up a soulless earth; we have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead!"

Said the great American apostle of infidelity, standing beside the coffin of his brother:—

"Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of a wailing cry."

"Without God" man has "no hope"; he is a fragment of a broken-up universe, and there is no one to put him in the place where he belongs. But when he knows the Lord, then he finds a Father, a Saviour, a Comforter, and a Friend,

and his life finds its axis, and moves in harmonious order under the guidance of the gracious and ever watchful providence of God.—*The Armoury.*

THE WORD OF THE LORD.

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth an herb, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55: 10, 11.

AS SNOW and rain rise not again to heaven,
But yield their treasures to earth's thirsty soil,
Till bud and flower and bounteous fruit are given
To him who sows and reaps in faithful toil—

So, saith the Lord, My holy word shall be,
That goeth forth in plenitude of power;
Not void shall it again return to me,
But gather from all lands a precious dower.

The sad shall hear it and in heart rejoice;
The heavy-laden listen and find rest;
And burdened souls by this thrice welcome voice,
Shall change their load of guilt for pardon blest.

It soothes the sufferer on his couch of pain,
Makes bright and warm the dull, cold days of care;

Translates the poor man from his low domain,
To this Divine estate—of Heaven an heir.

The quickened conscience hears the vital word,
And, lo! a new, strange life the bosom thrills;
The world's deceitful voice no longer heard,
The heart turns upward to the heavenly hills.

Silent as dew and sunshine on the earth,
Not fire nor sword its power Divine can stay.
In lowly paths it finds its choicest worth,
And ripens souls for God's eternal day.

And so at last from every land they come,
In shining columns crowned with joy and song;
In chants of praise to God no voice is dumb,
Nor silent harp in all the ransomed throng.

O ye to whom 't is given to bear to men
The precious word of life from Christ the Lord,
Cease not nor weary in your toil; for then
Heaven shall unfold your infinite reward.
U. SMITH.

REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM!

WERE we to adopt the conclusions of the critics and allow centuries to interpose between the events narrated in the Pentateuch and the time of their committal to writing, let us note some of the difficulties to be faced. There is a perfect familiarity with the Egypt of the Exodus, the minute accuracy of which is being confirmed by daily discoveries, manifested by writers to whom Egypt is an almost unknown country, and who lived hundreds of years after the facts occurred, which they succeed in so marvellously recording. They describe a journey through a desert which they never traversed in such clear and precise details as to furnish the best guide-book to the Wilderness of Sinai we still possess! In the reign of Josiah a law is promulgated for the extermination of the Amalekites (Deut. 25: 17-19), who had long since disappeared, and is as great an anachronism as a law in the reign of Queen Victoria expelling the Danes. In the time of Moses a law favouring Edom as against Ammon and Moab had reason (Deut. 23: 3, 4, 7, 8), but in the time of the later Kings, when Deuteronomy is said to have been written, the positions are reversed. Then Jeremiah predicts the restoration of Moab (Jer.

48: 47) and of Ammon (Jer. 49: 6), whereas he threatens the utmost desolation against Edom! How absurd to warn against going back to Egypt after settlement for centuries in Palestine! The people are exhorted to friendliness towards Egyptians (Deut. 23: 7), while at the very time the book is supposed to be written the prophets are doing their best to dissuade the nation from forming any association with them! (Isa. 31: 1.) Think also of the anomaly of a law shutting out foreigners from the throne at a time when the succession was firmly fixed in the house of David!

The impossibilities of the theory proposed by the critics appear at once, so soon as we begin to apply it. Let it only be tested in this practical manner throughout and there will appear as fine an illustration as we could desire of the *reductio ad absurdum*.

To form a subtle theory after years of experimental guessing, and with full liberty to remove every objectionable reference from the text, is no impossible task. But to verify the theory by laying it alongside even the facts which have been allowed to remain will prove a task of a much more formidable kind. We are not venturing a hair's breadth beyond what is capable of proof when we assert that no theory which has yet seen the light can pass this ordeal. Believers in the inspiration of the Old Testament have no reason to dread experiments, which have hitherto been so futile and fruitless. If the time and labour foolishly expended on these vain attempts were devoted to the elucidation of the contents of the Book itself there would be unspeakably more gain both to the workers and to the world.—*Word and Work.*

FOOT-PRINTS.

SHOULD the eye of a traveller in a lonely wood, or on a dreary desert, rest upon the foot-print of some fellow traveller who had passed that way before him, he would be cheered, and hope would be revived in his heart; he would be inspired with fresh courage to press on.

We are travellers in an enemy's land. Often, and especially in these last days, we are tempted to grow weary at the roughness of the way; but just then we catch a glimpse of a foot-print of One who has travelled the same road, and immediately we feel strengthened. Yes, our Saviour, the Son of God, has passed by this way, and left His foot-prints all along for us to follow. In the hour of poverty and want, we falter and feel that we can go no farther. But, lo! the foot-prints of Him who, though rich, yet for our sakes became poor, and while He sojourned among men had not where to lay His head. We become glad and joyful as we remember this dear Saviour's promise, "I go to prepare a place for you; . . . I will come again, and receive you unto Myself;" and we press on rejoicing that we can follow in the

way He trod. Ofttimes we feel a heavy cross upon us; we grow weak, and are ready to faint and cry out, "I cannot bear it!" But again we catch sight of the foot-print of the sinless One on the way to Calvary, bearing the heaviest cross ever borne on earth.

Dear brother, sister, in this precious truth, let us search more closely for the foot-prints of Jesus, the Son of God. We will find them along the dusty highway, at the bedside of the sick and dying, in the abode of poverty, in the garden of Gethsemane, on the mount of transfiguration, in the valley of humility, along the quiet path of self-denial,—wherever we can do good, there we shall find the foot-prints of Jesus.

When evil spoken of, there, too, you will see His radiant foot-prints; for who is more evil spoken of than He? When reviled, He reviled not again. Christ, our elder Brother, has passed over the same road, and walking in His foot-prints we cannot go astray.

But look not for His foot-prints in halls of mirth or places of amusement, so sought after by many of His professed followers; look not for them in church fairs and festivals, theatricals, and gaming-places; you will not find them there.

Christ walked in the way of His Father's commandments, and kept His law; and as we strive to do the same, we need not fear that we are walking in an old Jewish by-path, as some tell us, but in the very foot-prints of the Master. Soon He is coming to take us to Himself. Let us still seek to follow His steps more closely.

MARIETTE CARPENTER.

LOSSES AND GAINS IN CHARACTER-BUILDING.

A WASTED day in the life of a human being is something to be regretted, first, because it is a waste of privilege and power, and, further, because it endangers the right use of other days. In character-building, just as in house-building, every day's work ought to count for good. If the house-builders do one day's work carelessly, dishonestly, or in violation of the architect's plan, the result is liable to be serious, no matter how well the work is done thereafter. An unsound spot in the wall, a beam not properly placed, or any other feature of a misspent working day, will render questionable the soundness and safety of the entire structure, when the strain of use and occupation comes. So the wasted day of one's life may fix a flaw in the character, which will expose that character to grave perils, when certain temptations and trials assail it. As we go through each day, let us think of coming days and make provision for their cares and crosses—for any cares and crosses that may befall—by doing our very best work at character-building. This provision of and provision for the future is entirely consistent with that solemn regard for

personal accountability which impels a Christian believer to live each day as if it might be his last on earth. We want to be sound and secure, come life or come death.—*The Interior.*

RESIST THE BEGINNINGS OF EVIL.

LET none of you deceive yourselves with the notion that you will not be tempted, and terribly tempted, to do wrong, or that, unless you be armed and watchful, you will not be awfully liable to be wounded, even unto death. Sin wounds, and it may be slays us, in two ways. It creeps toward us stealthily; or it crashes out upon us suddenly. It comes with the glide and rustle of the serpent, or with the crouch and bound of the tiger. It comes with the shout and charge of an enemy, or kissing and smiting under the fifth rib, with the smile of some false friend. How often is a man's fall, or a boy's fall, sudden, in a moment—in a sudden flash of fatal anger; in a sudden burst of ruinous temptation. The tempting opportunity always meets sooner or later the susceptible disposition and then

There cometh a mist, and a weeping rain,
And life is never the same again.

And yet, common as this sudden failure is, the other form, of defeat is far more common, in which, when the wakefulness of battle is sunk into deceitful sleep, then in silence

Slowly drawing near
A vapour, heavy, baneful, formless, cold,
Comes creeping on, for many a month and year
Unheeded.

The thought becomes the wish, the wish the act, the act the appetite, the appetite the habit. The evil first draws, then drags, and lastly drives. The sin becomes first pleasing, then frequent, then habitual, then confirmed; then the man is impenitent, then obstinate, and then—ah! my brethren, then comes what comes hereafter. And all this may date, alas! from one day's unwatchfulness, from one hour's disgrace.—*Archdeacon Farrar.*

HOW TO MEET TEMPTATIONS.

TEMPTATIONS never give us notice; can we expect them to do so? The sailor does not expect to have notice of every gale of wind that blows upon him. The soldier in battle does not reckon to have notice of every bullet that is coming his way. By what apparatus could we be kept aware of every advance of the evil one? The very essence of temptation lies in the suddenness of it: we are carried off our feet or ever we are aware. Yet we must not say, because of this, "I cannot help it"; for we ought to be all the more watchful, and live all the nearer to God in prayer. We are bound to stand against a sudden temptation, as much as against a slower mode of attack. We must look to the Lord to be preserved from the arrow which flieth by day, and the pestilence which walketh

in darkness. We are to cry to God for grace, that, let the gusts of temptation come how they may, and when they may, we may always be found in Christ, resting in Him, covered with His Divine power.—*Mr. C. H. Spurgeon.*

PRAYER AND WORK.

THERE is a story of a marble-cutter, with chisel and hammer, working a block of stone into a statue. A preacher who was looking on said, "I wish I could, on hearts of stone, deal such transforming blows!" "Perhaps you might," was the workman's quiet answer, "if, like me, you worked on your knees." We are deeply and unalterably persuaded that the power of prayer is the lacking, if not the lost, power of the Christian ministry of to-day. The work done on the knees is the only work that evinces or effects the transformation which is a supernatural sign that God is with the workman. The Bible, studied on the knees, becomes a new book; the cross, seen from the knees, wears a new halo; the sermon wrought out on the knees, thrills with a new power.—*Dr. A. T. Pierson.*

MARK THIS!

HEAVEN is a prepared place for a prepared people, but the grace of God is prepared for unprepared sinners. You need a Mediator between your souls and God, but you need no mediator between your souls and Christ. Fitness for the presence of the Father you do require; but you may come to Jesus just as you are. The way to heaven may be long, but the way to Christ is but one step of faith. Saints will be and must be fruitful through the Spirit of God, but sinners are wrought upon by the Holy Ghost when they are as yet barren and unfruitful. In a word, there is a reward which is of grace; but before it is gained grace comes to us freely, not of reward at all, but as the free gift of God to the undeserving.—*Word and Work.*

THE year to come will be very much what you make it. You may not be able to control its events, but you can, to a large extent, determine whether those events shall help or hinder you in the way to Heaven. Without your co-operation, the best things will avail you little; with faithfulness in service the most bitter herbs will give forth an agreeable odor, and possess healing virtue.—*Zion's Herald.*

DUTY DONE.

"CANST do little? It's enough;
Do it well, and let it be;
It will count as much as more,
When thy Judge requires it thee.

Little talent well improved,
Little service rightly done—
Be it all thy Master asks,
Brings the victor's palm and crown.
—*Selected.*

The Home.

'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'—Phil. 4:8.

A MOTHER'S CARE.

I do not think that I could bear
My daily weight of women's care,
If it were not for this:
That Jesus seemeth always near,
Unseen, but whispering in my ear
Some tender word of love and cheer,
To fill my soul with bliss!

There are so many trivial cares
That no one knows and no one shares
Too small for me to tell;
Things e'en my husband cannot see,
Nor his dear love uplift from me,
Each hour's unnamed perplexity
That mothers know so well.

The failure of some household scheme,
The ending of some pleasant dream,
Deep hidden in my breast;
The weariness of children's noise,
The yearning for that subtle poise
That turneth duties into joys,
And giveth inner rest.

These secret things, however small,
Are known to Jesus, each and all,
And this thought brings me peace.
I do not need to say one word,
He knows what thought my heart hath stirred,
And by Divine caress my Lord
Makes all its throbbings cease.

And then upon His loving breast
My weary head is laid at rest
In speechless ecstasy!
Until it seemeth all in vain
That care, fatigue, or mortal pain
Should hope to drive me forth again
From such felicity.

—Selected.

HOME TRAINING.

"I DECLARE, Burton has gone and cheated himself," said Mrs. Drake to her sister, as she unrolled and measured a piece of ribbon she had purchased during that morning. "I thought it looked long for three yards, and I only paid him for three, but he has cut four, that's certain."

"Well, you can pay him for the extra yard, when you are that way," said her sister Mary, who lived with her.

"Not I. I shall keep it. He makes plenty out of me in the course of the year," replied Mrs. Drake, as she rolled the ribbon about her fingers and passed out of the room.

It was a surprise to her five-year-old little boy, Charlie, who, though playing unobserved with his toys in the corner of the room, heard every word as distinctly as if his mother had spoken to him. It did not seem to correspond with what she had taught him about truth and honesty. But his faith in his mother was such that for the time he felt she would be sure to do the right thing. Had his aunt uttered any further reproof of her sister's conduct, she might have helped him to feel the wisdom of being honest in trifles. But she was one of those who are more ready to go with the stream than incur any trouble in opposing public opinion, and so she had uncon-

sciously helped to bias the boy's mind in the wrong direction without suspecting it.

A few days after, Charlie heard his mother say, "I did not give up my railway ticket this morning. It will do again."

"How was that?" asked her sister.

"The collector was too busy to notice me, perhaps."

"But why did you not stop and give it him, mamma?" asked Charley.

"Because it was his duty to look after it himself," replied Mrs. Drake, who felt rather uncomfortable at such a question from her little boy, so she added to cover her annoyance, "It will teach him to be more careful in the future."

Charley was silent for a moment, and then said, "But he won't know anything about it, mamma."

"Oh you are too sharp," exclaimed his mother with a laugh. "I was not talking to you about it at all."

"But little pigs have great ears," said Aunt Mary, as she also tried to laugh the impression away.

So the subject was pushed aside, neither the mother or aunt thinking for a moment that the bright and truthful boy they loved so tenderly had received another lesson in dishonesty, never to be forgotten. But so was it.

Not long after, while Charley was again building his house of bricks, he heard the remark, while his mother was counting the money in her hand, "Let me see, one, two, three, four. I gave him a half-sovereign, and the things came to six and sixpence. He has given me sixpence too much change." Then in a tone of satisfaction, she added, "I am sixpence richer than I thought I was."

Aunt Mary smiled, but said nothing; but Charley took it all in, and thought the more when he heard his mother add:—

"I think we will have a cake for tea at—at Brown's expense."

"That's too bad," said Aunt Mary, as she shook her head, and pointed to Charley.

But the words had gone deep down into his nature, and again his perception of right and wrong were obscured and dimmed.

This was seen a short time after, when he came running into the house with an orange in his hand, saying, "Look what I've found."

"Where, my dear?" asked his mother.

"A woman let it fall from her basket. She didn't see it, but I did, and picked it up."

"But why didn't you run after her, and give it to her?" asked Aunt Mary.

"Because I wanted it myself. She dropped it, and I picked it up."

"But you ought to have given it her."

"I don't know where to find her now," said Charley, evasively.

"Then mind and not do it again," added his mother, not feeling satisfied

with his conduct, and yet being a little amused at his cuteness, as she called it to her sister.

In this way his education in crime was begun. His mother's motto, "he cheated himself," became his maxim as he grew older and understood its application more clearly. True, his mother never meant to train him to be mean, selfish, or dishonest, but she sowed the seed by her own conduct. Evil seed must produce evil fruit. "As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined." The real quality of an act lies in the intention. She never realized, however, that the fine lady who keeps the ribbon she is not entitled to, or the change which does not belong to her, though given in error, is as criminal as the thief who steals a coat, or anything else he can, when he has the chance.

She found it out in time, to her sorrow, when she stood, almost broken-hearted, in the police-court, and heard her son, when just budding into manhood, sent to prison for robbing his employer, and while he was thrust into the van and conveyed to gaol, she was taken fainting to her home, to mourn too late her folly and sin in training up her child in the way he should *not* go. Mothers and fathers, ever remember example is more powerful than precept; and if you want your children to be saved from ruin, let your prayer be, "May the words of my mouth and the acts of my life ever be governed by a desire to do what is right and good and true."—*John W. Kirton.*

TRUE BEAUTY.

A WOMAN, famous as one of the most kindly and lovable among leaders of the best society, once said, "If I have been able to accomplish anything in life, it is due to a word spoken to me in the right season when I was a child, by my old teacher. I was the only plain looking, awkward girl in a class of exceptionally pretty ones, and being also dull at my books, became the butt of the school. I fell into a morose, despairing state, gave up study, withdrew into myself, and grew daily more bitter and vindictive."

One day the French teacher, a grey-haired old woman, with keen eyes and a kind smile, found me crying.

"What is the matter, my dear?" she asked.

"O madame, I am so ugly!" I sobbed out. She soothed me, but did not contradict me.

Presently she took me to her room, and after amusing me for some time, said: "I have a present for you," handing me a scaly, coarse lump covered with earth. "It is coarse and brown as you. 'Ugly,' did you say? Very well. We will call it by your name, then. It is you! Now you shall plant it and water it and give it sun for a week or two."

I planted it and watched it carefully; the green leaves came first, and at last the golden Japanese lily, the first I had

ever seen. Madame came to share my delight.

"Ah," she said, significantly, "who would believe so much beauty and fragrance were shut up in that little, rough, ugly thing? But it took heart and came up into the sun."

It was the first time that it ever occurred to me that, in spite of my ugly face, I too might be able to win friends and to make myself beloved in the world.—*Sel.*

TWO GOOD HANDS.

WHEN I was a boy I became especially interested in the subject of inheritances. I was particularly anxious to know what my father's inheritance was; so, one day, after thinking about the matter a good while very seriously, I ventured to ask him. And this was his reply:—

"My inheritance? I will tell you what it was—two good hands, and an honest purpose to make the best use in my power of my hands and of the time God gave me."

Though it is many years since, I can remember distinctly the tone of my father's voice as he spoke, with both hands uplifted to give emphasis to his words.—*Selected.*

A BATTLE OF BUTTERFLIES.

ON the mornings of the 20th and 21st of August last, a pitched battle was fought by two armies of butterflies, between Nojima and Kawasaki-mura, in Japan. The battle was witnessed by a number of country people, as it took place on a narrow road between the two localities mentioned. The fight lasted till noon on the 21st, and the neighbouring fields were covered with the dead bodies of the combatants. The resident population regarded the event as an omen of some national calamity.—*Sel.*

Health and Temperance.

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10 31.

"THE WORKINGMAN'S FRIEND."

THIS is the heading of an advertisement of tobacco, which may be seen prominently posted at London railway stations. The question that arises in our mind is, Wherein is this tobacco such a friend? Let us notice a few points:—

1. One of the most important considerations of the workingman, is his pocket. Here we must confess tobacco seems to be particularly friendly. By consulting Government statistics, we find that between 1801 and 1871 it cost the British public £578,000,000, and 90 per cent. of this amount is said to have come from the working classes. The present yearly expenditure is about £17,000,000. Dividing this among the population it

gives 9s. 6d. to every man, woman, and child. Adult men being about one-fifth of the population the average cost of tobacco for each would be 48s. Thus to secure the services of this friend costs the workingman about 48s., and not all of these smoke. Many people are friendly under such circumstances.

Do you know how much is offered each day at the shrine of this "friend" in England? Only £48,000—that is all. Take that amount of money and you could visit every dark slum in London; you could dive into every damp cellar and up into every cobweb-hung garret, and could bring forth from those haunts of vice, every bread-starved and gospel-starved child, and could feed and clothe and educate that child. This is what could be done if this "friend" were to gracefully retire.

2. Another important thing to the workingman is his health. How does the friend improve that. Listen to what scientists say, who have studied its effects:—

Sir Benjamin Brodie, Bart., F.R.S.: "From the best observations which I have been able to make on the subject, I am led to believe that there are very few who do not suffer harm from it, to a greater or less extent."

Dr. Conquest observes: "In my now lengthened medical life, I have often seen the worst and most intractable forms of indigestion, and the most distressing and fatal cases of stomach and liver diseases traceable to snuff and tobacco."

Here are some more things which this "friend" does for the workingman. It will weaken his muscles, shatter his nerves, and destroy his appetite. It will ruin his voice and benumb his mind. It will make him an abject slave to a degrading habit. It will soil his mouth, destroy his teeth, befoul his breath. It will lead him to drink, by creating a thirst for it. It will make him love his pipe apparently more than he loves his wife or child. It will make him spend more in a lifetime, than would buy him a fine farm in the colonies, or send his son to college. In fact it will work him all manner of evil and no possible good, and the best thing he can do is to let this "friend" alone. Give it up.

But, pleads the tobacco user, it has come to be more than food and drink to me. In this plea there certainly is more truth than poetry. A Parliamentary report on adulteration sets forth the following list of ingredients found in a piece of tobacco: "Sugar, alum, lime, flour, meat, rhubarb leaves, chromate of lead, peat, moss, molasses, burdock leaves, lamp-black, gum, red dye, a black dye composed of vegetables, red licorice, scraps of newspapers, cinnamon stick, cabbage leaves, and brown paper."

This, an American paper says, is convincing not only that it is food and drink, but house and land, paint shop

and literature, with drugs, condiments, and chemicals thrown in *ad lib.* But, as for us, we prefer to take them separately. FRANK HOPE.

STERILIZED MILK.

THIS is the scientific name for milk which has been rendered germ-free by boiling. Cow's milk should never be fed to young children without being first boiled. Although free from germs when it first comes from a healthy cow, milk very quickly becomes infected with myriads of these enemies of life to which thousands of infants annually succumb. By boiling, these are killed, and the alimentary canal is thus kept free from the poisons which they generate in the process of growth, for which they find the most favourable conditions in the stomach and intestines.

To sterilize milk, place it when fresh from the cow in soda-water bottles, using as many bottles as necessary for the quantity of milk to be sterilized. Fill each bottle to within an inch of the top. Boil for ten minutes in a steamer or boiler. Stop the bottles tightly with a rubber cork, and boil for twenty minutes more. See that the corks are tight and well secured. Care must also be taken that the bottles and the corks used for the purpose are scrupulously clean, and to insure this they must be not only well washed, but should be boiled for half an hour before using.

By the adoption of this precaution, thousands of lives would be saved annually. Boiled milk is not only free from germs, and so not likely to sour, but it is more easily digested, as it does not form large curds in the stomach as does raw milk. To render milk a perfect food for a young child, it should be enriched by the addition of cream in the proportion of an ounce of cream to a gill of milk. This should be diluted, of course, with the proper amount of water to adapt it to the age of the child; say with an equal quantity of water for a very young child, and half as much water for a child between one and two years of age. Such food is as digestible as mother's milk, and is no more likely to cause disease.

Milk treated in the manner above described, and well bottled, will keep perfectly sweet for two or three months or longer. Sterilized milk is not only good for infants, but is a boon for travellers on a journey.—*Good Health.*

TOWN LIFE AND DISEASE.

THE fact that the prevailing epidemic of influenza prevails in towns, serves to remind us of the insanitary influences of town life. There are sanitary influences as well; there is shelter from cold winds and tempests often disastrous to the ill-nourished in the country, and food is nearer at hand to the multitude. The prevalence of germs, bad odours, and other self-evident sources of grave disease

in cities is well known. It is rather the less constantly recognized unhealthy habits of townfolk that are mostly at fault when the fairly fed and well-to-do are smitten with colds and with influenza. Diet is abundant, but taken irregularly. The townsman, as a rule, is not a good breakfast eater, and he dines too late and too heavily. He is much addicted to taking alcohol, tea, or coffee between meals. He is a late riser and goes to bed late, so that a large fraction of his "day" is spent at night in artificial light. He seldom takes enough exercise, for the "constitutional" is intolerable to men of a certain temperament, and others have no time for that form of physical exertion. A hurried race to catch a train or omnibus is not hygienic. He is gregarious, and his natural flocking instinct makes him overlook, both in his pleasures as well as his duties, the fact that he works or plays with his fellow man in ill-ventilated or over-crowded rooms. Above all, he is out of training, as he finds out during the first days of a holiday. Many explorers and fighting men have noted that they catch cold readily in towns after bearing cold and damp with impunity in the country. The cockney tourist, on the other hand, is often astonished to discover how he can bear a wetting or a draught at the seaside or in the fields. All the surroundings of the townsman predispose him to attacks of disease like the present epidemic. He can at least rise early and take exercise, and will soon find that such habits will be to his advantage.—*British Medical Journal*.

IS LONDON HEALTHY?

IS LONDON, despite its low death-rate, a really healthy town? Dr. Williams-Freeman has published some figures which may give pause to our complacency. He seems to think that London has obtained a fictitious reputation for healthiness by reason of the large proportion—37 per cent.—of the population which is country-born, and by the constant removals to the country of persons whose health has broken down under the stress of metropolitan life. Dr. Freeman's figures are certainly disquieting. The average mortality per thousand of children under fifteen in the Registrar-General's 101 "selected healthy districts" is 196; in the suburbs of London it is 273; in Urban London, 308; and in the Strand district, 422. Such figures as these may well shake the old belief in the healthiness of London, especially when we remember that the Cockney whose father, mother, and four grandparents were all born and bred in the capital, has not yet been discovered. There are some, indeed, who have come to the conclusion that in London, as in the tropics, the race will not perpetuate itself. This is not owing to the natural climate of the town, but to an acquired and vitiated climate, the result of a vast

aggregation of humanity in one spot, and that not the healthiest or most bracing spot in England. It is a heavy penalty which London pays for being the greatest city in history.—*St. James' Gazette*.

A MORAL FROM THE VINE.

AMONG the pleasant features of the wayside in these Tuscan valleys, were always the vines clambering on the fig trees or other sturdy trunks.

Nothing can be more picturesque than an old grape vine with almost no trunk of its own clinging fast around its supporting tree. Nor does the picture lack its moral. You might turn it to more than one grave purpose as you see how the knotted serpentine growth imprisoned within its strong embrace the friend that had supported it under infancy, and how it converted the sturdier tree entirely to its own selfish ends, extending its innumerable arms on every bough, and permitting hardly a leaf to sprout except its own. Here is an emblem of the remorseless grip which the habit of vinous enjoyment lays upon its victim, possessing him almost wholly and letting him live no life but such as it bestows.—*Nathaniel Hawthorne*.

IN HIS ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH YEAR.

ELGIN boasts of a remarkable centenarian. He has entered on his 106th year. He is a carter named Peter Laing, and is in excellent health, and still follows his ordinary occupation, all his faculties being unimpaired. He is come of a family celebrated for longevity. His father died when 109 years of age, and his great grandfather, who fought under the standard of the Duke of Cumberland at the battle of Culloden, died at the remarkable age of 133. Peter lived in the time of Burns, and his memory is so retentive that he can recall an episode in the life of the Scotch National Bard. He was over sixty before he was married, and since his wife died, over thirty years ago, he has been his own cook and house-keeper. He has a most robust constitution, his diet being brose, porridge, potatoes, and salt herrings; and he confidently declares that a change in the shape of dainties would be to him worse than drugs.

POISONOUS DRAPERY.

CRETONNES of the cheaper grades which are often used in decorating rooms, are often more dangerous from arsenical poisons than green wall-paper. Out of forty-four samples recently examined in London, none were free from arsenic, three had only faint traces of it, twenty-one had larger traces, eleven were classed as very bad, and nine were called "distinctly dangerous." One specimen yielded nineteen and one-half grains of white arsenic to the square yard. The greens

and blues were the least harmful, while reds, browns, and blacks were heavily loaded with poisons.—*Sel.*

DR. HUMPHREY publishes figures to show that while the Temperance movement is only about sixty years old, twenty per cent. of the centenarians who have died of late were practically life abstainers. Dr. Humphrey has also inquired into the habits of 824 persons between eighty and 100 years of age. Of these thirty-seven per cent. took no alcohol, and he comes to the conclusion that "that which most contributes to the prolongation of life is temperance in eating and drinking, and, above all, in alcoholic drinking."

THE drink bill of New South Wales in 1888 reached £4,777,168 for about a million of people, many of them children and abstainers. The same sum was spent on intoxicants as on bread, flour, vegetables, and fruit, or three times the money spent on sugar, tea, and coffee; or seven times the money spent on state education. The Sydney *Presbyterian* is driven by these figures to the conclusion that the colony is bankrupt in common sense.

WATER is sometimes boiled before being drunk in the family circle, but to the Sanitary Board of Houghton-le-Spring belongs the distinction of having boiled the water for a whole village before allowing it to enter the reservoir. Having traced an outbreak of enteric fever to the great Herrington well, they erected engine-boilers near it, and boiled every drop of water that was taken out.

"THE real truth is," says the *Star*, "that men who have much brain work to do should not drink stimulants at all. It is pretty sure to leave them less fit for work in the morning. Among politicians, the man who drinks wine freely is now almost unknown; and there are a great number who do not touch stimulants at all."

It seems that wherever the European goes he must carry with him the fatal vice of drink. It is not pleasant to be told that the state of Zanzibar town after dark is dangerous, owing to the number of drinking shops, and that the great offenders against the peace are drunken Europeans.

40,000,000 bushels of grain, each year, are used in the manufacture of alcoholic liquors. This would make 600,000,000 four-pound loaves of bread.

THE consumption of tobacco throughout France is steadily rising, having gone up from 1½ lb. per head in 1878 to nearly 2 lb. in 1889.

BELGIUM has 5,500 schools, but 136,000 drink shops. For public instruction it spends 15 million francs, for intoxicating liquor 135 million.

THE PRESENT TRUTH.

"And be Established in the Present Truth."—Bible.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 13, 1890.

HAVE WE REACHED THE LAST DAYS?

IN the last paper we called attention to two prominent signs our Lord gave, that were to mark His second advent—the darkening of the sun and the moon. These met their fulfilment, as we have shown, in the memorable dark day and night of May 19, 1780. Of the next great sign we read: "And the stars shall fall from heaven." Matt. 24:29. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars." Luke 21:25. "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Rev. 6:13. The following graphic account of the falling stars of Nov. 13, 1833, written by the Hon. Henry Dana Ward, was published in the *Journal of Commerce* two days later:—

"At the cry, 'look out of the window,' I sprang from a deep sleep, and with wonder saw the east lighted up with the dawn and meteors. The zenith, the north, and the west also, showed the falling stars, in the very image of one thing, and only one, I ever heard of. I called to my wife to behold; and while robing, she exclaimed, 'See how the stars fall!' I replied, 'That is the wonder!' and we felt in our hearts that it was a sign of the last days. For, truly, 'the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Rev. 6:13. This language of the prophet has always been received as metaphorical. Yesterday, it was literally fulfilled. The ancients understood by *aster*, in Greek, and *stella*, in Latin, the smaller lights of heaven. The refinement of modern astronomy has made the distinction between stars of heaven and meteors of heaven. Therefore, the idea of the prophet, as it is expressed in the original Greek, was literally fulfilled in the phenomenon of yesterday.

"And how did they fall? Neither myself, nor one of the family, heard any report; and were I to hunt through nature for a simile, I could not find one so apt to illustrate the appearance of the heavens, as that which St. John uses in the prophecy before quoted.

"The stars fell 'even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Here is the exactness of the prophet.

"The falling stars did not come as if from several trees shaken, but from one; those which appeared in the east, fell toward the east; those which appeared in the north, fell toward the north; those which appeared in the west, fell toward the west; and those which appeared in the south (for I went out of my residence into the park), fell toward the south. And they fell not as the ripe fruit falls. Far from it; but they flew, they were cast, like the unripe fruit which at first

refuses to leave the branch; and when, under a violent pressure, it does break its hold, it flies swiftly, straight off, descending; and in the multitude falling, some cross the track of others, as they are thrown with more or less force; but each one falls on its own side of the tree. Such was the appearance of the above phenomenon to the inmates of my house."

In commenting upon this great meteoric shower, Prof. Olmstead, of Yale College, says:—

"The extent of the shower of 1833 was such as to cover *no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface*, from the middle of the Atlantic on the east, to the Pacific on the west; and from the northern coast of South America, to undefined regions among the British possessions on the north, the exhibition was visible, and everywhere presented nearly the same appearance. The meteors did not fly at random over all parts of the sky, but appeared to emanate from a point in the constellation Leo, near a star called Gamma Leonis, in the bend of the sickle. This is no longer to be regarded as a terrestrial, but as a celestial, phenomenon; and shooting stars are now to be no more viewed as casual productions of the upper regions of the atmosphere, but as visitants from other worlds, or from the planetary voids."

The *Journal of Commerce*, from which we have already quoted, informs us that "within three hundred miles of Liverpool, the phenomenon was as splendid as elsewhere." Other showers of meteors have been seen, but none have equalled this one, either in extent or grandeur. By the events we have noticed, the minds of the beholders were impressed with the idea that they were gazing upon striking tokens, designed to mark the near coming of the Son of God.

The parable of the fig tree which our Saviour gave in connection with the signs already noticed, was designed to inspire faith in the hearts of those who would consider the reasons for the soon coming of Christ. The reader should carefully note the forcible language employed in the terms of this parable: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it [margin, He] is near, even at the doors."

In response to those questions, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" after pointing out events that were to transpire down through the centuries, our Lord informs His disciples that when the end should approach there would be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars, and that when these signs should begin to come to pass, redemption would be drawing near; but when they should all have taken place, then, just as approaching summer would be known to be near by the appearance of nature as indicated in

the budding fig tree, even so would the people of God know that the coming of Christ was near, even at the doors, when they could point to events which unmistakably mark the fulfilment of the signs which the Saviour gave.

These signs are in the past. They came in the manner and at the time to meet the requirements of the testimony of the Divine Word. The Lord then states the sad and solemn truth that "as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:37. The character of those days and the condition of the people He describes in the next verse. "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." The Lord here draws a vivid picture of the last days. Eating and drinking, seeking after pleasure and worldly enjoyment, having little faith in the testimony of God relative to the awful doom of a Godless world,—these are the characteristics of the people of the last days. In Noah's time the people were given to feasting and drinking, hilarity and pleasure. They scoffed at and ridiculed the testimony of God through Noah concerning the coming flood. That preacher of righteousness warned them, but they disregarded the warning. They might have known the flood was coming had they received the light which God in mercy had given, but they closed their eyes to its Divine rays, "and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." And the Son of God has solemnly declared that "even thus shall it be when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:26-30.

All did not know back there, "even so" shall it be at the end; all had a warning of approaching dangers back there, even so will it be in the last days; some had light and understanding there, and escaped the judgments which came, even so will it be at the end. "Ye brethren," says Paul, "are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." "The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." Dan. 12:10. Such will have gathered up the rays of light which God in mercy has given, and, walking in that light, will be prepared for the day of God.

D. A. R.

CALL OF ABRAHAM.

Soon after the flood, as men began to multiply upon the earth, they again forsook the Lord, and gave themselves fully over to the service of Satan. In a very short time, we find them so filled with

rebellious pride that they began to build a city and a tower, thinking that thereby they could protect themselves against any judgments that God might bring upon them. Gen. 11:1-9. This impious attempt was brought to nothing, and the people were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth, yet they did not forsake the service of Satan. Within about four hundred years after the flood, the people of the earth were once more sunken in idolatry and superstition.

At that time the Lord came to Abraham, one of the descendants of Shem, and said to him: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 12:1-3.

The Lord saw in Abraham a willingness to serve him, although all his people were idolaters (Josh. 24:2); and he separated him from them, so that he might not become contaminated by them, but might become the father of a people who should be fit to inherit the earth. If we closely examine this promise, we shall find that it comprehends a great deal. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed," means nothing less than the possession of the whole earth by the descendants of Abraham. But this will appear more clearly as we pass on.

In Gen. 13:14-17 we find the promise renewed more in detail, in these words: "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

Here we have strong proof that the promise to Abraham included nothing less than the whole earth; for his seed were to be multiplied as the dust of the earth. The length and the breadth of the land was to be theirs.

At that time Abraham had no child, and in all human probability could never have one. "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with

him, saying, As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." Gen. 17:1-5.

Again, when God was about to destroy Sodom, he said: "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment: that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him." Gen. 18:17-19.

This gives us to understand that the promise was made to Abraham with so much positiveness, because the Lord knew that he would keep His commandments, and that he would command his children and his household after him to do likewise. From this also we may learn that the promise to his seed was only to those who should serve the Lord.

Once more we find the promise renewed when Abraham had shown his faith in God by proceeding to offer up his only son, through whom the promise was to be fulfilled. The Lord then called to Abraham, and said: "By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice." Gen. 22:16-18.

In the expression, "thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies," we have the promise of conquest. Bear this in mind, while we consider a few other points. In Gal. 3:13-17, we have a scripture that has an intimate connection with the subject under consideration: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law . . . cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."

From the above scripture we learn that the seed to whom the promise was made is Christ,—the same that was promised at the time of the fall.

Now in connection with the promise to Abraham that his seed should possess the gate of his enemies, read the following words of God the Father to His Son Jesus Christ: "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psa. 2:7-9.

When this shall have been accomplished, then "the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." For the meek are they who have come to Christ and have learned of Him, yielding themselves to Him to be His servants; and Paul says, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. From this, together with the statement that "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham, and the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:7, 8), we may conclude, even at this stage of our study, that the promise to Abraham, and to his seed, was nothing less than the promise of the earth to all who, through faith in Christ, should gain the victory over sin. And this is further confirmed by Paul's statement that "the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. 4:13.

In the twenty-sixth chapter of Genesis we find the promise once more repeated, this time to Isaac; and in the twenty-eighth chapter it is renewed to Jacob.

E. J. W.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S WORD.

At the beginning of each new year it is customary for many to begin anew the reading of the Scriptures; for the benefit of such, and others who we hope may be induced to begin, we offer a few thoughts for consideration.

As men realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin they will value the Word of God, for the Word only reveals to man the means by which he can be saved from sin. When men do not see the awful tendency and the terrible consequences of sin, they cannot properly appreciate the means which God has devised to save them from it. Consequently they cannot appreciate the book which points out to them the only method of salvation.

Sin is defined as being the transgression

of the law of God. The law of God reveals those principles of righteousness which show the character of God. Sin, therefore, is a rebellion against God's government. It is the carnal mind which is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Some men boast greatly of possessing the Spirit of God, but at the same time they reject some of the plain teachings of His Word. But the Word is only a product of the Spirit. David says, "Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name." And Job says, "I have esteemed Thy Word more than my necessary food." God is very jealous for what He has spoken. When the Saviour healed one "possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and He healed him in so much that the blind both spake and saw," it was a fulfilment of the Word of God. It was an unanswerable argument that Christ was the Son of God. Then said the Pharisees: "This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." In reply, the Saviour said: "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." This He said "because they said He hath an unclean spirit." See Matt. 12:22-32. Also Mark 3:22-30.

To deliberately attribute the works of God which are the fulfilments of His Word, to the works of the devil, is a sin against the Holy Ghost. Nothing can be more pleasing to God than for men to place a proper estimate on the Word that He has spoken. No study can be more important than the study of the Word which God has given to mankind.

Were many asked why they believed the Bible, the answer oftentimes would be, Because my parents did. While this may be a sufficient and satisfactory answer for a child to make, it cannot be for one who has passed the age of childhood, and reached a position of personal responsibility in moral and religious matters. Nothing should ever take the place of that personal confidence in God, by a belief in the Bible, which comes only in an individual experience. To say we believe the Bible because our parents do, or that we believe in some particular doctrine because our minister does, may be said with equal sincerity by a believer in any other sacred book, as for instance the Chinese, the Hindoo, or the Mahometan scriptures. Such a ground of confidence is unworthy of Protestant Christianity, which emphatically calls for a reason for the hope that is in us, for the statement of a belief which is our own. Even the

prophets could not always perfectly comprehend the deepest meanings of the truths which they announced, although they studied to penetrate into their fullest significance. They had to rest content with the assurance that it was not altogether for their sakes that the Holy Ghost came to them, but for the sake of those who were to live after them, that they were inspired to announce events which a long future would disclose. The apostle Peter on this point says: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." 1 Pet. 1:10-12. It will be noticed that even angels seek with longing desire to know these things which are the subject of the prophetic messages.

We have, therefore, in the Word of God a priceless treasure, but it becomes to us a dead letter unless we daily study it with prayerful meditation. It becomes the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth; and then to walk in the light and to encourage others to follow his example. David says, "The entrance of Thy word giveth light. It giveth understanding." The study of the Bible will ennoble every thought, feeling and aspiration, as no other study can. It will give stability of purpose, patience, courage and fortitude. It refines the character and sanctifies the soul. An effort to grasp the great truths of revelation imparts freshness and vigour to all the faculties, it expands the mind, sharpens the perceptions, and ripens the judgment. An earnest, reverent study of the Scriptures, brings the mind in direct contact with the Divine mind. Were it properly instilled into the minds of the youth, it would give to the world men of stronger and more active intellects, as well as of nobler principles, than has ever resulted from the ablest training that human philosophy affords. It was with the Word of God that the Saviour met and vanquished Satan at his every direct attack. He who commits the Word to memory carries with him a weapon that is sure in its effect on the enemy.

But how we should study the Bible in order to get from it its greatest benefits is an important question.

1. We should realize that we cannot obtain an understanding of the Scripture by simple study, or by strength of intellect. Therefore our first duty is to begin with

prayer. Entreat the Lord to deign to grant you in His mercy to rightly understand His Word. There is no other interpreter of the Word but the Author of the Word Himself. Even as He hath said, "They shall all be taught of God." Hope nothing simply from study and the strength of intellect, but put your trust in God and in the guidance of His Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood, or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension. It is the office of heavenly angels to prepare the heart to so comprehend God's Word, that we shall be charmed with its beauty, admonished by its warnings, or animated and strengthened by its promises. We should make the Psalmist's petition our own: 'Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.'

"Temptations often appear irresistible because through the neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible the tempted one cannot readily remember God's promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons. But angels are round about those who are willing to be taught in Divine things, and in the time of great necessity, they will bring to their minds the very truths which are needed. Thus when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him."

Jesus also promised His disciples: "The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom My Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." But the teachings of Christ must have been previously stored in the mind, in order for the Spirit of God to bring them to our remembrance in the time of peril. David said: "Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee."

2. We should humble our hearts before God, and oftentimes with fasting and prayer, that we may meditate upon His Word. "We should exert all the powers of the mind in the study of the Scriptures, and should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God; yet we must not forget that the docility and submission of a child is the true spirit of the learner. Scriptural difficulties can never be mastered by the same methods that are employed in grappling with philosophical problems. We should not engage in the study of the Bible with that self-reliance with which so many enter the domains of science, but with a prayerful dependence upon God, and a sincere desire to learn His Will." We should open the Bible with reverence, it is the Word of the Most High; with gratitude, it is the charter of liberty and peace; with humility, for what are we that God should be

mindful of us? with affection, for it is the language of our Heavenly Father; and with prayer, for how can we understand unless we be taught? We should try to recognize the presence, and to hear the voice of God addressing us individually, for unless we make it our own it cannot properly affect us.

3. Time should be taken each day to read the Scriptures by course. It should be a careful and prayerful reading, shut away from worldly care. We should weigh every expression and oftentimes stop to meditate upon them that the Spirit of God may impress the mind with the true thought. Oftentimes it will be found that many expressions will emit special light that we have never seen before, which will give food for thought during the entire day. We would not recommend that in reading by course we stop and bring other parallel texts into bearing upon the question, which, although they might give more light, might at the same time tend to destroy the impression made by the particular verse that dawned so brightly on the mind.

4. Time should also be taken to study the Word by subjects, bringing forth, and laying side by side what the different inspired writers have said upon the same subject. The period in which the Word was written covers about 2,000 years. And yet the Word itself reaches from creation to the close of the seven thousand years when man enters on the future state. About forty writers have taken part in giving the Word to mankind; and almost every one of them has something to say upon every subject pertaining to the salvation of man. Therefore the truth will be found by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, here a little and there a little, as no one writer tells all that is revealed on any one particular subject. When studying the Scriptures those texts which emitted such light while reading by course, will often come to the mind, and the memory will call them up. It is in this manner that the memory may be strengthened, and the mind become familiar with the sacred volume.

We are aware that it will be argued by many that they have no time, that they cannot thus study the Word of God. We can only say to this that we have twenty-four hours each day to live, and that the most important thing in life is the transforming of the character that it may be fitted to live in an eternal hereafter. Therefore time should be taken from our labour or our sleeping hours, if not more than one hour each day.

The Bible was given for common people, as well as for individuals of education and giant intellect. We are to answer for ourselves before God in the day of Judgment. We should therefore know for ourselves what is truth, and seek to

conform our lives to the same, as much as in us lies, with the Divine help. We should simply take the Bible as it reads. If there were no false teachers to confuse the mind, or to mislead it, and if individuals would read and study for themselves, what a work would be accomplished to bring into the fold of Christ thousands and thousands who are now wandering in error. Trying times are before us. Perplexities and trials are thickening on every hand. Everything will be shaken that can be shaken, and that which cannot be shaken will remain for ever. Each individual's soul will be tested to see if faith is built upon the rock. An abstract faith in Christ, without an understanding of His revealed Word and a special interest in it, will save no one; for it is the Word that reveals Christ, and teaches us how we can have a saving faith in Him.

S. N. H.

BIBLE ELECTION.

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." 2 Pet. 1:10.

"ELECTION" comes from "elect," which signifies to choose. "Give diligence to make your calling and choosing sure," is what the text would read to substitute the definition for the word. Leaving for the present just what is the meaning of the above text, we can certainly conclude that election is a Bible doctrine.

It is not proposed in these articles to enter into an exhaustive examination of the subject, nor to notice every Scripture text having a bearing upon the subject. We propose to examine in the light of Scripture the strongest and most striking passages upon the doctrine, and draw therefrom, in connection with other passages, a key to the understanding of the whole.

But right here we would say that our object of inquiry does not include special election to some particular work. The election which we propose to examine is election which pertains to permanent character and eternal life. Examples of special election are frequent in both Old and New Testaments. For instance: Abraham was chosen as the one through whom the promised Seed should come. This did not mean, however, that all the rest of the world were rejected. Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. It was necessary to choose between them as to which one should be the progenitor of Christ. Isaac was chosen. Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau; Jacob was chosen. Jacob had twelve sons. Judah was chosen. But this choice did not mean that the eleven unchosen ones were rejected of God, or that Judah was elected to eternal life. Judah was honoured of God in the choice; he was elected for a special purpose. This election did not

eternally save him, and did not eternally reject others. It was a special election for a special purpose. So Jeremiah and Cyrus were chosen before they were born as instruments of God in carrying forward His work, the one chosen for a prophet (Jer. 1:5), the other as a deliverer of God's people (Isa. 45:1-4); but this election was to their work and office, not to eternal life. Many other examples might be cited, but these are sufficient. It is election to eternal life which we more especially wish to consider. The Arminians have held to conditional salvation, and have endeavoured to harmonize their views of the free and resistible grace of God with those texts which speak of election. On the other hand, Calvinists have insisted on the doctrine of unconditional election, and have endeavoured to harmonize their teaching with the texts which speak of God's free grace. Their theory may be given in their own words, from the Presbyterian (Westminster) "Confession of Faith," as follows:—

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and some angels are predestinated to everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

"These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

1. Now it is true that the Bible does teach election and predestination from the beginning. A few expressions will make this clear:—

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Pet. 1:2); "shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24:24); "according as He [God] hath chosen us in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world;" "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself;" "in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated" (Eph. 1:4, 5, 11); "because God hath from the beginning chosen you" (2 Thess. 2:13); "whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 17:8).

The above are the strongest expressions which can be found in the Word of God. The last one implies that some names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. From such plain and unequivocal texts, it is certain that the Bible teaches election. One can safely take on this point as strong ground as the most ultra-Calvinist.

2. It is true that the Bible teaches the doctrine of free and universal grace, as the following passages show:—

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Isa. 45:22. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.

And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And *whosoever will*, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. For *whosoever* shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. 10:13.

Certainly, nothing could be more plainly and positively declared than that salvation is free to all who will accept it. God offers it to all alike; for He is "no respecter of persons." He does not offer that which is impossible; He does not tantalize His creatures by impossible invitations. His commands are to all, His promises are to all. Every command is an implied promise that God will give power to perform the duty.

3. It is true that the Bible teaches free-will, or the power of choice. One or two passages will be sufficient to show this:—

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore *choose* life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Deut. 30:19. "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." Prov. 1:29. "I also will *choose* their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and *chose* that in which I delighted not." Isa. 66:4.

God has thrown around every responsible individual on the face of the earth a circle sacred to that individual alone, which even Deity will not enter in order to compel choice or obedience. God will warn and entreat; He will surround with heavenly influences, that He may draw the soul to Himself; but He will not compel; He will not destroy man's free choice, or free-will. This awful, solemn prerogative of choosing between the issues of eternity rests with man.

Here, then, we have these three great truths over which there has been such conflict through the centuries past, namely, election from the beginning, free salvation freely and impartially offered to all, and man's absolute free-will. Each and all are taught in the Word of God; that Word is truth, and therefore is consistent with itself. These doctrines agree with each other and the other parts of the Word of God, each adding strength and beauty to the others. What is the doctrine of Bible election? This we will endeavour to answer in the future.

M. C. W.

A GENTILE SPEAKS.

A LETTER has recently been received, in which the writer said, "Show me where a Gentile is commanded to keep the Sabbath, and I will keep it." Our friend thus puts himself down as a Gentile; he claims the title, and he wants a command addressed to that class as such, as he evidently intends to remain a Gentile.

We have to inform him that if he persists in remaining a Gentile, it will make very little difference with him whether he keeps the Sabbath or not. Paul describes his condition in Eph. 2:11, 12: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

If you are a Gentile, such is your condition; and without Christ, without God in the world, and having no hope, what matters it whether you keep the Sabbath or not? The first thing for you to do is to get out of this condition, and that speedily. Leave your Gentile citizenship, and join yourself to the "commonwealth of Israel;" become an "Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile," John 1:47, a "Jew inwardly," Rom. 2:29, a child "of promise" "counted for the seed," Rom. 9:7, 8, a member of the body of Christ, and so "Abraham's seed" and an "heir according to the promise," Gal. 3:29, an ingrafted branch into the stock of the tame olive, Rom. 11:17-24. Then you will be no longer a Gentile, but a member of the commonwealth of Israel.

Coming to this position, you will be no longer at a loss for a commandment for the Sabbath; and more than that, you will be at no loss for a disposition to keep it; for the carnal mind, which is not subject to the law, will have given place to the spiritual mind, which delights in it, and you will esteem the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord and honourable.

But to return, the quotation given above reveals the radical misapprehension that exists in many minds. Why should any one take so superficial a view of this subject as to suppose that because God, for the time being, made the descendants of Abraham the depositaries of His law, it thereby became the property of that people alone, binding upon no one else? We might with more propriety say that God was their God alone; for He styles Himself "the God of Israel," and says that He brought them out of Egypt "to be their God;" but He never says that He gave the law to be their law.

With just as much consistency one might say, "Show me where a Gentile is commanded not to steal, and I will not steal." The command for this and for the Sabbath also, is found in the decalogue, binding on all the world, whatever their name or nation. See also the promise to the sons of the stranger, in the last days, who will keep the Sabbath. Isa. 56:6. But they must "join themselves unto the Lord," to become par-

takers of the promises. This is the testimony of the Scriptures everywhere. If a man would have Christ and God, and a good hope, and a share in the promises, he must cease to be a Gentile, and join himself to Israel. U. S.

The Watch Tower.

"Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night. The morning cometh, and also the night; if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."—Isa. 21:11, 12.

UNHEEDED LESSONS.

WHEN the Lord sends forth the warning of the approach of the great and notable day of the Lord, His exhortation is, "Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Those great calamities which the Saviour said would mark the days of His coming—"famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places"—are exactly calculated to startle the world from its indifference, and teach it the terrible nature of sin and the curse which are devouring the earth, only restrained by God's merciful hand in His desire that all should come to repentance. "When Thy judgments are in the earth," says Isaiah, "the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Yet how sadly true it is, as the prophet adds, "Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness."

Thus it is that the judgments of God increasing in the earth to-day, fulfilling the Divine prophecies, fail to impress the world at large with the lesson which Christ taught through those who had witnessed the fall of calamities upon others, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The *Spectator* recently had occasion to make some observations bearing upon this point. "Of earthquakes," it says, we have almost ceased to think, fire is a terrible misfortune for individuals and insurance offices, and plagues are 'abnormal increases of average mortality.'"

Indeed, there is a tendency on such subjects toward a rather irrational optimism. There is nothing that we know of in the discoveries of modern science, or in the recorded history of God's dealings with men, to demonstrate the impossibility of a country being now ruined by earthquake, or a great island being swept by a sea-wave, or a civilized capital being reduced to ashes, or a nation perishing of famine, or a continent losing half its population in some burst of a deadly epidemic. Had the Krakatoa eruption burst out in Naples or Aetna or Lisbon, or anywhere else on the European earthquake belt, a country might have been ruined for a generation. A destructive sea-wave might pass over Ireland as well as over Deccan Shabazpore, where in 1866 a whole population, half a million of souls, was drowned in a quarter of an hour. Chicago was burned to the ground in 1871, and two-thirds of its population rendered homeless. The famine in the two Shans, in China, killed out a population three times that of Scotland, or a third of that of Italy, and epidemics have within this

century desolated whole provinces of Turkey, and thrown back the progress of territories as large as many countries. Suppose it is true that this "influenza" comes from some "poisoned condition of the atmosphere," and that such poison were slightly intensified in its action, half Europe might perish in a month, and the whole relation of the white man to the world be suddenly changed by the exhaustion of his energy in a recuperative effort.

Yet, as the *Spectator* says, "there is no new guarantee against grand calamities, either in thought about the nature of things or in reverence for the Divine will." On the contrary, as we have noticed, there is the guarantee that what has been experienced here and there is but the beginning of troubles, amid which God's truth is promised as the only shield and buckler. According to the journal from which we quote, faith in this promise is not the cause of this feeling of security in the general world. "We wish," it says, "we could assign the diminution of fear to the increase of reliant faith; but all, or nearly all, the intellectual symptoms around us are opposed, except as regards the very few, to that satisfactory explanation."

The true explanation is to be found in the statement of Christ that these days were to be as the days before the flood, the same intoxication of worldliness, and recklessness of the importance and end of life, causing men to disregard warnings of coming judgments, and to allow themselves to be lulled into feelings of carnal security. It was this monstrous infatuation of worldly pleasure which, not long ago, made possible a second Johnstown disaster, through a panic in a theatre improvised amidst the ruins of their homes for the entertainment of the survivors of that terrible flood.

W. A. S.

THE "BLACK CHRONICLE."

THE Pope is likely to drop the "outrage" of the Bruno celebration, which has furnished the text for many lamentations and appeals, in following up more recent exhibitions of the anti-Vaticinal feelings which find vent now that the Papacy has not power to serve its enemies as it served Giordano Bruno in 1600. A new institution now flourishing in the very shadow of the Vatican is a daily paper called the *Cronaca Nera*, or the Black Chronicle, which professes to champion the cause of the lower clergy, and expose the corruptions of high ecclesiastics. An evening paper gives the following translation from its programme:—

The *Cronaca Nera* will, without offending religious sentiment, give battle to the potencies of the higher clergy, unmasking their vices and crimes. We shall then see who those are who, not contented with waging unrelenting war against their own fatherland, calling on foreign arms to injure it, pitilessly persecute the lower clergy, and defy, with unheard-of provocations, the discontent which insinuates itself everywhere in their ranks.

Under the heading "Types and Figures," we shall sketch various cardinals, bishops, canons, etc., concerning whose lives, by no means immaculate, ecclesiastics will themselves furnish authentic particulars of exceptional interest. Under the heading "Cronachetta Nera" we shall collect the complaints and protests which reach us from the pariahs of the clergy, and the information and revelations which they send us.

Although the Vatican has not so much cause for fear from this enterprise as from the Bible societies which have sprung up in Rome since the Italian troops let in a little light and liberty through the breach near the Porta Pia, the new paper has been met with a tempest of abuse. But it is said to have a circulation of 38,000 copies, and the Government looks kindly upon it. It is too much to hope, perhaps, that it will be conducted on lines sufficiently elevated to render great service to Protestantism, but it is interesting as a manifestation of a spirit of free inquiry and protest which may yet lead many Romanists into the light of Protestant truth.

W. A. S.

ITALY AND THE VATICAN.

THE following paragraph from an Italian correspondent of the *Methodist Recorder*, will be read with interest in connection with the article in another department, "The 1260 Years of Papal Supremacy." After mentioning several incidents calculated to remind the Vatican that the Government proposes to allow no interference from that quarter in affairs of State, the writer says:—

Still more interesting, from a historic point of view and in its consequences, has been the recent action of the Ministry with regard to a refractory prelate. Bishop Luigi Pellegrini, a rabid reactionary, was in the enjoyment of certain rich benefices in the South of Italy. But the power and wealth thus placed in his hands were abused for partisan purposes. Priests suspected of patriotic sympathies were savagely oppressed, and funds were misappropriated in the interest of party politics. A recent visit of King Humbert to the Southern Provinces brought matters to a crisis. The furious prelate publicly prohibited any display of loyal sentiment on the part of his subordinate clergy. But he had gone a step too far. The Government took up the glove, and in a day or two came a decree from the Privy Seal depriving him of all his benefices. It is a menacing reminder to the Vatican that the famous formula, Free Church in Free State, has a double edge. The Vatican is still free to dub Monsignor Pellegrini bishop or archbishop, if it choose, but the State has asserted its freedom to give or withhold the "temporalities." It is the first time, I believe, that such a blow has been really struck. To those who are read in the great conflicts between the Papacy and the civil Powers which divided and desolated Europe in the Middle Ages the incident will be full of significance. Evidently King Humbert is not "going to Canossa." But perhaps the most serious omen for the Vatican lies in the burst of acclamation with which this energetic act of the Government was greeted by the people, and even by the clergy of the diocese. Amongst other demonstrations a telegram was sent to the Minister, signed by eight canons, expressing their joy that they "are now free to combine their religious functions with their duties as citizens towards King and country." Indeed, that

there exists a widespread discontent among the inferior clergy with the Vatican and its instruments in the higher prelacy seems now to be indubitable.

The Missionary.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."—Ecc. 11:1.

THE SOWER.

THE sower went forth sowing;
The seed in secret slept
Through weeks of faith and patience
Till out the green blade crept,
And, warmed by golden sunshine
And fed by silver rain,
At last the fields were whitened
To harvest once again.
Oh, praise the bounteous Giver
Who gave the fruitful seed,
And watched and watered duly
And ripened for our need!

Behold, the Heavenly Sower
Goes forth with better seed,—
The word of sure salvation,—
With feet and hands that bleed;
Here in the church 'tis scattered,
Our spirits are the soil;
Then let an ample fruitage
Repay his pain and toil.
Oh, bounteous is the harvest
Wherein all goodness thrives,
And this the true thanksgiving,
The first-fruits of our lives!

—Selected.

THE WORK IN FRANCE.

OUR contemporary, the *Signs of the Times*, says: "There seems to be better prospects for the truth in France than formerly. God, no doubt, still has a people there, despite the curse which hangs over it. France rejected the Reformation, drove the Huguenots and others from her shores or put them to death. England and America profited by her loss, and since that time instability and revolution and infidelity have been characteristics of beautiful France. Those who love the truth have had a hard time to get a footing in France. It seems that everything has been against them, but they have laboured on, toiled and sacrificed and suffered for their kindred's and nation's sake.

"But a new generation is coming upon the stage of action. Many have rejected Christianity, because they supposed that it was manifested in Catholicism. Now there are calls for Protestant ministers. The Protestant State church can get no support from the State till they have quite a large company raised up, while the various missions of other Protestant bodies make very slow progress on account of the great expense. They do not seem to know how to make their missions, or companies, which they raised up, self-sustaining. With Seventh-day Adventists the work has been different. Our people in France have been faithful in paying the Lord his own, and so love the truth that they will live on the poorest fare, and walk many miles to meet with others of like precious faith. The French are also much interested in matters of healthful living and hygiene. It is hoped that the truth may reach souls in this way."

A LETTER FROM RUSSIA.

A LETTER recently received in Hamburg from a brother in Russia, reads as follows:—

"DEAR BRO. PERK AND BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN HAMBURG: I received your letter, and rejoiced very much over it, but especially was I glad to receive the reading on Daniel 2. And not only was I very much satisfied, but all the brethren and sisters with

me. I am told that I and another brother are soon to appear before the court for circulating our reading-matter. The judge has watched us for some time with suspicion, and has already questioned us. I am now under the supervision of the police, and have been forbidden to leave the city. I have sent a letter to a Baptist sister in Petersburg. I wrote her, greeting her thus: 'Be joyful in the Lord. Isa. 58:13, 14; Matt. 5:5; Psa. 37:11; 2 Pet. 3:13.' She wished me to write her more fully on the Sabbath, and as she had learned that I had a tract on it, she begged me to send her one. As to our membership, we now have twenty-one Sabbath-keepers here,—eleven brethren and ten sisters. As to the Molakans and Sabbathniki, I will write you later. I have of late sent seventeen missionary letters to different parts of Russia. May all the brethren and sisters remember us in their prayers."

THE UNITED STATES.

From reports received during the fortnight, we take the following items of interest in the progress of the work in the States:—

WISCONSIN.—A profitable series of meetings was held with the church in Lucas, during which their new meeting-house was dedicated. The Lord greatly blessed in these meetings, and six were received into the church by baptism, and others by letters from other churches. The church in Beldenville was also greatly strengthened and blessed by services held in connection with their quarterly meeting. Seven were received into full membership, and six await baptism. Several in this place are preparing to give themselves and their means to the work.

ILLINOIS.—A report says: "I spent the week of prayer at Belvidere and Rockford, three days at each place. The Lord came very near to His people, and I believe the time and services were profitable to all. Since the week of prayer we have secured a very central and commodious hall in Rockford, through the generosity of the church here, and I have spoken ten evenings, to interested audiences, with a gradually increasing attendance of intelligent people. The three city papers give us favourable notices daily, and we have faith that the Lord will glorify His name by bringing some souls to the obedience of the truth. Those who have recently embraced the truth are growing in grace, and are active in spreading the light."

MISSOURI.—A brother reporting meetings in two towns in which he gave a series of discourses, says that thirteen signed the covenant to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus as they now understand them in the light of present truth, and others have begun the observance of the Sabbath who have not yet fully taken their stand.

MAINE.—During a visit among several of the churches in Maine, eight were received into church fellowship, and a number have begun the observance of the Sabbath of the Lord. Two Sabbath-schools were organized, and meetings established with two companies of believers who had not previously had regular Sabbath services.

MICHIGAN.—In North Star, fifteen have made a beginning in the Christian life, and the interest continues to increase. The week of prayer which has been observed throughout our churches, has brought great blessings upon many companies. A ministerial labourer reporting from Kent City says:—

"I have never witnessed so much of the Spirit and power of God attending His Word as during the last few weeks. The week of prayer was a precious season to the brethren in Kent, and has since been followed by many tokens of Divine favour. Last Sabbath was spent with the little company of commandment-keepers there, and was a day not soon to be forgotten. A sister belonging to that church, who has for years been a great sufferer, said to me on Friday afternoon, 'I be-

lieve the Lord will heal me!' and she wished to have the instruction in James 5:14 carried out. We brought the matter before the brethren at our prayer-meeting that evening, and after making the case a subject of prayer, we were sure the Lord would put forth His healing hand. When the meeting closed, I went over to her house, and the first words she spoke were, 'Have n't some of you been praying for me? I feel so much better!'

"The next day we met at her house, and with prayers of faith anointed our sister in the name of the Lord, and claimed His promise; and, praise His name! He did not fail us. That hour was the most solemn and impressive I ever experienced, and all present were most profoundly impressed and affected by the presence of the Lord. Thus from a life of almost constant suffering, our sister is restored to the best condition of health she has enjoyed for years. The circumstance was one which greatly strengthened the faith of our brethren there, most of whom were present at the time, and is the subject of conversation and astonishment among many not of our faith."

Interesting Items.

—Great mortality from famine prevails in the Soudan.

—The total expenditure upon the Forth Bridge has exceeded £3,177,000.

—News from Monte Carlo says it is reported that ex-King Milan has lost \$300,000 at the gaming tables.

—A New York millionaire is said to have offered the Sultan of Turkey £20,000 if he will embrace Christianity.

—No Mahomedans attend theatres in Bombay or Poona. The Mahomedan priests have issued a strict edict against it.

—The Czar of Russia is by far the strongest monarch in Europe. He can bend a horse-shoe, or strangle a bear by mere force of hand.

—One-pound notes are now being printed in London for circulation in England. It is thought they will largely take the place of gold.

—The residence of Mr. Tracy, Secretary of the U. S. Navy, was burned at Washington last week, and his wife and daughter were killed.

—It was just forty-one years ago that the Roman National Assembly divested the Pope of all temporal power, and adopted Republican Government.

—All the best sites along the hill country of Judea, between Jerusalem westward and the sea, have been bought by Russia, and covered with splendid Greek temples.

—The amount embezzled last year in the United States from corporations, private firms, and the Government is reckoned at £1,712,550, ranging from sums of £200 up to £200,000.

—The population of the United Kingdom in the middle of 1889 was estimated at 37,808,892 persons—29,015,613 in England and Wales, 4,077,070 in Scotland, and 4,716,209 in Ireland.

—A piece of enamelled facade from the Palace of Darius, at Susa, the Shushan of the Book of Esther, has been discovered, and a copy is about to be added to the South Kensington Museum.

—The latest Krupp gun weighs 135 tons, is forty-four feet long, throws a 2,600 pound projectile twelve miles, requires a charge of 700 pounds of powder, and it costs £500 every time it is loaded.

—An extraordinary riot of 2,000 Polish women took place at Buffalo, U. S. A. They assembled together to mob a Roman Catholic priest whose appointment to succeed a favourite pastor was distasteful to them. The women threw salt and pepper into the eyes of the police.

—A hundred miles of telephone wire has been stretched out between Yokohama and Striznoka, in Japan, at the expense of the State. It is to be applied, like the telegraph, to the public service.

—A conspiracy to assassinate Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, and overthrow the Ministry, was unearthed at Sofia, and Major Panitza and other officials were arrested. Major Panitza and four other conspirators implicated in the plot against Prince Ferdinand, are said to have been shot on Thursday night.

—It is calculated that there are 70,000 Protestants in the Turkish Empire, Egypt included. Of this number 15,200 are communicants, the majority of them Armenian and Greek converts, the outcome of American, English, Scotch, and Dutch missions. The aggregate is increased by about 1,500 members yearly.

—In the Queen's Bench Division, on Monday, before the Lord Chief Justice, a settlement was arrived at in the action brought by Mr. Parnell against the proprietors of the *Times* to recover £100,000 for libel. The jury having been sworn, the defendants assented to a verdict for £5,000, and judgment was pronounced accordingly.

—There is one spot in the British Empire which may claim to be a terrestrial Paradise. It is the far off city of Vancouver, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Vancouver has received a visit from the Viceroy of Canada, Lord Stanley of Preston, and among the mottoes which the citizens displayed to welcome the Queen's representative was the legend, "Happy People without a Grievance."

—Mr. Edison's father is still living, and is hale enough to walk ten miles a day. He is of Dutch ancestry, with a trace of Irish blood in him. His mother had been a school-mistress, and she educated him at home to such purpose that when he was twelve he was studying Newton's Principia. At that age he began to earn his living by selling newspapers on the train.

—A terrible explosion in Llanerch Colliery, Abersychan, Wales, last week, resulted in a death roll of 171, and many injured, some doubtless fatally. The mine was supposed to be a safe one, and the men were working with naked lights. Most of the victims were evidently killed instantly by the force of the explosion. There are seventy widows and 230 children left to be provided for.

—Intelligence received at Askabad from Persia states in the month of November last, in the province of Khorassan, nearly three thousand persons died from a terrible stomachic disease, the deaths in Meshed itself numbering about a hundred daily. Later, however, the mortality commenced to diminish. Owing to the want of experienced doctors, the exact nature of the disease has not been ascertained.

—The Prussian authorities keep a watchful eye on their officers. An order has been issued in the military casinos that no spirituous liquors, beyond one liqueur-glassful, are to be served to officers before noon, and that no absinthe is to be served at any hour. The authorities discovered that it was the practice of officers to toss for liquor just before the midday dinner, and that such tossing often led to the consumption of so much that many a lieutenant was rendered incapable for the clear-headed performances of duty.

—Some large vessels greatly overdue are believed to have gone down during the recent gale. Incoming vessels still continue to report falling in with wreckage in the Atlantic. One vessel encountered a rain-storm, the drops being a blood-red colour. Another steamer collided with an iceberg, and mountains of ice and over forty derelict vessels are floating about the Atlantic, to the danger of navigation. A fishing-boat went down with nine men off the Irish coast near Lough Swilly, leaving 54 persons unprovided for.

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LONDON, FEBRUARY 13, 1890.

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"THE highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul." Proverbs 16:17.

WE are glad to be able to announce that our publishers have just put through the press a second edition of "Prophetic Lights, or The Testimony of the Centuries." This last edition is one of 5,000 copies.

THE prospect before Spain is not a hopeful one. The numbers of cloisters and monks in that country have, it is said, increased with astonishing rapidity of late years. Spain now has 29,220 monks, and 25,000 nuns in 1,330 cloisters and 179 orders. In the last fourteen years the number of monks has been sextupled, and the number of nuns has been doubled.

WE have received from the Imprimerie Polyglotte, our Basle publishing house, copies of eight four-page Bible-reading leaflets, just from the press, printed in the Russian language. The leaflets are numbered, and the Bible readings treat upon the following subjects: No. 1, Importance of the Prophecies; 2, The Second of Daniel; 3, The Seventh of Daniel; 4, The Eighth of Daniel; 5, The Ninth of Daniel; 6, The Second Advent; 7, The Sanctuary; 8, The Saints' Inheritance. These leaflets are printed in two forms, the first on very light weight paper, suitable for sending in sealed envelopes, the second on ordinary paper with four leaflets bound together making a sixteen-page tract, designed for general tract distribution. The first form is designed especially for circulation in Russia, where, as will be seen by the letter from Russia, printed in our Missionary department, our brethren

are obliged to use the greatest caution in their efforts to bring the truth to the knowledge of the people. These leaflets are sold at the rate of one penny for sixteen pages, and may be ordered through our publishers.

ACCORDING to the Scriptures, all future life for those who have died, or who shall yet die, is dependent upon the resurrection. Job was a perfect and an upright man, "one that feared God and eschewed evil," yet he was a stranger to the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul and of going to heaven at death. When apparently on the brink of the grave, he asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and immediately answered his own question thus: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call and I will answer Thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands." Job 14:14, 15. Where he expected to wait till his change, the change to immortality, should come, is told in chapter 17:13: "If I wait, the grave is mine house." And that his hope was a hope of the resurrection is shown in chapter 19:25, 26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." In exact harmony with Job's testimony are the words of the apostle Paul: "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die." 1 Cor. 15:16-18, 32.—*Signs of the Times.*

THE fact that the Papacy has been dispossessed of its temporal power, in accordance with the word of prophecy, in no way indicates that its power for evil has gone with its temporalities. "What he lost in temporal power," says Mr. Rose of the Pope, in his "Century of Continental History," "he gained in spiritual power, which was no longer associated with a despotic rule upheld by mercenary troops." In an article in the *Revue Internationale*, M. de Laveleye quotes a conversation which Count Arnim once had with him, in which the Count said:—

"Bismarck thinks that the suppression of the temporal power will weaken the Pope. Exactly the contrary is the case. When he had a territory he was under the thumb of all the Powers, but now that he is only a spiritual potentate, he baffles the interference of the greatest Powers. The friends of the Papacy are blind when they seek to restore its temporal power. Give him back his temporal throne, and at once you make him subordinate to political exigencies."

"Events since then," says M. de Laveleye, "have more than justified Count Arnim's prediction. The Vatican is to-day one of the great diplomatic centres of Europe. Everywhere the Pope has followers who obey his voice, and in countries like Belgium his authority is much greater than that of the King. He has met and vanquished Prince Bismarck, the most powerful statesman of our time." Thus, too, the Apocalypse represents the working of Rome, throwing the mystic spell of her enchantments over the governments of earth, and causing all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her abominations.

WE acknowledge with thanks a copy of *The Kansas Worker*, published monthly at Topeka, Kansas, by the Kansas Tract Society. The reports show that the agents of the Society are doing good work in securing a large circulation for such books as "Bible Readings" and "Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation." Several other of the State Tract Societies have, we believe, established a monthly organ for the encouragement of their members. It is a sign of progress in the Tract Society work in the States to which we are glad to call attention.

"THERE can hardly be a sillier utterance," says the *Independent*, "than that found on some lips, to the effect that 'religion is not a theology, but a life,' and that 'if the life be right, no matter about the theology.' Pray, upon what shall the life be based if not upon the truths that constitute theology? The idea of piety toward God with no creed in the mind with respect to God is an absurdity. The Bible is not a speculative book, but the duties which it imposes rest on the profoundest truths in regard to God. It gives a creed as the reason for deeds to be done."

THE establishment of a publishing office for our denominational literature in Toronto has given an impetus to the work of the colporteurs in Canada. During the past year, we learn from *The Home Missionary*, over 10,000 copies of "Bible Readings for the Home Circle" have been sold in the Dominion, besides many other books, pamphlets, and tracts. The sales for the last six weeks reported for are over £1,200. They have at present a force of twenty-five colporteurs, distributed as follows: Nova Scotia, 5; New Brunswick, 5; Province of Quebec, 5; Province of Ontario, 8; Manitoba, 2; while a much larger force was at work during the summer. Many more contemplate entering the field soon.

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