

# The Signs of the Times.

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."—Rev. 22:12.

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## The Signs of the Times. (1)

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[For terms, etc., see last page.]

### "THE POOR MAN'S HYMN."

AS MUCH have I of worldly goods,  
As er'e my Master had.  
I diet on as dainty food,  
And am as richly clad,  
Though plain my garb, though scant my board,  
As Mary's Son and Nature's Lord.

As much of this world's goods I share,  
It's favor and applause,  
As He whose blessed name I bear,  
Hated without a cause,  
Despised, rejected, mocked by pride,  
Betrayed, forsaken, crucified.

The manger was his infant bed,  
His home the mountain cave.  
He had not where to lay his head,  
He borrowed e'en His grave.  
Earth yielded him no resting spot,  
Her Maker, but she knew him not.

Why should I court my Master's foe?  
Why should I fear his frown?  
Why should I seek for rest below,  
Or sigh for brief renown?  
A pilgrim to a better land,  
An heir of joy at God's right hand.

—Unknown.

## General Articles.

### JOSHUA'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

UNDER the leadership of Joshua, the Israelites as a nation maintained their allegiance to God, and his blessing attended them. Among the wooded hills and fertile valleys of the promised land, doubly attractive after the long desert wanderings, the chosen tribes dwelt safely; and the years passed on, peaceful and prosperous.

As Joshua felt the infirmities of age stealing upon him, and realized that his labors must soon cease, he assembled the elders, the judges, and the officers of Israel, that he might communicate to them his last warnings and admonitions. The people looked upon the form of their veteran general, who had led them on from victory to victory, and they were ready to ascribe to him the honor of placing them in possession of that good land. But, like his great predecessor, Joshua showed them that their enemies had been conquered because the Lord had fought for Israel, and that God alone should have all the glory.

Although the Canaanites had been subdued, they still possessed a considerable portion of the land promised to Israel; and Joshua exhorted his people not to settle down at ease, and forget the Lord's command to utterly dispossess these idolatrous nations. Lest the Israelites should be disheartened, he assured them that if they would be true to God, his presence and power would attend them in their future conflicts as in the past. He earnestly sought to inspire their hearts with faith and courage. "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left."

He repeated the instructions given by Moses, that they were to form no allegiance with the idolatrous nations that God had appointed to utter destruction. They were forbidden to manifest the least respect for the gods of the heathen, to take oath by their names, or to join in their worship in any manner. They were warned that familiarity with idolatry would remove their abhorrence of it, and would expose them to God's displeasure.

[We are in as great danger from contact with infidelity as were the Israelites from intercourse with idolators. The productions of genius and talent too often conceal the deadly poison. Under an attractive guise, themes are presented and thoughts expressed that attract, interest, and corrupt the mind and heart. Thus, in our Christian land, piety wanes, and skepticism and ungodliness are triumphant.]

The Israelites were exhorted to make the Lord first in their thoughts and affections, and to cleave unto him as their source of strength. "For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day." Joshua reiterated the words of Moses: "One man of you shall chase a thousand; for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you."

He warned the people that if they should in any manner unite with the remnant of the heathen nations still among them, and contract marriages with them, the protecting care of God would surely be removed from Israel, and those very nations would be the instruments of their punishment. "They shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you."

Joshua declared to the people that his work among them was done; for he was soon to die. He appealed to themselves as witnesses that God had faithfully fulfilled his promises to them. "And ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." He assured them that as the Lord had fulfilled his promises, so would he fulfill his threatenings. If they were disobedient to his requirements, he would destroy them, as he had destroyed their enemies.

[The Lord has not changed.] His character is the same to-day as in the days of Joshua. [He is true, merciful, compassionate, faithful in the performance of his word, both in promises and threatenings. One of the greatest dangers that besets the people of God to-day, is that of association with the ungodly; especially in uniting themselves in marriage with unbelievers. With many, the love for the human eclipses the love for the divine. They take the first step in backsliding by venturing to disregard the Lord's express command; and complete apostasy is too often the result. It has ever proved a dangerous thing for men to carry out their own will in opposition to the requirements of God. Yet it is a hard lesson for men to learn that God means what he says.]

As a rule, those who choose for their friends and companions, persons who reject Christ and trample upon God's law, eventually become of the same mind and spirit. [We should ever feel a deep interest in the salvation of the impenitent, and should manifest toward them a spirit of kindness and courtesy; but we can safely choose for our friends only those who are the friends of God.]

Those who make the word of God their rule of life are hated by the world. The ungodly are not willing to have their consciences aroused; and the silent example of Christ's true followers is a constant reproof. There are many professed Christians who partake of the spirit of the world, and love its friendship. But none need be deceived by their example; for the word of truth declares that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Those who take human feeling and human reasoning for their guide, will as surely separate from the wisdom of God, as did ancient Israel when they forsook the Lord to serve Baal and Ashtaroth.

Once more, before his final removal from the people of his care, Joshua assembled the chosen tribes to speak to them the words of God. He rehearsed before them their own history and the history of their fathers from the days of Abraham. He did not conceal their errors and mistakes; and with earnestness and gratitude he dwelt upon the dealings of God with them. He reminded them that it was not their own strength or valor which had given them the land of Canaan. God himself had said, "I have given you a land for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them. Of the vineyards and olive-yards which ye planted not, do you eat."

In view of all that God had done for them, Joshua exhorted the people, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord." The human mind is naturally inclined to dwell upon the things which are seen and heard, and to neglect the things which are unseen. The Lord had done marvelous things for his people in the manifesting of his power as the only true and living God; yet many had been led astray by the Satanic delusion that God might be represented by material objects, the works of men's hands. By the contemplation of these things, their minds were diverted from God.

Among the multitudes that came up out of Egypt were many who had been worshipers of idols; and such is the power of habit that the practice was secretly continued, to some extent, even after the settlement in Canaan. Joshua was sensible of this evil among the Israelites, and he clearly perceived the dangers that would result. He earnestly desired to see a thorough reformation among the Hebrew host. He knew that unless the people took a decided stand to serve the Lord with all their hearts, they would continue to separate themselves farther and farther from him. Then would the Lord remove his protecting care, and suffer them to be driven out and scattered, by the very people whom he had commanded them to destroy.

Said Joshua, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua endeavored to show the people that God's requirements were just and merciful. He would lead them to serve him, not by compulsion, but willingly. Love to God is the very foundation of pure and undefiled religion. To engage in his service as an unpleasant task, merely from hope of reward or fear of punishment, would bring no sweet peace, no assurance of God's favor.

While a portion of the Hebrew host were spiritual worshipers, many were mere formalists; no zeal or earnestness characterized their service. Some were idolators at heart, who would be ashamed to acknowledge themselves as such. Joshua urged them to consider in all its bearings the important matter which he had set before them, and to decide if they really desired to live as did the idolatrous nations around them. If it seemed evil to them to serve the Lord, if his requirements seemed a grievous exaction, he bade them that day choose whom they would serve,—the idols worshiped by their fathers from whom Abraham was called out, or the gods of the Amorites, "in whose land ye dwell."

In these last words was a keen rebuke to the idolatry of Israel. The gods of the heathen had no power to bestow peace or prosperity. Their worshipers had ascribed to them praise and honor for all the bounties bestowed by the mercy and love of God. Hence the Lord had removed from

(1) Commentary, Vol. 2, pp 999, 1000; (2) 1000

(3) Sons and Daughters of God, p. 165



them his blessing, and had left them to the mercies of the gods in whom they trusted. That wicked people had been destroyed; and the good land which they once possessed, had been given to God's people. Then what suicidal folly for Israel to choose the gods for worshiping whom the Amorites had been destroyed!

(1) When a man comes to his right mind, he begins to reflect upon his relation to his Maker. It is moral madness to prefer the praise of men to the favor of God, the rewards of iniquity to the treasures of Heaven, the husks of sin to the spiritual food God gives his children. Yet how many who display intelligence and shrewdness in worldly things, manifest an utter disregard to those things that pertain to their eternal interest.

Joshua assured the Israelites that of themselves they could not serve the Lord. The natural heart is a battle-field, upon which there is a constant warfare; conscience seeking to hold sway, and passion also struggling for the victory. God would not grant them his favor and support while they persisted in transgression. If they honored him, he would honor them. If they should forsake him, and serve strange gods, he would forsake them. As God is a being of perfect truth and holiness, it was impossible for them to serve him and yet continue in sin; for he could not unite with iniquity. Only by thorough repentance and reformation of life, could they hope to secure the divine favor.

(2) God's plan for the salvation of men, is perfect in every particular. If we will faithfully perform our allotted part, all will be well with us. It is man's apostasy that causes discord, and brings wretchedness and ruin. God never uses his power to oppress the creatures of his hand. He never requires more than man is able to perform; never punishes his disobedient children more than is necessary to bring them to repentance; or to deter others from following their example. Rebellion against God is inexcusable.

The judgments of God quickly following upon transgression, his counsels and reproofs, the manifestations of his love and mercy, and the oft-repeated exhibitions of his power,—all were a part of God's plan to preserve his people from sin, to make them pure and holy, that he might be their strength and shield and their exceeding great reward. But the persistent transgressions of the Israelites, their readiness to depart from God, and their forgetfulness of his mercies, showed that many had chosen to be servants of sin, rather than children of the Most High.

God had created them, Christ had redeemed them. From the house of bondage their cry of anguish went up to the throne of God, and he put forth his arm to rescue them; for their sake, bringing desolation upon the whole land of Egypt. He had granted them high honors. He had made them his peculiar people, and had showered upon them unnumbered blessings. If they would obey him, he would make them a mighty nation,—a praise and excellence in all the earth. God designed to magnify his name through his chosen people, by showing the vast difference existing between the righteous and the wicked, the servants of God and the worshippers of idols.

Joshua sought to show his people the inconsistency of their course of backsliding. He wished them to feel that the time had come to make a decided change, to put away every vestige of idolatry, and to turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart. He endeavored to impress upon their minds the fact that open apostasy would not be more offensive to God than hypocrisy, and a lifeless form of worship.

If the favor of God was worth anything, it was worth everything. Thus Joshua had decided; and after weighing the whole matter, he had determined to serve him with full purpose of heart. And more than this, he would endeavor to induce his family to pursue the same course.

God said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the ways of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." The promises of God to Abraham and his posterity, and through Christ to the nations of the earth, may appear to have been unconditional. But such was not the case. Whether Abraham would share in their fulfillment, was determined by the course which he pursued. The Lord approved his faithfulness in the government of his household. Abraham

firmly restrained evil, and endeavored by precept and example to promote justice and godliness among them. Thus he worked in harmony with God, faithfully performing his part in the great plan.

Our dangers are similar to those which threatened the prosperity of ancient Israel. The oft-repeated warnings against idolatry addressed to the Hebrew host, are no less applicable to us. Everything which leads the affections away from God is an idol, and betrays us into sin. If we serve God willingly and joyfully, preferring his service to the service of sin and Satan; if we choose him, openly and boldly turning from all the attractions and vanities of the world, we shall enjoy his blessing in this life, and shall dwell forever in his presence in the future life.

The Lord our God is a jealous God. He is just and holy. He will not be trifled with. He reads a deceptive heart. He abhors a double mind. He hates lukewarmness. We cannot serve God and mammon, for they are antagonistic.

### THIS GENERATION.

BY WM. PENNIMAN.

(Concluded.)

WE are living in the time of which the prophet Isaiah speaks (Isa. 24:5, 6): "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth; in the time when 'they will not endure sound doctrine,' but 'shall turn away their ears from the truth' 'unto fables,' 2 Tim. 4:3, 4; when *perilous times have come*, 2 Tim. 3:1-8; when many have departed, and many are departing, from the faith, 1 Tim. 4:1; when faith is so small and scarce upon the earth in this age of doubt (Luke 18:8) that one (as Mr. Spurgeon in a recent sermon expresses it) 'will have to look through a microscope to find it;' when unclean spirits have gone forth, and are deceiving the nations just before the coming of Christ as a thief. Rev. 16:14-16. Iniquity is abounding, and the love of many waxing cold when the end is near. Matt. 24:12. Evil servants (backsliders, hypocritical professors of the advent faith) are saying, 'My Lord delayeth his coming,' and are eating and drinking with the drunken just before the Judgment day. Matt. 24:48. In the last days scoffers were to come walking after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' 2 Pet. 3:3, 4. Men seem as sinful and secure as they did at Sodom's overthrow. Luke 17:28-30. The world is just as careless in regard to Christ's coming as it was to the coming of the flood in Noah's time. Matt. 24:37-39. Men are saying, 'Peace and safety, and that there is a good time coming, when sudden destruction is coming upon them. 1 Thess. 5:1-9. The gospel, in a *threefold* sense, has been preached in nearly all the world. Matt. 24:14. Many of the unwise are slumbering and sleeping just before the coming of the Bridegroom. Matt. 25:1-5. Near the end there was to be distress of nations with perplexity (see article in this paper from New York Herald on this subject), the sea and the waves thereof roaring, and stormy wind fulfilling his word. Luke 21:25; Ps. 148:8. The nations are *now prepared for war as never before*, and are angry, and have been in the recent past. Rev. 11:18; Joel 3:9-12.

Earthquakes are increasing, and have recently been in divers places. Luke 21:11. The sun has been darkened (May 19, 1780), and the stars have descended from heaven (Nov. 13, 1833) even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind. Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:13. Fearful sights and great signs are foreshadowing the approach of the King of kings. Luke 21:11. Many are *heaping up earthly treasures for the fires of the last days*. James 5:1-9. Many are running to and fro, and knowledge is increasing at this time of the end. Dan. 12:4. The increase in knowledge does not refer merely to the wonderful discoveries and inventions in the arts and sciences, such as the railroad, and telegraphy, and yet more recent inventions, but to the increase of prophetic knowledge of the word of God, and of the nearness of the end.

### THE LESSON.

What is the lesson we are to learn from the teachings of our Saviour that, "*This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled*"?

Seven times our Lord has given the injunction to *watch*. "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:42-44. Not only sermons, but volumes are implied in this brief language of Christ. When he says, "*Watch therefore*," he refers to *all* the signs which the generation which precedes his coming should witness, and gives his disciples a brief, and yet most comprehensive lesson in a few words. They are taught that although they know not *what hour* he will come, yet they are enjoined to *know this*, etc. Therefore (as the good man of the house would have watched had he known what hour the thief would come) *be ye also ready* (not knowing the hour, etc.), *for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh*.

A letter recently received from a brother in the truth contains the following exhortation to the church (we extract briefly): "I beseech of you, my brethren, do not put off the coming of the Lord. The world is growing darker, the struggle is getting harder. The world is filling up with prophets who are foretelling everything almost, but the greatest of all events, the second coming of Christ. Let us keep the coming of the Lord before us constantly. If we are *every day looking for the coming of the Lord*, we shall not neglect our duty nor grow cold in his service."

A work has recently been written, entitled, "The Decisive Battles of the World," referring to the conflicts with carnal weapons, and to the confused noise of warriors, and to the sight of garments rolled in blood. But there is a great and decisive battle coming which shall conclude the war of the great day of God Almighty. "Multitudes in the valley of decision" (Joel 3:14) are now deciding their eternal destinies, placing themselves on the side of the Lord or of the enemy in the coming great battle. How important it is to decide and act right *now* while probation lasts, and before the decree goes forth (Rev. 22:11): "He that is unjust let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy let him be holy still." "And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man (Greek *oudeis*, no one can enter therein, plainly teaching that the work of mercy is closed during the pouring out of the plagues) was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." Rev. 15:8.

Do not think the uninhabited regions must yet be settled, and that the immense amount of coal in the earth must first be consumed before the Lord comes. Those who are waiting for the wilds of America to be settled will not have to wait long, for they are fast being peopled by the hundreds of thousands pouring in from foreign countries. As to the coal, or to the consumption of minerals and fluids in the earth; who knows but that the Lord is reserving some of these forces of nature (as the Lord works by means) in accordance to what we find in Job: "Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" Job 38:22, 23. Do not say there is yet too much good in the world for the Lord to destroy it. True, there is much good in the world, and that is what causes the Lord in mercy to spare it. But when the time comes for its destruction the Lord will take care of the good as he did in the time of the flood, at the destruction of the cities of the plain, and also of Jerusalem. *Now* is the time to escape the impending wrath of God. Many who will not obey the truth and are too high-minded, and have too much pride to pray now, will be in the great and terrible prayer-meeting soon to come: "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? Dear reader, let us pray earnestly unto God, seek him by fasting and prayer, walk in the light of his truth, 'seek righteousness,—seek meekness,'"



make a "covenant with God by sacrifice," pray for, and do all we can for those around us, do all we can in sending out the light and truth, and "it may be" as the prophet says: "Ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Let us heed the injunction (1 Pet. 4:7): "But the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer."

Again we read, 2 Pet. 3:10, 11: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" H. L. Hastings, in his "Signs of the Times," alluding to the closing words of the text just quoted, says: "What manner of persons ought we to be? Shall we dance, and dally, and riot, and play? Shall we drown our senses in indulgence, and stupefy our souls with lust? Shall we cling to our idols while the true God is so soon to come? Shall we heap up treasures to perish in the day of wrath? Shall we yield to fleshly lusts that war against the soul? Shall we build our hopes upon a fleeting world, which will soon reel to and fro like a drunkard and fall in utter ruin? Or shall we, who are of the day, be sober, and diligent, and earnest, and sincere? The Judge standeth before the door. The temple of eternity echoes with the advancing tread of him who is Lord of all. Is it a time for petty strifes and contemptible bickerings? Is it a time for vain wranglings and perverse disputations? Is it a time for seeking honors, and hoarding wealth, when the day of wailing is so near, and the multitudes around are so secure? Is it not rather a day for putting on the whole armor, and girding up the loins for the final conflict? Is it not a day for fasting, and praying, and tears? Is it not a time for men to seek the Lord, and seek righteousness, and seek meekness, that they may be hid in the day of the Lord's anger?"

We quote from another writer, which is to the point: "Bride of the Lamb, awake. The cry has gone forth, 'Behold he cometh'; the night of unrest and weeping is almost ended; the foe's distress has begun, and the church's rest hasteth. The storm will soon sweep wildly around, and the angry elements already seething and foaming in rage, becoming daily more and more exasperated with hatred and anger, will rush the final storm. Christian cheer thee; land is nearing."

Yes, the promise is sure, and "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28. Again we say, in conclusion, *Judgment-hastening generation, awake!* All the signs given by our Saviour in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew (except the shaking of the powers of the heavens, and "the sign of the Son of man in heaven") are now in the past. The great day hasteth greatly. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1 Thess. 5:6. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36.

#### "DISTRESS OF NATIONS WITH PERPLEXITY." LUKE 21:24.

THE *New York Herald* has able correspondents in every land, and their statements in regard to the different countries are reliable. The following extracts from an editorial in this paper of April 1, 1881, will show the condition of the nations: "The strained relations between Turkey and Greece have a special importance now, when we consider the assassination of the Czar, and the advent to the imperial power of a sovereign, who is believed to have ambitious plans for the development of his nation, and who is known to be a soldier of approved courage."

"If the question between Turkey and Greece related simply to the boundary lines between the two nations, it might be easily adjusted. Nothing seems more certain (unless we misread the decrees of fate) than that the Turkish Empire in Europe must come to an end. With Greece fighting Turkey alone, it is in the power of the Sultan to destroy Greece. If Russia or Austria interferes, then there is no knowing where the contest may end. In fact, *Europe is now in a critical condition. The spirit of revolution is abroad.* The continent is burdened with standing armies, every peasant in Germany (as it is said) carrying

a soldier on his back. France adds taxes to her budget in order that she may have greater armaments. Russia throbs with revolution, and is in the hands of a young and intrepid prince.

"It will need the wisdom and strength of conservative nations like England to prevent a conflict which may result in the most destructive and disastrous war of modern times. England should preserve herself for the struggle that cannot much longer be postponed in Europe. The peace of the world depends more on the strength of England, her moral force, the wisdom of her ministers, than upon any other influence. The world sees now that if England had been wise at the close of the Franco-German war, or even at the beginning of that unfortunate strife, she might have forced upon the contending nations, a peace which would have lasted as long as that which came after the battle of Waterloo. So long as France is in an unsatisfied mood, so long as her people feel that her honor was satisfied at the time her territory was despoiled, so long as every Frenchman feels that his highest aim is to save money and buy arms, the contest on the Continent is adjourned. Russia may provoke it by new adventures in Turkey. Austria may be drawn in by an attempt to govern her newly acquired provinces with a strong hand. Germany may strike, as she wished to do not long since, the first blow in self-defense; Italy scarcely conceals her desire for Trieste and the Austrian provinces on the Adriatic; Greece, highly gifted, intellectual, flashed with new life, strong and animated by the memory of an ancient and illustrious lineage, may rashly bring on what may be the most desolating war of modern times. If England exercises her influence on the Continent, this war may be postponed. It may even be adjourned forever. As it is, the outlook is dark enough, and it would be well for Americans to expect the worst and prepare for it."

It can be seen by the preceding that the prospect for a long reign of peace in the world is not very promising, as the dark clouds of war and commotion seem to be hanging over the nations.

WM. PENNIMAN.

#### THE CLOSING DISPENSATION.

How few are aware that the evening shadows of this gospel dispensation are stretching across the world. As the sunset of the age approximates, time seems to speed away with a constantly accelerated swiftness. Prophecy and history give no uncertain warning that the crisis of ages impends. The index-finger on the dial-plate of heaven now nears the mysterious figure that marks the closing hour of Gentile times. The awe-inspiring future will soon unveil its solemn realities of judgment dooms and irreversible destinies of life or death eternal. The chief-like coming of our Lord for his precious jewels is near, very near. At some midnight or mid-day; at some dawning morn or dewy eve, after a very little while, the heavenly Bridegroom will come for his bride. That *parousia* will occur as suddenly as the lightning's shaft flits across the face of the storm cloud. In less time than the utterance of the shortest monosyllable will every grave sunder where one sleeps in Jesus.

A learned professor says, "We have now arrived at the very borders of that period which is to be signalized by the winding up of that drama which has for ages been enacted in Christianity." A celebrated historian observes, "Modern history seems not only a step in advance of ancient history, but the last step. Modern society seems to bear marks that the fullness of times is come—that there will be no future history; and if it be the case, that we are living in the last age of the world's history; that no other race remains behind to perfect what we have neglected, to restore what we have ruined; then, indeed, the interest of modern history becomes most intense." In the glamping of this evening twilight of time our lot is cast.

The finishing up work of the centuries devolves upon the church of the now passing generation. Responsibilities as solemn as eternity weigh now upon every child of God. The last heir to a crown of glory will soon win the fadeless diadem. Some honored herald of the cross and kingdom will soon place the last repentant believer of the gospel beneath the waters of holy baptism. Some little church of the faithful and true will soon, and for the last time, place the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of a once crucified Redeemer upon the commemorative table.

He is coming! Israel's hope and earth's re-

storer—will his words to us be words of welcome? Will time's closing hour find us among the faithful servants of the King of kings? He is coming! He that holdeth the keys of death and the grave. He is coming! He that crowns the heirs of glory and shares His eternal kingdom with the redeemed. He comes, and comes quickly! May it be in every heart to say—"Even so, come, Lord Jesus.—*Restitution.*"

#### UNPROFITABLE SOCIAL MEETINGS.

WHAT would be thought of a convention of persons professing to be teachers, who never did any teaching and never intended to do any, and yet assembled every week for mutual congratulation on the delights of their profession? Some such paradox is seen in the weekly gatherings of Christians to talk of their enjoyment and progress in the divine life with no thought or plans for aggressive work in winning souls. Their exercises inevitably become common-place and destitute of interest. Stereotype methods and prayers and testimonies in the social meeting should be displaced, and each participant's claim to a hearing should depend upon its activity and efficiency in inducing men to seek Christ. "What is the state of your feelings?" should always be the leading question to believers. Every prayer and class meeting should be a council of workers, to canvass ways and means to save souls. Every prayer offered, every word uttered, should bear on this point.

It is the lack of this practical use of social meetings that causes them to languish. It is difficult to maintain much interest in what relates exclusively to our own or others' personal feelings and aspirations, when we have told or heard it fifty-two times a year, with little or no variation. We tire of such meetings and of our part in them. They have no interest for the unconverted. The way to make the social meeting a power for good and a source of perennial interest and enthusiasm is to make it a business meeting, in which men who are working for God stimulate each other to greater activity, and talk, not in stilted, stereotyped phrases about how they feel toward God, but in the most earnest, simple manner, of how they shall best glorify him by doing his work.—*N. W. Christian Advocate.*

#### EVERYBODY BOTHERED.

"MAN never is, but always to be, blest." Each individual finds, on attaining to the object of his ambition, that he is still hampered by restrictions and worried by obstacles, and that the bed he had fancied to be of roses is thickly sprinkled with thorns. The patriot who, after long suffering, succeeds in attaining the mightiness of a position on the police force, soon finds that the policeman's lot is not a happy one altogether. The able attorney who becomes a member of the City Hall Commission is fretted by the difficulty of keeping "my men" in positions. The politician who gains a place in the Legislature soon discovers that he cannot be happy till he gets to Congress; the congressman sighs to become Governor; the governor lays pipes toward the United States Senate; the senator looks toward the Cabinet; the cabinet member intrigues for the presidency; the president plans for another term. Nobody is satisfied. The Czar is scared of his life all the time. Emperor William and Bismarck are in little less trepidation. The kings of Spain and Italy never feel safe. The king of Greece is preparing to skip out, if necessary. And now comes said Pasha, Prime Minister of the Porte, and talks in this discouraged way to a delegation of bankers who have been urging peace and industry as necessary for Turkey:—

"I quite understand that European capitalists are frightened away from here, since every offer based on concession of an industrial nature, is rejected. I myself have always seen clearly that the regeneration of Turkey is bound up with two conditions—peace and productive labor. But there are elements at work stronger than I. Whenever I support a petition for a concession, I notice that I am suspected of having been bribed; and important local reforms cease to be recommended, because one does not care to be suspected of being subject to foreign influence. I find the same hindrances in the arrangement of political questions. When ignorant eunuchs obtain a voice in the State Councils, ministers cannot govern."—*Alta.*

WE ask advice, but we mean approbation.—*Colton.*



**"WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING?" 2 PET. 3: 4.**

In addressing the Fraternal Union by appointment of its committee, we have chosen this theme, not because we think ourself master of the subject, but because the second coming of our Redeemer is a promise we love to think of, and is a subject that once was, and should be now, of great importance to the church, and especially to us who stand before the world as advocates of a broken law, and the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. How often do we read such passages as these: "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Pet. 5: 4. "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints," etc. Jude 14. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2: 12, 13. And especially Acts 1: 11, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

These, and like words spoken by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, have made the doctrine precious to every watchful and prayerful believer in the Son of God. There is power in them to alarm and arouse the sinner and the lukewarm Christian, and to comfort the faithful. But the more this truth is proclaimed the more we hear the question, "Where is the promise of his coming?" not from unbelievers only, but from millions of professed Christians, who ought to remember that the Lord hath said, "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour the Son of man cometh." Having become "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," they say, "for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." That is what the vast majority of mankind are saying to-day, and that is what the apostle declared should be said "in the last days." Do they believe that Jesus once came as prophesied by Isaiah and others? Yes. And that he will come the second time to judge the world? Yes, away off in the future, after unnumbered ages have rolled by; when the world is all converted to him; but not now, while there is such rapid advance made in the arts, in science, in everything that makes the world wiser and better (?). His coming now would bring to an end all our cherished plans.

While a worldly church may not openly reject, or scoff at, the Bible doctrine of the soon return of the Lord, yet those who love their divine master and receive the word relative to his coming with all gladness, are, with a reproach not becoming Christians, termed "Adventists," as though to be an Adventist was sufficient cause for such treatment. We do not have special reference to those who are called thus denominationally. But we will here say that we thank that people for their zeal in proclaiming this precious doctrine, and though we may believe they embrace some errors which tend to bring reproach upon the name of Adventist, we love them for their adherence to the broken law of God and their proclamation of the faith of Jesus. If we read our Bible aright, we learn that such as "keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" are those who "may enter in through the gates into the city," (Rev. 22: 14) and one prominent part of that "faith" is the prophecy concerning Christ's literal coming to reign with those ready for him, and to "destroy with the brightness of his coming" all who reject him. While his chosen ones wait in joyous expectation of speedy deliverance, their Lord saith, "Surely I come quickly," "Watch and pray," to which they respond, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22: 20.

We have no faith in the doctrine which tends to lull the church to sleep, namely: the conversion of the whole world, and union of sects before the second advent. The prospect looks darker at the present time than ever. We do not doubt but that there will be more of the "form of godliness" as years roll by, but that will not be real godliness or genuine conversion. In the words of another let us inquire: "And what are the present prospects of a church that has set out in all confidence to convert the world? How may those now putting on the harness boast of greater expected success than is warranted by the experience of those who have put it off after having fought the good fight? The prophets could not convert the world; are we stronger than they?"

The martyrs could not convert the world; are we mightier than they? The apostles could not convert the world; can we do more than they? The church for eighteen hundred years could not convert the world; can we do it? They have preached the gospel of Christ; so can we. They have gone to earth's remotest bounds; so can we. They have saved 'some;' so can we. They have wept as so few believed their report; so can we. Has God a mightier Saviour—a more powerful Spirit? Has he another gospel which will convert the world? Where is it? Is there any way to the kingdom other than that which leads through much tribulation? Is there another way to the crown besides the way of crosses? Can we reign with him unless we first suffer in his cause?"

If all are converted long before his coming, how can these scoffers spoken of by Peter, arise and deny it, and persecutions and perils exist in the last days? Were they converted at the time Noah entered the ark? But words of inspiration tell us that "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." "When the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17: 26-30. At the very moment when many popular churches cherish the delusive hope of "the good time coming," destruction, instead of conversion, awaits the world. While they see no danger, those they brand as fanatics, alarmists, will obey the prophetic injunction, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2: 1. When they say "peace and safety," sudden destruction cometh. 1 Thess. 5: 3. We are no "timist," but we learn a lesson from the fig-tree, and God promises us "signs" though we ask not for them.

See how dark were the features in Noah's time. That "preacher of righteousness" warned them of the swiftly coming destruction, and the works he wrought were calculated to send home to the hearts of unbelievers the truth of what he preached, and was condemnation to the careless, scoffing world. But the time drew nigh and the favored family was alone entering the ark. As the people say now, "Do a few Seventh-day Baptists, or Adventists know more about God's law than the world's popular and esteemed clergy?" so then they no doubt said, "Does Noah and family know more than all the world?" while the wise ones explained away the fears of those almost inclined to believe the "preacher." The shepherd is tending his flock, the mechanic is building, some young and gay, are being joined in holy matrimony, there is feasting and sporting by many, and all are planning for the future years, looking for prosperity, when lo! the heavens blacken, and soon descends the rain in torrents. "The fountains of the great deep are broken up." Every heart then is filled with fear, and as the panic-stricken multitudes flee with their treasures to the highest hills, the floods mount up after them, until no foot-hold is found for man or beast, and soon the teeming millions are still in death. Mercy slighted!

The evidences which Noah gave of the impending destruction were considered insufficient for them to base their faith upon. But they were sufficient, and those, too, given by God through the testimony and acts of one man. But how many hundredfold greater and more convincing are the evidences that are to, and no doubt have already, come to us, telling us of the approach of the Son of man. Prophecy is fulfilling while the church grows lukewarm and the spirit of holiness is departing. Will there be such signs given that the world will be compelled to believe? In the days of Noah no one was compelled to believe. God never thus reveals his truth. Blinded by pleasures, smooth preaching, cares and wealth, men will continually grow careless, and an unbelieving, infidel generation in and out of the church, will say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" until the Lord shall descend with multitudes of his saints and then "shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt." Isa. 13: 6, 7. O blessed thought for God's people! Jesus will come, and soon come. Be ready, be anxious, pray for it. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—H. D. C., in *Sabbath Recorder*.

To REJOICE in another's prosperity is to give content to your own lot; to mitigate another's grief is to alleviate or dispel your own.—T. Edwards.

It is right to be contented with what we have, but never with what we are.—Sir James McIntosh.

**WHAT IS THE SABBATH?**

BY CHARLES P. WHITFORD.

A PRIVATE letter from a friend contains the following: "I for one never thought it mattered so much which one of the days we keep for the Sabbath, as how we keep them." Query.—If we keep a day for the Sabbath, which is not the Sabbath, will the keeping of the day make it the Sabbath? Sabbath means rest, and the only Sabbath of the Lord; the only Sabbath having any claims on mankind, is the *rest-day* of the Lord; and that is the day of the week on which he rested, and no other. But according to the view set forth in the above, it matters not whether we keep the day of God's rest, or some other day, providing we only keep it right, whichever that day may be.

Were we to be governed by the same principle in relation to the other nine commandments, what would be the condition of society and of the world? We should find all classes claiming that it did not matter whether they obeyed those precepts or not. In short, it would be a virtual claim that they could obey God and be saved, or they could disobey him and the result would be the same, provided they were only sincere. To us this seems like a very doubtful piece of sincerity. While we believe that it is a good thing to be truly sincere, we also believe that God will accept of nothing but strict obedience to his commandments. He will accept of none but godly sincerity. To be sincere in actions which are violations of the law of God, is dangerous sincerity.

Says Christ, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matt. 19: 17. Again he says: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22: 14.

God has given commandments, and promises salvation to those who will keep them. Now if men can continue to do things which are violations of these commandments, and yet can be saved, then there are two ways to salvation. We can obey God and be saved, or, if this is not so convenient, we can disobey him and be saved, provided we are only sincere! We believe that such reasoning is a deception of the great enemy of all righteousness, and we wonder how any person can be led to accept such foolish and absurd positions. Let us strive to know the whole will of God and do it; for none but those who keep the truth will enter into the city.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. "Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

**"ALL THINGS ARE YOURS."**

BY W. L. COFFEE.

DEAR brother or sister, are you passing through temptation, and trial, and is the enemy of souls trying all his arts to ensnare you? Remember this is one of the all things, that are yours. Do you sometimes feel almost discouraged, and fear that at the last you will fail to gain the celestial city? Discouragements, trials, and temptations, "all are yours." Do you realize your own weakness and proneness to sin? then cling more closely to the source of all strength, and hide in the "Cleft Rock," for this also is yours. Do those who are near and dear to you fail you in the hour of need, and pass you by unnoticed? "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," and this friend also is yours. And then when all the conflict is ended, and the trials are all in the past, if you have overcome in them all, the victory also shall be yours. Although you may have to pass through the dark portals of the tomb, yet if you have a part in the first resurrection, eternal life shall be yours. Then shall you realize, as you cannot while here, the fullness of this promise, "All things are yours."

Freeport, Maine.

**NATIONAL DEBTS.**

IN 1715 the known national debts of the world amounted to \$1,460,000,000; in 1793, to \$2,461,000,000; in 1848, to \$8,423,000,000; and in 1880, to \$26,493,200,000. Of the increase in the debt since 1848, nearly \$16,000,000,000 have been spent for carrying on wars, and for military purposes.

At the close of the Rebellion, the U. S. national debt was \$2,755,995,000, and the annual interest was \$151,000,000; this has been steadily reduced until, at the present time, the national debt is \$1,879,956,000, and the annual interest, \$76,845,000. This is being constantly reduced.



## THE PHARISEES.

"THE separated"—there is a whole story in the name. It was given at first, probably, to that extreme party of the Jews who opposed most bitterly the adoption of Grecian customs. Cursed alike by them was the Jew who kept pigs or taught his child Greek. But the name gathered a deeper meaning, until in the time of Christ the Pharisee felt himself "separated" as well from the rest of his own race as from the Gentiles, and could utter complacently that prayer, "I thank thee that I am not as other men."

The Pharisees were the Jews of the Jews when all the Jews were filled with hatred towards all other men, would refuse even to point out the way to any but a Jew, would receive a proselyte only on condition that he abjure his country and abandon his children, parents and family, and held ignorance of everything not Jewish a sacred part of their religion. It was the Pharisee's pride to be considered the orthodox of his race, the perfect exponent and representative of Moses, the flower of God's "chosen people."

It was as the orthodox party, hedging around the law with oral traditions held equally sacred and binding with the law, that the Pharisees grew into power and became the recognized religious leaders of the nation. They soon strove to be its political leaders also, and to mould the State into an independent theocracy. They recognized no law but that of Moses with all their additions.

They looked upon Herod as an usurper of civil and divine rights, and hated the Roman dominion with unspeakable hatred. To them may be traced the restless turbulence of the nation, which "made Judea, to Herod and the Roman emperors, what Ireland at one time was to England, and Poland to Russia—the seat of chronic revolt, which knew no considerations of odds against success, and seemed to take counsel of despair." In Christ's day the Pharisees numbered above 6,000 men in Judea, and were at the height of their power in the national councils. Josephus, himself one of them, says they prided themselves greatly on their knowledge of the law, and made men believe they were holier than their neighbors, and especially in favor with God. They plotted Herod's death with the women of his family. They claimed the gift of prophecy, were closely bound together, and had as their one great thought and inspiration the founding of a grand hierarchy in which the Jews should reign over the whole world. The Messiah they expected was to set up such a kingdom for them.

By the traditions with which the Pharisees sought to bind the whole Jewish race together, they treated men like children, formalizing and defining the minutest particulars of daily action. They were the extreme Ritualists of their day, and made the usual mistake, if not the inevitable one, of losing the spirit of religion in its form. There had been at first and there always were some good and holy men among them, and their reputation had largely been gained because of their plain and rigorous life, with fastings oft. Indeed, those who strictly followed their rules would have little time for anything else but observances. But they had largely divorced religion from morality, so that it was possible for the worst among them morally, to be considered the most religious. Their character had become such as to fully justify the denunciations of Jesus, the most bitter that ever fell from his lips.

To show the Pharisaic feeling brought out in the lesson at the failure of Christ to wash his hands before dinner, it was related by the Jews of later times with intense admiration how the Rabbi Akiba, when imprisoned and given only water enough to maintain life, preferred to die of starvation rather than eat without the proper washings. That illustrates well, too, the spirit with which the Pharisees looked upon all their formalities. They went into elaborate argument, in their supplement or commentary on the Mishna of the Talmud, to show how the candles of the Sabbath were to be lighted, and with what materials. There was a grave discussion between opposing parties as to whether an egg laid on a festival might be eaten, the school of Shammai saying yes, the school of Hillel saying no.—*Examiner and Chronicle*.

WHEN you read a book in a dark room, and come to a difficult part, you take it to a window to get more light. So take your Bible to Christ.—*McCheyne*.

## The Sabbath School.

LESSON FOR PACIFIC COAST.—MAY, 21.

Sermon on the Mount continued.—Matt. 6: 16-21; 7: 6, 12-16; Luke 6: 37, 42, 43.

## LESSON COMMENTS.

FASTING had become one of the prominent religious usages of our Saviour's day. Though only one fast had been appointed by Moses—that of the Day of Atonement—the Pharisees had added numerous others, especially on the two days of the week, Monday and Thursday, on which synagogue worship was held. When fasting, they strewed their heads with ashes, and neither washed nor anointed themselves nor trimmed their beards, but put on wretched clothing and showed themselves in all the outward signs of mourning and sadness used for the dead. Insincerity made capital of feigned humiliation and contrition, till even the Roman theater noticed it. In one of the plays of the time, a camel, covered with a mourning cloth, was led on the stage. "Why is the camel in mourning?" asked one of the players. "Because the Jews are keeping the Sabbath year, and grow nothing, but are living on thistles. The camel is mourning because its food is thus taken from it."

Rabbis were forbidden to anoint themselves before going out, and it was recorded of a specially famous doctor that his face was black with fasting. All pretense was abhorrent to the soul of Jesus, especially in religion. "When ye fast," said he, "be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you they have their reward. But do thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face; that thou mayest not appear unto men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who sees in secret, will reward thee." To seek effect, applause, credit, or gain, by a show of godliness, must be shunned by members of the New Kingdom. It would be better to let men think evil of them, than to be tempted to use religion for ulterior ends. True pain and true sorrow hide from the eye of strangers; they withdraw to the secrecy of the breast.—*Geikie*.

"Openly." These words are omitted by nine MSS. in uncial letters; and by more than one hundred others, by most of the versions, and by several of the primitive fathers.—*Clarke*.

"Treasures in Heaven." The only way to render perishing goods eternal, to secure stately furniture from moths, the richest metals from canker, and precious stones from thieves, is to transmit them to Heaven by acts of charity. This is a kind of bill of exchange which cannot fail of acceptance, but through our own fault.—*Quesnel*.

"Judge not." Matt. 7: 1, 2. These verses do not forbid the magistrate to judge and pass sentence on criminals; or the rulers of the church to censure and exclude such members as disgrace their profession; or Christians to "withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly," for these are duties expressly enjoined in scripture. . . . But we ought not to be officious, rash, or severe, in forming our judgment; nor hasty in declaring it. We are not bound to believe an infidel or a profligate to be a true Christian: but we should judge as favorably as we can, where the fundamentals of Christianity are professed, and not disgraced by an inconsistent conduct.—*Scott*.

"Into thy bosom." Almost all ancient nations wore long, wide, and loose garments; and when about to carry anything which their hands could not contain, they used a fold of their robe in nearly the same way as women here use their aprons. The phrase is continually occurring in the best and purest Greek writers.—*Clarke*.

"The mote and beam." It is probable that our Lord alluded to some proverbial expressions familiar to his hearers, the knowledge of which would throw more light on the subject than any criticism on the original words can do. There was a proverbial speech among the Jews in and before Christ's time (set down afterward with some variation in the Talmud, thus) They which say to others, *Take out the small piece of wood out of thy teeth*, are answered, *Take out the beam out of thine eyes*: to check the importunity of those who are always censuring and condemning others for small matters when they themselves are guilty of those things which are much more to be reprehended.—*Hammond*.

"Pearls before swine." Many truths, and many instances of the Lord's goodness to us, which are precious to the humble and teachable, are not proper to be communicated to scoffers, or those who pervert sacred things: they will only be emboldened or exasperated by them to greater ungodliness, and to shew more impious rage and contempt. They will trample under foot, with disdain, all that can be said of experimental religion or communion with God, as swine would tread pearls in the mire, regardless of their value; and they will be so enraged at holy warnings, reproofs, and counsels, that, like fierce dogs, they will be ready to turn again and tear their friendly reprover.—*Scott*.

## THE CHEERY TEACHER.

YEARS ago I knew a class in which a disintegrating process was going on. It could not be kept together. Persistently the superintendent filled it up, bringing new recruits to make up the gaps which were always occurring in its ranks, but it was in vain. The boys could not stand the chill of its atmosphere, nor be natural under the influence of the good but dismal elder who taught it, and away they went to find brighter and more congenial places. It was in vain that the excellent man haunted his pastor's study, laboriously read this great book and the other, in desire to make the lesson interesting, and devoted, yes, spent himself, in efforts to keep the young men's Bible class, where he felt it should be, in the front of the school, a sort of shining light and example. In his hands it was a little more than a name, a tradition of a good thing that had been, and he at last resigned his task in absolute despair.

There followed him very quickly a gentleman not nearly so well educated, not nearly so thorough, not, at a casual glance, half so well fitted for the position. But before many Sundays had passed, everybody was talking about the change. The class rallied around the new leader. One young man brought another. Their blithe, eager faces, their cheery voices, their interested manner, showed that they enjoyed coming; and the good people who had been lamenting over the fact that the boys of this period so soon grew too large to go to Sunday-school, had reason to felicitate themselves on having been greatly mistaken.

Where was the secret? Both were good men. Both were anxious to teach well. The first was a failure, and the second a success.

It was no secret to any one who could read human nature. One had the magnetism of a happy, joyous, enthusiastic, temperament. He bore his light aloft on a candlestick, to be seen of all; the other, by reason of a naturally moody and melancholy disposition, which had grown morose through much brooding over trouble and loss, hid his light under a bushel. Young people were repelled from the one as certainly as they were attracted by the other characteristic.

You will have no difficulty in holding your growing-up boys, and your young ladies, if you bear in mind two facts; they must have good teaching, and they must have cheery teachers. The air around us is full of stimulus.

Information abounds. Wide awake girls and boys of this day have been, in the secular schools, under the influence of the most advanced minds, and the best text-books, and the most thorough preceptors. They will not rest contented with inefficient, half-digested, and second-hand instruction in the Sunday-school. They are willing to be students, and they want some one able to guide them. Then they will not—and who can blame them?—submit to sitting down among the toms when all the world is full of sunshine and gladness. Let us have cheery teachers, for their sakes.—*M. E. Sangster, in Sunday-school World*.

A QUESTION that ought to be asked in every Sabbath-school is, "To what extent do the teachers visit the scholars?" No teacher can keep his hold on his Sabbath-school scholars who does not visit them. And yet, in many schools nothing of the kind is done, while in others it is but partially done. How often should the visiting be? That depends. In the city, with the concentration of population, and the convenience of horse cars, it can be done oftener than in the country. But even in the country it should never be lost sight of. Every teacher ought to visit his scholars at least once every three months—four times a year. How often do you visit your scholars?



## The Signs of the Times.

"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

J. H. WAGGONER, . . . . . EDITOR.  
J. N. ANDREWS, }  
JAMES WHITE, } CORRESPONDING EDITORS.  
URIAH SMITH, }

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, MAY 19, 1881.

### A DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER.

"AND Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." Matt. 9:15.

Fasting is an expression of sorrow. It would not have been fitting while the Lord of life and glory was with his own. It is specially fitting in times of moral declension, backsliding, and when the cause of God is in deep affliction. All through the Bible we have such instances. When Israel fled before their enemies, they fasted. Josh. 7:7; Judges 20:26; 1 Sam. 7:6.

Moses, Elijah, and Christ, fasted even forty days. Ex. 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8; Matt. 4:2. When God's people fell into sin, and he could not consistently bless them because of this, fasting was one special means of grace to bring them into God's favor. Ezra 8:23; Neh. 1:4; 9:1. The most devoted servants of God, in times of anguish and spiritual darkness, have fasted and prayed for the outpouring of the Spirit. Dan. 9:3; 10:2; Acts 27:33; 2 Chron. 6:5; 11:27.

We have reached an age of great spiritual darkness. The possession of the form of godliness, with little of the power, is that which marks the age in which we live as the "last days" of the earth's history in its present state. In spite of all the light we have as a people, we are deeply afflicted with this spiritual apathy. We are very near the day of God, and do not sense it. We greatly need to humble our hearts before him with fasting, weeping, and earnest prayer. While others are rushing on with carelessness, surfeiting, and love of pleasure, we ought to feel our need of God, and seek him with all the heart.

Our camp-meeting season is just before us. How exceedingly important it is that these meetings should be spiritual seasons of great encouragement. Satan's power to harden the heart and make people unfeeling, seems to be stronger and stronger, so that our sermons do not have the success of former years. We must have, at least, a proportionate increase of God's blessing, to do the work committed to our hands. Our faithful missionaries are struggling hard to break through the barriers of long entrenched error, and let in the precious light of truth, to gladden honest souls. They have a hard battle to fight. They need the prayers and sympathy of all who love God, especially our beloved Bro. Andrews, one of the faithful pioneers in this work, who is struggling with disease which human power can never cure. Consumption seems to have marked him for the grave. But our God is a mighty God. He greatly blessed and strengthened him at the time of fasting last appointed; and we will continue to hope that he will hear the united prayers of our people in his behalf, and spare him to help us in this great work before us. Just at this juncture, when he has learned the language and become familiar with the situation, and has had encouraging success, his loss would be very great. God is blessing him spiritually with great peace and courage. His articles were never more clear or weighty. Shall not our united prayers, as a people, ascend to God in his behalf, for restoration to help as long as he lives? Shall we not fast before God, and humble our hearts before him, that we may not lose the valuable labors of this faithful man?

In accordance with these suggestions, we hereby appoint Sabbath, May 21, as a day of fasting and prayer. We recommend our people, when they can, to assemble in their places of worship, and read such portions of Scripture as relate to fasting and special answers to prayer, and that all our people humble their hearts before God, and seek him with all the heart. Pray that he may forgive our sins as a people, and bless our camp-meetings, encourage our ministers to labor faithfully in the work, and give us an outpouring of his Spirit; that he may bless our missionaries, and especially our beloved Bro. Andrews, if living,

and raise him to health again. May God greatly bless this appointed fast to the good of our people everywhere.  
GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

### HAVE MIRACLES CEASED?

IN a recent number of the SIGNS we noticed the answer of a D. D. to this question showing, as we think, that his answer was not satisfactory according to the Scriptures. The *Christian at Work*, which is generally alive to every question going, has solicited and received an answer to it from representatives of the several denominations all over the country. They nearly all affirm their belief that they have ceased. The exceptions are so few that we can easily notice them. Dr. Whedon, Methodist (New York), says:—

"I am unable to deny that miracles have taken place since the apostolic days, but am equally unable to specify any which I positively believe to be real. I should concur with the old New England divines in holding that miracles could only be the result of a special 'faith of miracles,' divinely conferred. With such a 'faith' consciously possessed, the Christian may look for the miraculous answer. Whether any at the present day are endowed with that faith, I am unable to say."

Dr. Geo. E. Pentecost, Congregationalist (Brooklyn), believes that every answer to prayer is miraculous. He says:—

"I believe that Christians pray to God, not to 'nature' or to 'law,' and that God answers prayer. I believe that God often answers prayer in so wonderful a manner as to put the answer, almost, in the category of the 'miraculous,' in the popular sense of that term. We are to expect that God hears and answers prayer."

Beyond this he does not believe in miracles, such as are recorded in the New Testament.

Dr. Leon Walker, Congregationalist, (Hartford), says:—

"I think Christian people should be slow to deny the fact of post-apostolic miracles, or the probability of such answers to prayer as properly may be classed as supernatural interposition for human help. A great body of facts, all along the tract of history, seems to indicate that such interposals have actually occurred. There is nothing more irrational in the belief of their occurrence now than in the apostolic times. I do not dare to say they do not."

Dr. Edward Judson, Baptist (Orange, N. J.), gives a brief word as follows:—

"I am not yet prepared to formulate my views on the question whether or no miracles are discontinued."

Dr. Gordon, Baptist, (Boston), is the most decided. He says:—

"I believe that the promise of the signs following those that believe (Mark 16:17) was given to believers in all time. Unless the testimony of nearly all the Christian fathers is set aside, these miraculous signs continued in the church for more than two hundred years after Christ. The statements of the fathers are most explicit on that point, and so eminent an authority as Uhlhorn declares that their testimony is such as to put the matter beyond reasonable doubt. I believe that the promise of miraculous healing of the sick is especially explicit, that the declaration of Scripture, 'The prayer of faith will save the sick,' is applicable to all time, and that it has been honored in many instances in our own times."

Dr. Gordon is a literalist in reference to the prophecies concerning the coming of the Lord. He repudiates the prevailing mystical views of this subject.

But Dr. Pentecost does not believe in the continuance of miracles such as Christ and the apostles wrought. So he is scarcely a believer after all. And Dr. Walker thinks that "prayer for physical blessings rests on a very much smaller basis of promise and probability than for spiritual." Hence, he is but a partial believer. If blessings are received in measure by the Saviour's rule: "according to your faith," the tangible blessings in answer to prayer in this age must necessarily be small and rare.

### WORTH THINKING OF.

IN the *Sabbath Memorial* of April, 1881, published by Bro. Wm. M. Jones, London, a Seventh-day Baptist, we find the following editorial note:—

"Is Judas Iscariot extinct? Because, in our daily lesson in Arabic this morning, First day, 27, II, '81, we have just read, perhaps for the twentieth time, Matt. 27:5,—*thumma madda wa khanaka nafsahu*—that is, he [Judas] went away and strangled his soul! So read the Malta and Beyrout translations. A translation of 1671, reads,—*wa madda wa khanaka nafsahu bi-rasan*,—and went away and strangled his soul with a halter [possibly stolen from a donkey!]. All three are orthodox translations. What will Doctors of Divinity and Physic say to this?"

If the Doctors have carefully examined the doctrine of the soul, the Scripture usage of the word *neh-phesh*,—and this usage is decisive as authority,—they will say that these Arabic translators are quite correct, and fully justified by usage. The primary idea of *neh-phesh* is that of person or self. The best critics, such as Dr. Clarke, plainly say so. It is used in the Old Testament about 750 times, and it refers to the person about 700 times, either directly or indirectly. In a large number of instances no other rendering can possibly be given to it, and any meaning other than this is tropical. We feel prepared to verify our statements, for we have examined every instance of the occurrence of this word in the Hebrew Scriptures, and these give the primary meaning as it was used thousands of years before the writing of the Greek Scriptures. It is unfortunate that writers on the New Testament, to maintain their theories, have decided on the meaning of the word *psuche*, and then, by a few texts, decided on its use, without carefully examining the usage of its Hebrew equivalent, *neh-phesh*. Such a course, instead of establishing the truth, can only settle the reader more deeply in error.

We wish that many would do as Bro. Jones did, read it twenty times and meditate on the truth it contains. But we care very little what "Doctors of Divinity and Physic" say of it, unless they have examined it thoroughly and without prejudice.

### NOT EVANGELICAL.

A PERSON in Iowa takes us severely to task for some expressions in the article, "Scarcely Answered," which noticed the reply of the *Advance* to a Catholic. He quotes these words from us: "The denomination to which President Garfield belongs is quite numerous and claims to be evangelical." On this he remarks:—

"Wrong here: It is denied that they are evangelical, and have been denied admittance into and with all the alliances. Not so much as admitting them into the Young Men's Christian Association," etc.

This person, who appears to belong to that denomination, has mistaken the drift altogether. We said it "claims to be evangelical." Does it or does it not? We did not affirm that it is so; in fact, we have very strong doubts on that subject. We may have spoken too strongly when we said it is generally fraternized by others. We know it has been on occasions which have come under our notice. This has been generally in the northern States. We are aware that in the South, where they are the most numerous, the Baptists have waged an uncompromising warfare against them; or they against the Baptists, we are not sure which it is. As neighbors they do not seem to have a peaceful time.

### THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K. G., ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

WE have received the following from the "Victoria Institute, or Philosophical Society of Great Britain," with a request to publish it in the SIGNS. We cheerfully do so, as we think it will be of interest to all our readers.

"A few years ago the attacks made upon religion by some men of science, led to the foundation of a Society to investigate all philosophical or scientific questions, more especially those said to militate against the truths of revelation, and to publish the results to its members in a quarterly journal; this Society, which was called the Victoria Institute, or Philosophical Society of Great Britain, has now a house at 7, Adelphi Terrace, London, and boasts of 900 members, each paying a small annual subscription, amongst whom are many leading men of science. The Archbishop of Canterbury, and several English, Colonial, and American prelates have also joined it. Having been founded under Lord Shaftesbury's auspices, his lordship takes much interest in its progress, which he recently described as follows:—

"I was present at the very birth of this Society, when an address was delivered in a small, dark room. I had no conception at that time of the work which the Society would do, and of the position which it would hold, not only at home, but also, as it is now beginning to do, in America, and our Colonies. I had no expectation whatever, of seeing the Society assume such magnificent proportions, and from the bottom of my heart I thank Almighty God that he has so prospered our efforts (cheers). The object with which this Society was formed, was not merely to beat down the views



of others, not to be antagonistic to the progress of science, but to do all that we could for the development of truth, and, if I may use the phrase, to give religion "fair play." This Society was not founded to establish either one opinion or another. It was not started for the purpose of setting up the Bible against science. The object of the Society was, that science should have fair play, that the truth should be told on all sides, and that we might get rid of the despotism of certain scientific men (hear, hear). Because it is perfectly well-known that men of science, with all their sublime and mighty notions, are as despotic as the weakest of the human race, and they are exercising their despotic sway to a remarkable extent over a very large number of rising young men, who are either fascinated by what they have read and discovered or are crushed by the authority of a few great names. It was in order, as I have said, that science should have fair play that this Institute was established, and the blessing of God has so rested upon it that it has at last taken a hold in public estimation."

#### THE SABBATH, AGAIN.

A FEW weeks ago we copied a good answer which the *Christian at Work* gave to the *Advance* (of Chicago) on the modification of the fourth commandment. The *Advance* tried to justify itself by the customary dodge of an indefinite seventh day, to which the *C. at W.* replies as follows:—

"The *Advance*: 'The Christian Sabbath is as truly the seventh day as the Jewish Sabbath.' Oh no;—perhaps if you had been an Israelite in the time of Moses or Joshua, and had worked on Saturday, and made your 'seventh day' to be Sunday, you would have found out the difference. The Jews, if the *Advance* please, had a chronology of their own, and the seventh day meant the seventh day and not the first. Is Chicago the place where folk drop a day and take up another? It seems to be?"

That is true; "the seventh day meant the seventh day and not the first," and so it does still. And nothing but prejudice can prevent any one seeing it.

And now we would like to know if the *Christian at Work* thinks the fourth commandment is modified? And if so, by what action, and by whom? What is its principle of Sunday observance?

#### THE BAPTIST CONVENTION.

THIS Convention met in Dixon, May 11. It had been expected that there would be a division, as several churches were anxious to follow in the wake of the Stockton church, which had refused to entertain the Convention because Kallloch was fellowshipped. A discussion over the powers of the Convention sprang up, when Dr. Abbott of Oakland, editor of the *Herald of Truth*, asked if the Convention could not refuse admittance to a church, unsound in faith and whose practice was contrary to that of the Baptists; to which Dr. Kallloch replied that it had no authority to do so, and it would not be consistent (as Baptist) if it did. A division followed, and those who were opposed to Dr. Kallloch withdrew to the Presbyterian house, and organized as a Convention.

A secular paper of this State, speaking of this action, said:—

"Outside all this is the broader question which this schism in the Baptist church suggests. 'What influence will it have upon the world?' Is it calculated to create respect for church assemblies in the minds of sensible people, or is it not rather calculated to bring them into contempt? We suspect the latter will be the main result. There is not overmuch reverence for sacred things among our population at the best of times, and this event will weaken what little there may be left."

But we think not so. When soundness of faith and practice cease to be requisites to fellowship in a professed Christian body, then the sooner a "schism" follows the better; especially where the phrase, "faith and practice," includes all that it does in this case. We have the confidence in the good sense of those who are called "worldlings" to believe that respect for "church assemblies" will be increased by such action. If we may judge from the tone of the papers, both secular and religious, both east and west, the Baptists of California have been in great danger of losing the respect of almost everybody. We cannot imagine why any church or church delegates should object to the closest application of the principles of faith and practice as held by their own churches, unless they

feared the test of the application to themselves. And we believe that this will be the judgment of the people at large, whether in or out of church relations.

#### TRIALS WILL COME.

BY ELD. R. F. COTTRELL.

"It must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." Matt. 18:7. "For there must be also heresies [margin, sects] among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." 1 Cor. 11:19.

We may expect that trials, offenses, and apostasies, will come. These should not discourage us, "as though some strange thing" had happened to us. The primitive church was not free from these things, and we should not expect to be. There was a Judas among the chosen twelve; and when Jesus was betrayed and apprehended, the disciples present forsook him and fled; and Peter went so far as to deny, with cursing and swearing, that he knew him. But, thanks to our merciful Saviour, he was converted and restored to favor.

Terrible sins were discovered in the church, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira and the person mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. 5. The Corinthian church also got divided up into factions or sects, into Paulites, Apollosites, Cephasites, etc. And besides this, the church had become so disorderly that they could not come together to eat the Lord's supper and do it in a decent and proper manner. See chap. 11:17-34. Such abuses the apostle was constrained to rebuke sharply, as he afterwards directed Titus to do in such cases, in order that they might be sound in the faith.

Paul knew what it was to stand in defense of the truth, when none stood with him, but all forsook him. 2 Tim. 4:14-17. Behold the apostle standing alone, forsaken of his brethren who should have stood by him. But the Lord was with him and strengthened him; and in behalf of his brethren that deserted him, he had grace to pray that it might not be laid to their charge. He had confidence in the truth, while some were laboring to overthrow the faith. He knew that the foundation of God stood sure—that the Lord knew his faithful servants and would approve their course. 2 Tim. 2:17-19. Large numbers of those for whom the apostle had labored, bringing them into the truth, turned away from the aged prisoner of the Lord, so that he could say, "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me." Chap. 1:15. Perhaps they were ashamed to recognize him in his bonds; and they may have thought the condition he was in was evidence that the Lord had removed him from the work. But Onesiphorus oft refreshed his spirit, not being ashamed of him, though he was bound with a chain. Verse 16.

The venerable apostle John, beloved of the Lord, had experience also of a similar kind. 3 John 9, 10. Diotrephes, who loved to have the pre-eminence in the church, would not receive the advice of the aged apostle, who leaned on Jesus' breast at the last supper, but prated against him, with malicious words, nor would he receive the brethren who were laboring in harmony with the apostle, and those that were in favor of receiving them he cast out of the church.

If such were the trials of the primitive church, should like things, occurring amid the perils of the last days, weaken our faith in regard to the work of God? Not in the least. But if all things went smoothly, we might have reason to doubt. It is enough for the servant to be as his Lord. Many of Jesus' disciples went back and walked no more with him, at one time. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" The reply of Simon Peter was sensible: "To whom shall we go?" Before he left, he wished to be sure of something better which would be gained by an exchange. And if any now are tempted to leave this cause, it will be wise for them to inquire beforehand where they are going. Is there something better to choose?

The foundation of God stands sure. This message is the truth. It is sent of God. In it are the words of eternal life. Whatever trials may come, whoever goes away, here will we abide. There is no place of safety to which we may retreat. Our only safety is in moving forward with the work of the Lord.

A FAITHFUL minister is the most precious visible gift that Christ has to offer to his people.—*Christian Secretary*.

#### THE RIVER JORDAN.

BY ELD. S. N. HASKELL.

IN some respects this is the most remarkable river in the world. It is unlike all others in many particulars. No other river is so wonderful in its historical memories; no other has so many hallowed and sacred associations. It is THE RIVER of the holy land. Nearly all of the great events of scripture history from the patriarchs to the apostles, have been more or less connected with it. Its banks have been the scene of the most stupendous miracles the world has ever witnessed, evincing the love and power of God and also his judgments. As the priests dipped their feet in its angry, rushing waters, which at that time overflowed all of its several banks, they parted before the ark of God and all Israel passed over upon dry land. Twice did the waters divide when touched by Elijah's mantle. Once, at the bidding of the prophet, the iron axe rose from its bed and floated on its surface. In obedience to his directions, the healing virtues of its waters proved to the proud Syrian the fallacy of his sneering exclamation, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" But the event which surpassed all others in importance was the baptism of the Son of God, when, in answer to his prayer, which ascended from its banks, the Holy Spirit descended upon him, and a voice came from the Father giving his sanction to the Son and his mission to this earth, in these words, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." All these things make the memory of this stream sacred to the child of God.

The lake of this river also is associated with many of the noted events and miracles of our Saviour's life. There did the storm-tossed billows hear and obey the voice of their creator. It was there that our Saviour walked upon the face of the deep. Obedient to his will, the fishes filled the net of the disciples after they had toiled all night and caught nothing. Along these shores the lame walked, the deaf heard, the sick were healed, the lepers were cleansed, and the dead were raised to life again. Surely every spot along the banks of this river and lake is holy ground, and their names are not only emblazoned on the pages of history, but enshrined in every Christian's heart.

The principal fountain or source of the Jordan is at the base of the everlasting snow-capped Hermon which is on a level with the ocean. It descends rapidly through its whole course about one hundred miles, winding back and forth in its irregular and crooked course until it empties itself into the Dead Sea, which has a depression of thirteen hundred and twelve feet. The whole valley of the Jordan is therefore a huge rent or fissure in the earth's crust. At the southern extremity of this mysterious lake the climate and productions are those of the tropics, while the mountains at the source of the Jordan are covered with perpetual snow. The waters of the Dead Sea flow over the spot where once stood the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The lime-rock upon which the sea flows causes an evaporation of its waters sufficient to dispose of the immense quantity emptied into it by the Jordan and other smaller streams.

THE Boston *Herald* concludes an editorial review of California thus: "The spirit of business enterprise there has never been favorable to individual development. Every movement has been controlled by rings. Men have not sought for new undertakings on account of the legitimate profits to be made therefrom, but for the purpose of establishing a monopoly which will allow them to tax the rest of the community. There has been monopoly in land, grain, meat, and in fact of about everything into which monopoly could enter. The salvation of the State has been its prodigious wheat harvests, but even in these the gain has been much less than it might have been if shipments could have been made from San Francisco, with the small port charges that obtain in this city, for example. As it is, San Francisco is the most expensive port in the world to ship-owners, and in consequence of this same tendency toward monopoly. How this thing will end it is hard to say. With greater natural advantages than any other part of our country, California is not now making the progress that many other States are. Its opportunities have been wasted, and considered as a whole, its people are poor and dissatisfied, when they should have been well-to-do and contented. That under these circumstances it is a tempting field for investment of Eastern capital, is an assertion open to grave doubts."



## DANGERS.

THE sailor finds his special dangers near the end of his voyage, at the coast landing. That is the place for shipwrecks. According to the prophetic scriptures, the last part of the Christian voyage on the old ship Zion, will be particularly *perilous*. Says the apostle: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." That we are now living in perilous times, no one can doubt, who is a careful observer of the signs of the times. Satan is making special efforts, in various ways, to destroy the church of Christ. Pride, covetousness, envy, jealousy, ambition, love of the world, pleasure parties, fun, frolic, fashion, vanity, hatred, variance, and other evils are brought to bear upon Christian pilgrims with great force in these last days. Every artifice that demons can use to conquer the soldier of the cross, is being employed by the powers of darkness. He who steps aside from the narrow path will find himself at once beset by strong foes, bent on his ruin; but he who keeps continually in Christ, has nothing to fear. He who attempts to meet the enemies of the cross in his own strength is sure to be defeated.

The perils of these last days seem peculiar. One of them, as foretold by Paul, is this: "Despisers of those that are good." He speaks of them as "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." "Godliness" is God-likeness, or being like God. "The power of godliness" is vested in the Holy Spirit. Hence, those who have "the form of godliness," without the power, must be those who are opposed to holiness, and hold the truth in unrighteousness. Such will be "despisers of those that are good." Being "despisers" of course they will manifest that spite by unchristian treatment of those whom they despise. Their spite arises from natural enmity of the human heart against holiness. So long as the heart is impure, so long it is hostile to what is good. When a root of bitterness takes possession, a grudge, hatred, or variance, towards one that is good, it often becomes very bitter, and will spare no pains to ruin the innocent.

In these last days, Satan is exceedingly busy in this direction, consequently, there is special "danger" of being caught in this snare. His chief object seems to be to pull down the "good." To accomplish this result, every possible means will be employed. One of his most successful modes of attack is by misrepresentation, slander, lying, and making false charges against the "good." This he did towards Jesus and the martyrs. But so long as this cruel treatment is borne patiently, Satan is defeated in his efforts. When Jesus was reviled, he "reviled not again." When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. We are taught to arm ourselves with the mind that was in Christ. Again, the Scriptures say: "What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it *patiently*, this is acceptable with God." The great danger to the good consists in his liability to get out of patience with the one who misrepresents and abuses him. There is also special danger that his *friends* get out of patience, on account of their sympathy for the abused person. They often say, we would not mind it, if it had been spoken against *us*; but we will not see our innocent brother or sister in Christ abused. No doubt Peter had some of that feeling when he cut off the man's ear, who was arresting Jesus. He who would be a true Christian must decide to bear *patiently* all kinds of abuse that can be heaped upon him by those who despise the good, otherwise, Satan will get the advantage. No matter what is said or done to injure him, the good man must bear it all in a kind spirit, praying for his enemies.—*Sel.*

THERE is much in the expression of the poet: "Guard well your thoughts; your thoughts are heard in heaven." Our musings and meditations, all our fitting emotions and thoughts, of which men know nothing,—these are fully understood in the world above. How careful should we be to think only that which is good, and that of which we will be willing to give an account.

THERE are no accidents; all history is but the fulfilling of prophecy, and all events are the results of what has preceded.—*Golden Censer.*

NEVER trouble another for what you can do yourself.

## The Missionary.

## THE CAUSE IN ENGLAND.

THE quarterly meeting of the National Tract and Missionary Society of Great Britain is just passed. The report of labor for this quarter is as follows:—

No. of members.....	27
No. that reported.....	16
No. of families visited.....	1,389
No. of letters sent out.....	4,275
No. of letters received.....	222
No. of new subscribers obtained.....	28
No. of pp. of tracts and pamphlets loaned.....	18,925
No. of pp. of tracts given away.....	14,883
No. of pp. of tracts sold.....	8,181
Total.....	41,989
No. of periodicals sent by post.....	8,903
No. otherwise distributed.....	1,218
No. sold.....	581
Total.....	10,702
Amount of money received from book sales.....	\$34.50
By donation to society.....	2.05
Total.....	\$36.55
No. of ships visited.....	108

In the number of papers and letters posted, and in letters and subscribers received, this report is an improvement over that of last quarter. We hope to do still better during the quarter on which we have just entered. The few who have reported have been quite busy, and as the weather becomes more favorable, we hope to see more engaged in this work. If this is the case, we look for improvement in other branches of the missionary work.

Since my last report we have received many interesting letters from those to whom we have sent copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I can quote only from a few of the many.

One person writing from Kent, who has been reading the SIGNS a few weeks says, "I beg to express my satisfaction with the contents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Another from near Canterbury, who has been reading for a year, writes, "How thankful I am that you are so kind as to send me the SIGNS. I have read the Bible all my days, but I have learned more of it through reading the SIGNS than ever I knew before in all the fourscore years I have lived. The Bible is so nicely explained in the SIGNS. I continue to make one paper do for two or three families by changing them about, and then I mail them to my friends living round about in the towns. I give them your address, so if they wish, they can subscribe for the paper. Please inform me the price per year. I do not expect, at my age, to be in this world much longer. I want to do what good I can."

One writing from Northamptonshire says, "I am very much pleased, indeed, with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but there is one little fault only, so it seems to me, and that is that they contain rather old news when they arrive here, but I suppose that it is to be accounted for by the distance they have to come."

Another writing from Essex says, "It gives me much pleasure to read the papers, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so kindly sent me, and to show my appreciation of the same, I inclose stamps for subscription in order to have the continued pleasure of perusing your paper."

One from Berkshire inclosing a year's subscription says, "I am much pleased with your paper, and will do all I can for you by circulating it among my friends."

Another, inclosing pay for the paper, says, "I find the SIGNS very profitable reading. There is a high Christian tone about the articles that pleases me much. I have not yet been able to consider the subject that you have taken up, namely, the "Personality of the Devil," but I hope to do so, with a desire to get clear and truthful views on a subject I have found difficult to understand."

We have only room to quote one more this time. It is from one who writes to renew his subscription; he says; "I have read your letters respecting Mr. R. Robert's lectures with considerable interest. I am very glad you have so ably confuted those erroneous ideas which cannot but proceed from his too vivid imagination. I wish everybody could read them; for I am led to believe that, though he may do it ignorantly, he has been the means of driving a great many believers over to Mr. Bradlaugh's views."

We give these letters only as a sample of the words of good cheer that come in to encourage us in this branch of our work.

On the 12th of April, we had the pleasure of one-half hour's conversation with Bro. Matteson on the steamer *Necker*, which made a halt in Southampton Waters, on its way to Bremen from New York. We were indeed glad to see his face once more, but should have been much better pleased could he have spent a week or more with us. We were also pleased to meet sister Bertha Stein, from Oakland, California, who left the steamer and accompanied us to our house where she tarried one day. She was on her way to Germany to visit her native home, and induce, if possible, her friends to become interested in the views she holds so dear.

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH.

## NEW CASTLE, CAL.

I REACHED Fairfield the 28th, where I remained four days. Two embraced the Sabbath who had never heard our people preach before. Have been here ten days encouraging the fifteen brothers and sisters of this place, who have covenanted together to keep the commandments of God. Last Sabbath I baptized seven, at which time the Spirit of God seemed especially near, as also during the celebration of the ordinances. A T. and M. Society of nine members has been organized.

E. A. BRIGGS.

May 13, 1881.

## GUERNEVILLE, SONOMA CO., CAL.

WE closed our meetings in Guerneville, Sunday, May 1. Five have decided to keep the commandments of God. They have a Sabbath-school of eleven members.

W. C. GRAINGER.

ISAAC MORRISON.

## GLEANINGS FROM THE FIELD.

MAINE, *Milton*.—Bro. S. J. Hersum writes, April 25, that he has held twenty meetings in Milton, and six have commenced to serve the Lord.

WISCONSIN, *Sturgeon Bay*.—April 20, Bro. A. R. Johnson writes: I have been laboring in this vicinity about five weeks. Six have decided to obey God, and others respect the Lord's day by not working on it. Three subscribers have been obtained for the *Instructor*, two for the SIGNS, one for the *Review*, six for the *Advent Tidende*, one for the *Sevensk Harolden*, and one for the German paper.

MICHIGAN, *Geneva*.—Bro. R. C. Horton reports that he gave thirteen discourses there, and though he met with opposition, five persons, all heads of families, have taken their stand upon the side of the truth.

KANSAS, *Alta*.—Eld. G. H. Rogers reports, April 18, having organized a Missionary Society, and taken subscribers for periodicals as follows: for the SIGNS, 15; *Instructor*, 10; and one for *Good Health*. Nearly all have signed the "teetotal pledge."

Big Timber.—April 18, Brn. Cook and Enoch, report holding meetings there April 5-14. Six started, for the first time, to serve the Lord, and eight were baptized, and the church much strengthened and encouraged.

Moline and Grenola.—Eld. Smith Sharp writes that eight were baptized in Moline, Kansas, April 17. Also, he held five meetings in Grenola, and five were there baptized.

MISSOURI.—April 22, Bro. J. G. Wood reports labors in North-eastern Missouri. At Green Top labored ten days; two were baptized, and a Tract Society formed. In Macon county, four persons, heads of families, were baptized, in one place, and one in another place near Macon City.

The reports from all parts of the field, are generally encouraging.

## AN INCIDENT WITH A MORAL.

A PREACHER in a Western State, being called upon by Bishop Morris to report his missionary collection in open Conference, made this statement:—

"At the last Conference I was sent to a church that had never done much for missions. All they permitted was a plate collection once a year. When I went there the church needed repairing, and the parsonage must be rebuilt; and having to raise so much money for themselves, they resolved that they must withhold their usual missionary contribution, for that year at least, and the pastor accordingly was requested not to present the cause. As they presented the case to



me, it seemed almost a case of necessity. I fell into the trap, and we agreed to take no missionary collection.

"The very next Sunday, as was my custom, I invited persons to come forward. Among those who presented themselves was a young girl who had been away to school, but whose mother was very sick, and had called her home to attend to her. As she handed me her certificate of membership, she asked me if we had appointed our missionary collectors for the year, saying that she had been one of the collectors in the church where she had attended school—that she loved the work, and would be glad to continue in it. I stated to her the action of the official board, and that we would not raise any missionary money this year. Her countenance fell. She was sad, and returned to her pew. Early the next morning she called on me for a collector's book. I told her I had none—indeed, there had never been one in that church. Whereupon she wrote to her former pastor, requesting him to send her a missionary collector's book. In due course of mail it came, and she presented it to me that I should certify to her good character, and that she was authorized to receive money for the support of missions.

"The whole affair soon passed out of my mind. We repaired the church, we rebuilt the parsonage, and the bills were paid. Yesterday morning, when starting for Conference, I saw that young girl coming through the gate and up the walk to my house. As she came in she said, 'I understand you are going to Conference.' 'Yes,' was the reply. 'Here,' she said, 'is a little missionary money which I have gathered during the year,' and the faithful girl counted out seventy-six dollars which she had quietly collected in a church and community where they had never given more than twenty-five dollars under the most stirring appeals of the pastor, and when they had resolved to withhold even this amount for that year! Bishop, my missionary collection is seventy-six dollars."

This incident, adds Bishop Harris, is full of instruction and encouragement. If all our people are trained to love the cause of missions, and act for it, as was this young Christian, there is no power on earth or in hell, that can overthrow the missionary enterprise, or at all embarrass it.—*Methodist Recorder*.

## Temperance.

### A RIGHTEOUS SENTENCE.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following extract from a sentence pronounced by Judge Reading, of Chicago, upon the liquor dealers who had violated the law by selling rum to minors. The terrible sarcasm it contains is a powerful sermon on the whole business of rum-selling:—

"By the law you may sell it to men and women if they will buy. You have given your bond and paid your license to sell to them, and no one has a right to molest you in your legal business. No matter what the consequences may be, no matter what poverty and destitution are produced by your selling according to law, you have paid your money for this privilege, and you are licensed to pursue your calling. No matter what families are distracted and rendered miserable; no matter what wives are treated with violence; what children starve or mourn over the degradation of a parent—your business is legalized, and no one may interfere with you for it. No matter what mother may agonize over the loss of a son, or sister blush at the shame of a brother, you have a right to disregard them all, and pursue your legal calling—you are licensed. You may fit up your lawful place of business in the most enticing and captivating form; you may furnish it with the most costly and elegant equipment for your own lawful trade; you may fill it with the allurements of amusement; you may skillfully arrange and expose to view your choicest wines and captivating beverages; you may induce thirst by all contrivances to produce a raging appetite for drink, and then you may supply that appetite to the full; because it is lawful; you have paid for it—you have a license. You may allow boys and children to frequent your saloon; they may witness the apparent satisfaction with which their seniors quaff the sparkling glass; you may be schooling and training them for the period of twenty-one, when they, too, can participate—for all this is lawful. You may hold the cup to their lips; but

you must not let them drink—that is unlawful. For, while you have all these privileges for the money you pay, this privilege of selling to children is denied you. Here parents have the right to say, 'leave my son to me until the law gives you a right to destroy him. Do not anticipate that terrible moment when I can assert for him no further rights of protection. That will be soon enough for me, for his sister, for his mother, for his friends, for the community, to see him take the road to death. Give him to us in his childhood at least. Let us have a few hours of his youth, in which we can enjoy his innocence, to repay us in some degree for the care and love we have lavished upon him.'

"This is something which you, who now stand prisoners at the bar, have not paid for; this is not embraced in your license. For this offense, the Court sentences you to ten days' imprisonment in the county jail, and that you pay a fine of seventy-five dollars and costs, and that you stand committed until the fine and costs of this prosecution are paid."

### A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

GOVERNOR ST. JOHN, the temperance governor of Kansas, in a speech in an Eastern city, recently related the following touching story:—

A heart-broken woman came into his office with a babe in her arms to beg the pardon of her husband, who was under sentence of ten years' imprisonment in the penitentiary for homicide. She showed papers recommending the pardon from the judge who tried the man, the prosecuting attorney, and other prominent men. After closely examining the papers he said, "If I were to consult my personal feelings, I should gladly let your husband go, but I am bound by my official duty, and that forbids it." The woman fell at his feet in a paroxysm of weeping. "Then hear me," she cried, "till I tell you how he came to be where he is. We were married seven years ago; we went to a town (mentioning the place), and there in our little village we were happy. My husband was sober, industrious, and thrifty. By great exertion and self-denial we finally got our home paid for. But in an evil day the State licensed a saloon, and let it plant itself right between my husband's shop and our house. He was prospering so well that he could leave his business in other hands and lose an hour or two without feeling it. He was solicited to enter this saloon, and weakly yielded. Hour after hour he spent there, playing cards. One day he became embroiled in a drunken quarrel, and, fired by drink, struck a man and killed him. He was tried and sent to the penitentiary for ten years. I had nothing to live on. By and by the sheriff turned us out of our comfortable home into a rough shanty, neither lathed nor plastered. The cold wind came in through the walls and ceiling. My oldest boy took sick and died. Then little Tommy, my next, fell sick and died. Now this babe in my arms is sick, and I have nowhere to take it. The State licensed that saloon; the State murdered my children; and now in God's name I want you to set my husband free." I said I would—and I did.

### CONCERNING BEDROOMS.

A PHYSICIAN was lately called to prescribe for a young lady who lives in one of the most charming villages in Learnedville.

"Nothing the matter with her," she declared, "nothing but terrible headaches." Every morning she waked with a headache and it lasted nearly half the day. It had been going on for months—ever since they moved into their new house. The old doctor tried all the old remedies and they all failed. Riding and archery were faithfully tested, study and practice were cheerfully given up. Nothing did any good.

"Will you let me see your bedroom?" asked the doctor one day, and he was shown up into the prettiest little nest imaginable.

Nothing wrong about the ventilation. The windows were high and broad and left open every night, the patient said. The bed stood in one corner against the wall.

"How do you sleep?" says the doctor.

"On my right side at the back of the bed, with my face to the wall. Lou likes the front best."

"The dickens she does!" says the doctor. "So do I. Will you do me the favor to wheel the bed into the middle of the room and sleep so for a week? Then let me know about the headaches."

Doctors are so absurd! The middle of the room indeed! And there were the windows on one side, and the two doors on the other two sides, and the mantel with its Macrame lambrequin on the fourth side. There was no place for the bed but just where it stood, in the corner.

"Never mind! Sacrifice your lambrequin," urged the doctor—"just for a week, you know."

The lambrequin was sacrificed; the bed moved where it had free air on both sides, and the headaches disappeared.

It may be only an exceptionally delicate system that would be induced to actual headache by breathing all night the reflected air from a wall. Yet possibly some of the morning dullness we know of may be traceable to a like cause. At any rate, plenty of breathing space around a bed can only be an advantage to everybody.

In visiting three or four newly-built and beautiful houses, recently, the lack of a good place for the bed was the most striking feature of the bedrooms. Some of these rooms were finished in shining mahogany, ebony, or walnut. Some were hung with rich modern tapestry. All were elegant and a few were airy. But in the most of the best of them, where was the bed to stand? A bay-window, perhaps, would occupy the middle of one side, another window another, a door another, a mantlepiece another.—*Sophy Winthrop, in Christian Union*.

REV. G. A. BAILEY of Los Angeles related his experience, as Methodist preachers sometimes do—Paul did so in his day. In Los Angeles the people to whom "Papa Bailey" ministered were all in the habit of drinking moderately. They did not think it wrong. He labored faithfully to change their habits. On a certain occasion he was invited to be present at a birthday party. A young man had reached his majority. A splendid dinner was prepared. All the friends were present. The guests were taken to the table and "Papa Bailey" was requested to ask a blessing. Casting his eye over the dishes he saw several bottles of whisky and wine. He turned to his hostess and said: "I cannot ask God's blessing on the food till all liquor is taken away." The madam apologized, but did not take away the bottles. Again he was requested to "say grace." His answer was, "I cannot do it!" And turning to his daughter he said, "Come, Eliza—let us go home. This is no place for us!" And so he left them to engage in their revelry.

Of course he gave offense and made the work hard for himself. But he was true, and God's blessing will rest on such testimony in favor of sobriety.

ANOTHER suit under the civil damage act has ended in a verdict adverse to the liquor seller. A saloon-keeper appeared at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., court-house last week as defendant in a suit brought by the wife of a drunkard. The woman saw her husband go to the saloon on a Sunday morning last fall, and she followed him and begged of the proprietor not to sell him any more rum. He refused her entreaties, and her husband got drunk and went back to his home, where, maddened by liquor, he beat and kicked the poor woman in a most shameful manner, planting the heavy heels of his coarse boots in her side repeatedly. She suffered serious injuries, and she sued the saloon-keeper for damages, bringing her husband as a witness. The judge charged the jury that the fact of the illegal selling being admitted, and also that it occurred on Sunday, the statute gave the plaintiff a legal right of action. After a short absence the jury returned with a verdict for plaintiff of \$525. A few more verdicts of this character will, it may be hoped, render the vendors of the poison more attentive to the entreaties of distressed wives.

### A PERMANENT INJURY.

THERE are constantly crowding into our insane asylums persons fifty to eighty years of age, who in early life were addicted to the use of alcoholic liquors, but who have reformed, and for ten, twenty, or thirty years, have never touched a drop. The injury which the liquor did to their bodies seemed to have all disappeared, being triumphed over by the full vigor of their manhood, but when their natural force began to decrease, then the concealed mischief showed itself in insanity, clearly demonstrating that the injury to their bodies was of a permanent character.



## The Home Circle.

## OUR LITTLE FOLKS.

WHEN the lessons and tasks are all ended,  
And the school for the day is dismissed,  
And the little ones gather around me  
To bid me good-night, and be kissed;  
Oh! the little white arms that encircle  
My neck in a tender embrace!  
Oh! the smiles that are halos of Heaven,  
Shedding sunshine of love on my face!

And when they are gone, I sit dreaming  
Of my childhood, too lovely to last;  
Of love that my heart will remember,  
When it wakes to the pulse of the past,  
Ere the world and its wickedness made me  
A partner of sorrow and sin;  
When the glory of God was about me,  
And the glory of gladness within.

Oh, my heart grows weak as a woman's,  
And the fountains of feeling will flow;  
When I think of the paths steep and stony  
Where the feet of the dear ones must go;  
Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,  
Of the tempest of fate blowing wild—  
Oh! there is nothing on earth half so holy  
As the innocent face of a child.

They are idols of hearts and of households;  
They are angels of God in disguise;  
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses,  
His glory still gleams in their eyes.  
Oh, those truants from home and from Heaven,  
They have made me more manly and mild!  
And I know how Jesus could liken  
The kingdom of God to a child.

I ask not a life for the dear ones  
All radiant—as others have done,  
But that life may have just enough shadow  
To temper the glare of the sun.  
I would pray God to guard them from evil,  
But my prayer would bound back to myself;  
Ah! a seraph may pray for a sinner,  
But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bended,  
I have banished the rule and the rod;  
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge—  
They have taught me the goodness of God.  
My heart is a dungeon of darkness  
Where I shut them from breaking a rule;  
My frown is sufficient correction,  
My love is the law of the school.

I shall leave the old house in the autumn  
To traverse its threshold no more;  
Ah, how shall I sigh for the dear ones  
That meet me each morn at the door!  
I shall miss the good-nights and the kisses,  
And the gush of their innocent glee;  
The group on the green, and the flowers  
That are brought every morning to me.

I shall miss them at morn and at even,  
Their songs in the school and the street;  
I shall miss the low hum of their voices,  
And the tramp of their delicate feet.  
When the lessons and tasks are all ended,  
And death says "The school is dismissed,"  
May the little ones gather around me  
To bid me good-night, and be kissed.

—Charles Dickens.

## HOME VS. BILLIARDS.

"ALBERT, I wish you would let me have seventy-five cents."

Kate Landman spoke carefully, for she knew that her husband had not much money to spare; yet she spoke earnestly, and there was a world of entreaty in her look.

"What do you want seventy-five cents for?" asked Albert.

"I want to get some braid for my new dress."

"I thought you had all the material on hand for that."

"So I thought I had; but Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Thompson both have a trimming of braid upon theirs, and it looks very pretty. It is very fashionable, and adds much to the beauty of a dress."

"Plague take these women's fashions! Your endless trimmings and thing-a-ma-jigs cost more than the dress is worth. It's nothing but shell out money when a woman once thinks of a new dress."

"I don't have many new dresses. I do certainly try to be as economical as I can."

"It is a funny kind of economy, at all events. But if you must have it, I suppose you must."

And Albert Landman took out his wallet and counted out the seventy-five cents; but he gave it grudgingly, and when he put the wallet back into his pocket he did it with an emphasis which seemed to say that he would not take it out again for a week.

When Albert reached the outer door, on his way to work, he found the weather so threatening that he concluded to go back and get his

umbrella, and upon re-entering the sitting-room he found his wife in tears. She tried to hide the fact that she had been weeping, but he caught her in the act, and asked her what it meant.

"Good gracious!" remarked the husband, "I should like to know if you are crying at what I said about the dress?"

"I was not crying at what you said, Albert," replied Kate, tremulously; "but you were so reluctant to grant me the favor. I was thinking how hard I have to work. I am tied to the house, and have many little things to perplex me; then, to think—"

"Pshaw! What do you want to be foolish for?"

And away started Albert Landman a second time, but he was not to escape so easily. In the hall he was met by his daughter Lizzie, a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked girl of ten years.

"Oh, papa, give me fifteen cents."

"What?"

"Oh, I want fifteen cents. Do please give it to me."

"What in the world do you want with it? Are they changing school books again?"

"No, I want to buy a hoop. Ellen Smith has got one, and so has Mary Ruck and Sarah Allen. Mr. Grant has got some real pretty ones to sell. Can't I have one?"

"Nonsense! If you want a hoop go and get one off some old barrel. I can't afford to buy hoops for you to trundle about the streets."

"Please papa."

"No, I tell you."

The bright, blue eyes filled with tears, and the child began to sob. Albert Landman hurried from the house with some very impatient words upon his lips.

This was in the morning. At noon, when he came home to his dinner, there was a cloud over the household. His wife was quiet, and even little Lizzie, usually gay and blithesome, was sad and silent.

But these things could not last long in that household, for the husband and wife loved each other devotedly, and were at heart kind and forbearing. When Albert came home to his supper Kate greeted him with a kiss, and in a moment sunshine came back; and had the lesson ended there the husband might have fancied that he had done nothing wrong, and that the cloud had been nothing but the exhalation of domestic ferment, for which no one was particularly responsible, and he might likewise have cherished the conviction that woman's fashions were a nuisance and a humbug, as well as a frightful draft upon a husband's pocket.

After tea Albert did a few chores around the house, and then he lighted a cigar and walked out. He had gone but a short distance when he met Lizzie. In her right hand she dragged an old hoop, which she had taken from a dilapidated flour barrel, while with her left she was rubbing her red swollen eyes. She was in deep grief, and was sobbing painfully. He stopped her and asked what was the matter.

She answered, as well as her sobs would let her, that the other girls had laughed at her, and made fun of her old hoop. They had nice, pretty hoops, while hers was ugly and homely.

"Never mind," said Albert, patting the little one upon the head (for the child's grief touched him), "perhaps we'll have a new one some time."

"Mayn't I have one now? Mr. Grant's got one left—oh! such a pretty one."

The sobbing had ceased, as the child caught her father's hand eagerly.

"Not now, Lizzie—not now. I'll think of it."

Sobbing again, the child moved on toward home, dragging her old hoop after her.

At one of the stores Albert Landman met some of his friends.

"Hello, Albert! What's up?"

"Nothing in particular."

"What do you say to a game of billiards?"

"Good; I'm in for that."

And away Albert went to the billiard hall, where he had a glorious time with his friends. He liked billiards. It is a healthy, pretty game, and the keeper of the hall allowed no roughs on his premises.

They had played four games. Albert had won two and his opponent two.

"That's two and two," cried Tom Piker.

"What do you say to playing them off, Albert?"

"All right; go ahead," said Albert, full of animation.

And so they played the fifth game, and he who

lost was to pay for the five games. It was an exciting contest. Both made capital runs, but in the end Albert was defeated by three points, and, with a little laugh, he went up to settle the bill. Five games, at twenty cents a game, just one dollar. Not much for such sport; and he paid out the money with a grace, never once seeming to think that he could not afford it.

"Have a cigar, Tom?"

"Yes."

They lighted their cigars, and then sauntered down the hall to watch the others play.

Albert soon found himself seated over against a table at which some of his friends were playing, and close by stood two gentlemen, strangers to him, one of whom was explaining to the other the mysteries of the game.

"It is a healthy pastime," said he who had been making the explanation; "and certainly it is one which has no evil tendency."

Albert heard the remark very plainly, and he had a curiosity to hear what the other, who seemed unacquainted with billiards, would say.

"I cannot, of course, assert that any game which calls for skill and judgment, and which is free from the attendant curse of gaming, is of itself an evil," remarked the second gentleman. "Such things are only evil so far as they excite and stimulate men beyond the bonds of healthy recreation."

"That result can scarcely follow such a game," said the first speaker.

But the other shook his head.

"You are wrong there. The result can follow in two ways: It can lead men away from their business; it can lead men to spend money when they have not got it to spare. Whenever I visit a place of this kind I am led to reflect upon the most strange and prominent weakness of humanity as developed in our sex. For instance, observe that young man who is just settling his bill at the desk. He looks like a mechanic, and I should say from his manner, and from the fact that he feels it his duty to go home at this hour, that he has a wife and children. I see by his face that he is kind-hearted and generous, and I should judge that he means to do as near right as he can. He has been beaten, and he pays one dollar and forty cents for a recreation of some two hours' duration. If you will observe you will see that he pays it freely, and pockets the loss with a smile. Happy faculty! But how do you suppose it is in that young man's home? Suppose his wife had come to him this morning and asked him for a dollar to buy some trifling thing, some household ornament, and suppose his little girl put in a plea for forty cents to buy a paper and picture-book with, what do you think he would have answered? Of fifty men just like him, would not forty and five declared that they had not the money to spare for any such purpose? And moreover, they would have said no, feeling that they were telling the truth. Am I not right?"

"Upon my word," said the man who understood billiards, "you speak to the point. I know that young man who has paid his bill, and you have not misjudged him in a single particular. And what is more, I happen to have a fact at hand to illustrate your charge. We have a club for an excellent literary paper in our village, and last year that man was one of our subscribers. This year he felt obliged to discontinue it. His wife was very anxious to take it, for it had become a genial companion in leisure moments, but he could not afford it. The club rate was one dollar and fifty cents a year."

"Aye, and so it goes," said the other gentleman. "Well, that man's wife may be wishing this very moment that she had her paper to read, while he is paying almost its full price for a year, for what? And yet, how smilingly he does it. Ah! those poor, sympathizing wives! How many clouds often darken upon them from the brows of their husbands when they ask for trifling sums of money, and how grudgingly the mite is handed over when it is given. What perfect floods of joy that dollar and forty cents might have poured upon the household of that unsuccessful billiard player. Ah! it is well for such wives and children that they do not know where the money all goes."

They had finished at the nearest table. The two gentlemen moved on, and Albert Landman arose from his seat, and left the house. Never before had he had such thoughts as now possessed him—he had never dwelt upon the same grouping of ideas. That very morning his own true, faithful, loving wife, had been sad and heart-sick,



because he had harshly and unkindly met her request for a small sum of money. And his sweet Lizzie had crept away home almost broken-hearted for the want of a simple toy, such as her playmates possessed. And yet the sum of both their wants did not amount to as much as he had paid away that evening for billiard playing.

Albert Landman wanted to be an honest husband and father, and the lesson was not lost upon him. On his way home he stopped at Mr. Grant's and purchased the best and prettiest hoop to be found, with a red, white, and blue driving-stick, and in the morning, when he beheld his child's delight, and had received her grateful, happy kisses, the question came to his mind: Which was the best and happiest result; this, or the five games of billiards? The hoop cost thirty cents. He could play two games of billiards less, and be the absolute gainer of ten cents by the pleasant operation.

A few mornings after this, as Albert arose from the breakfast table, he detected an uneasy, wistful look upon his wife's face.

"Kate, what is it?"

"Albert, could you spare me half a dollar this morning?"

Out came the wallet and the money was handed over with a warm, genial smile.

What! tears at that? Was it possible that she had been so little used to such scenes on his part, that so simple an act of loving-kindness thus affected her?

How many games of billiards would be required to secure such satisfaction as Albert carried with him that morning to the shop!

A very simple lesson, is it not? But how many may gain lasting profit by giving heed to it?

#### ITEMS OF NEWS.

—Mrs. Garfield is seriously ill of a low, typhoid fever.

—Good Friday is now a legal holiday in Maryland.

—The population of Berlin, according to the last census, is 1,122,385.

—Prof. Swift, of Rochester, N. Y., discovered a new comet on the 1st inst.

—The mobs in South Russia are attacking the students as well as the Jews.

—Cincinnati, following the example of Chicago, is going to adopt the cable system of railroads.

—Large tracts of forest in eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, have been destroyed by fire.

—The Nevada City stage was robbed near Smartsville, Cal., May 9. None of the passengers were molested.

—The Chinese of New York city subscribed \$2,000 to aid in the prosecution of a murderer of one of their countrymen.

—In a fight with road agents near Nieburn, Neb., May 14, Lieutenant Samuel A. Cherry, of the 5th Cavalry, was killed.

—At Astorff, Russia, 6,000 railway workmen are homeless and starving, owing to incompetency and disorganization of the railway authorities.

—A petition to Congress for the abolition of advance payments of wages to seamen is being numerously signed in New York, and other seaports.

—Over 4,000 immigrants arrived in Chicago, May 12, and most of them will go to Western towns and farms. This is the largest day's arrival on record.

—A London dispatch states that a letter from Rome says the police discovered a plot to assassinate the king. The members of the International Society are suspected.

—The Baldwin Locomotive Company, of Philadelphia, has just contracted for the building of 200 locomotives for the Mexican National Narrow-gauge railroad. The total value of the contract is \$1,500,000.

—A Chicago dispatch says four car loads of Los Angeles oranges reached there Wednesday, May 11. They were in good condition, and sold readily at from \$5.00 to \$6.00 a box. The trade promises to be good.

—In La Plata county, Colorado, a ranch was attacked, May 5, and 150 head of cattle driven off, and three ranchmen, named Thumb, Smith, and May, were killed. It is not known who were the attacking party.

—The American Tract Society's annual report for 1880, shows donations and legacies of \$105,000, and book sales of \$256,000. The gross receipts are \$397,000. Two million pages of printed matter were issued during the year.

—The Norwegian and Swedish Consul at New York confirms the cable dispatch, that a contract has been closed with a steamship line in Hull, England, to bring 80,000 emigrants from those countries to the United States, principally settlers for the farming lands in the West.

—A dispatch from Vicksburg, Mississippi, May 13, says: "A break has occurred in the levee at Alsatia,

Louisiana, about 200 yards wide, and is spreading rapidly. The water is running through with great velocity, and there is but little prospect of closing the break. The damage will be heavy."

—A very rich strike has been made at Willow Springs, in Eastern Oregon, in the discovery of a narrow vein of quartz. About 300 pounds yielded \$160, and one piece of quartz, weighing twenty-five pounds, is said to be nearly half gold. Three pans of decomposed matter from the ledge yielded \$165.

—At Brownsburg, Ind., a Catholic priest named Donovan, was excommunicated by Bishop Chatard for refusing to raise money to pay a church debt. He closed the church for two months, and resumed services, saying, "We will report directly to the heavenly throne, without asking for the mediation of that fellow at Vincennes."

—The terms of the ukase lessening the peasants' rents are now finally settled. The ukase will apply to 3,700,000 peasants, who will be relieved of a considerable portion of their annual payments on account of land, while all accumulated arrears will be remitted. All proprietors who have not yet arranged the selling of holdings to the peasants will be compelled to do so by the 3d of June.

—Gen. Melikoff, commanding at St. Petersburg; Dabaza, Minister of Finances; Nicolai, Minister of Public Instruction, and Giers, Minister of Foreign Affairs, all tendered their resignations to the Emperor, May 12. The Czar, after a short consideration, accepted Gen. Melikoff's resignation. This seems to indicate absolutism, and a fresh Nihilist outbreak will probably be the next thing in order.

—A new cattle-car has been constructed, so that each animal has an apartment to itself. By a mechanical contrivance, which is operated from the end of the car, the cattle can be fed and watered in their stalls, all at the same time, and as often as necessary, the feed being stored in the top of the car. The use of such cars as these, will be for the interest of cattle dealers, and serve the ends of humanity.

—For some time there has been an "unpleasantness" in the U. S. Senate, mainly to determine, as the *Times* has it, "whether Conkling or Garfield would be president." And it appearing that the latter is likely to hold the office, Conkling and his colleague, Platt, have resigned. People are fast becoming disgusted with the ways of politicians who endeavor to lead the nation for their own personal benefit. The notoriety which the Ex-Senators are making for themselves is very cheap.

—The work of eviction among the settlers in Tulare Co., Cal., still continues. Up to May 10, Deputy Sheriff Dunlap had dispossessed seven settlers of their homes. O. C. Jackson, of Sacramento, was placed in possession of these places, as representative of the Southern Pacific railroad. The settlers, however, seem to be of the disposition that if they cannot live on their places, nobody else shall. Accordingly, Mr. Jackson does not enjoy his new possessions very much. It is reported that he did not remain on any of his newly acquired ranches, but invariably left in company with the Marshal's party, never allowing the settlers to become acquainted with their new neighbor.

—Governor Overton, of the Chickasaw Nation, has gathered together an army of 300 men, and has issued an order that Texas cattle-raisers and white men generally must leave the country before June 1st, or force will be used. A similar situation prevails in the Choctaw Nation. The trouble in the Chickasaw Nation is said to have grown out of the refusal of the Texans to pay more than 12½ cents per head for grazing cattle therein, Governor Overton demanding 25 cents per head. In the Choctaw Nation the trouble is chiefly in regard to the law allowing white men to live in that country, the Indians holding that nearly all the white population are there without proper authority.

—After several fights, France has succeeded in convincing Tunis that it needs protection, and the Bey has generously accepted of France as his protector. The treaty of peace assures to France the right to occupy positions which the French military authorities may deem necessary for the maintenance of order and security of the frontier and the coast. France has granted the Bey security of person and dynasty, and the maintenance of actually existing treaties between the Regency and European Powers. The Bey is not to conclude any new International Convention without a previous understanding with France. The other powers seem to feel a little dissatisfaction at the course France has taken.

—In the Baptist Conference at Dixon, Cal., May 11, the question was asked whether or not the Association has the power to refuse fellowship with a church false to its profession and unsound in its faith. Dr. Kalloch replied that there was no clause in the Constitution of the Convention authorizing it to do so, and if any Convention had such a clause, it would cease to be a Baptist organization. In consequence of this, a paper was presented at the next session, by several delegates, stating that their convictions of what constitutes purity and efficiency of Christian life and work, were so radically opposed to those entertained by a large element composing that body, that, as it was impossible for them to harmonize, they wished all who sympathized with them to withdraw and form a separate Convention. Accordingly, delegates representing 12 churches assembled across the street, and effected a new organization.

## RELIGIOUS PUBLICATIONS.

Published and for sale at this Office, and by "Review and Herald," Battle Creek, Mich.

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## The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, MAY 19, 1881.

**\*\* NOTICE** the appointment of a day of fasting and prayer.

### CAMP-MEETINGS FOR 1881.

MICHIGAN, Spring Arbor,	June 2-5
IOWA,	" 2-7
WISCONSIN, Neenah,	" 9-14
MINNESOTA,	" 16-21
DAKOTA,	" 23-28
UPPER COLUMBIA, Dayton, W. T.,	" 1-7
NORTH PACIFIC, Cornelius,	" 21-28

### HIS COMING.

THE article on the fourth page of this paper, entitled "Where is the Promise of His Coming?" copied from the *Sabbath Recorder*, is well worthy of a careful reading. It is a heart-cheering testimony on a glorious theme. "His coming" is, indeed, the "blessed hope," which his people love and look for.

### TITHING.

WE are surprised to learn that so large a number of S. D. Adventists in California pay no tithes to the churches, and through them to the State Conference. But we think we understand the reason.

Our old method, called "Systematic Benevolence," was dropped, and the tithing system adopted in its place. But the misfortune of California has been that it had no one to lead out and bring up this branch of the work. The remarks of Elder Haskell at the camp-meeting, which were both instructive and stirring, were well received, but for lack of labor in the churches, not much has been done to bring the Bible plan into use.

We were in hope that Elder Haskell would be able to visit most of the churches in this State before he had to return East, but he could not. Elder Corliss has gone to Los Angeles to join Elder Healey in tent labor in that city. And thus he is prevented visiting and laboring with the churches, as it seemed likely, at one time, that he would.

Under these circumstances, a duty seems to devolve upon the local elders to do more in this matter than they have done in the past. Let them pray over it until they deeply feel over it, and then talk it to the churches. Not only the welfare of the cause in this State, but the health and prosperity of the churches themselves require it. "To give is to live," and to withhold is to die—or seriously to decline.

### CALIFORNIA STATE S. S. CONVENTION.

IT was our privilege to attend the recent session of the Annual Convention of the State Sunday-school Association, at Sacramento. We made some pleasant acquaintances. The interest of the meetings was somewhat lessened by the absence of several who had been assigned to open the discussion of specified subjects. Yet many good things were produced, and the cause of this branch of education cannot fail to be advanced by this meeting.

We were somewhat surprised to learn that so little has been done toward thorough organization in the State. But hitherto they have depended upon some prominent worker from the East to take charge of their Conventions. Not depending on their own efforts, their efforts have been comparatively feeble. A change in this respect will doubtless bring satisfactory results.

From carefully listening to all that was said, we feel assured that our Sabbath-schools are as well conducted as any S. S. in the State; that no schools have methods and appliances superior to those in use by us. In this we are far from intimating that our churches should be satisfied with the present position of their schools. Continual improvement should be our aim.

Dr. M. C. Briggs, of the M. E. Church, was re-elected to the presidency of the Association. A better presiding officer could scarcely be found. The next Convention is appointed to meet at Stockton.

### TRUE BENEFICENCE.

MR. SENEY, of New York, has lately given to various benevolent and educational institutions sums amounting to considerably over a half million dollars. From an exchange we clip the following conversation held with Mr. Seney, and we hope the stewards of God's treasures will weigh and consider it carefully. Wills

are uncertain things, and to leave wealth of money to heirs to quarrel over brings no honor to a man's memory. There is a genuine satisfaction in knowing that your gifts are applied just as you want to have them:—

"Mr. Seney was asked recently, 'Why is it that you give all this money in your life-time? Most of such gifts are made in the form of bequests.'"

"The fact is," Mr. Seney replied, "that I have seen so many instances of men's apparent wishes, as expressed in their wills, becoming of no avail, that I wanted to make sure that the money would go exactly where I wanted it to go. By making these gifts in my lifetime I am sure that the precise object I desire is accomplished."

"Most men who have been able to accumulate that amount of money are disposed to keep it to make more of it," was suggested.

"I have observed that," Mr. Seney said. "I think that one motive I had was to prevent myself from getting a disposition to hoard money for the sake of hoarding, as men who accumulate money are apt to do. I do not see why it is not better to make these gifts in my lifetime, and to enjoy the pleasure of seeing them appropriated to their several objects. When a man gets to hoarding money it tends to make him close-fisted and mean. I want to avoid that disposition, if I can."

### HOME HAND-BOOK.

THIS book is receiving a most cordial reception from those who are best qualified to judge of its merits. Medical men of all "pathies," and eminent men of all professions, speak in its praise.

We have been surprised to learn how vague have been the views concerning it of some who received the prospectus, and even had thought to canvass for it. Some have thought it was merely a "hydropathic book," which would, at best, have but a limited circulation. To show the ability or standing of the author, we give the following information: He is a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; the American Public Health Association; the American Society of Microscopists; the Michigan State Medical Association; State Board of Health of Michigan; Editor of *Good Health*; Author of "Plain Facts for Old and Young;" "Diphtheria;" the "Household Manual;" "Alcoholic Poison," and other medical works.

The "Home Hand-Book" is eclectic—not in the technical sense of a certain school, but—in the highest sense of the term. It is the most complete and comprehensive book of the kind, ever published; well illustrated by cuts and plates, with full indexes. While it is well received by the profession, being indorsed by high medical authority, it is plain and practical, well suited to the wants of the household.

### CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES.

THE *Oakland Times* says that Mayor Kalloch "vetoed an ordinance for the suppression of lotteries, on the ground that it would impair the revenue of the churches. He declared that he was a minister as well as a Mayor, and that he should protect the rights and privileges of the sanctuaries."

Thus it seems that, in Mayor Kalloch's opinion at least, the lottery is one of the church's especial privileges. We notice, however, in another paper, that "four Chinamen who were convicted of conducting a lottery game on the corner of Dupont and Stockton streets, were fined \$40 each in the old Police Court."

It seems that, as heathen, Chinamen are not entitled to the rights and privileges of Christians. Possibly the Joss houses do not depend on lotteries for their support.

### FALLING BEHIND.

REV. DR. HARRISON, Congressional Chaplain, states in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* that the Methodist Episcopal church, during the twenty-seven years from 1852 to 1879, has failed to keep pace with the growth of population in the Middle States by 27 per cent., and in the "Border States," so-called, viz., Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky and Missouri, the falling behind has been 40 per cent. In the New England States he says the showing is better; but taking the nineteen Northern States together the M. E. church, which in 1852 had one member out of 22 population, in 1879 had but one in 25—a relative decrease of over 11 per cent. The *Advocate* says: "There is in the whole field a manifest failure to keep pace with the growth of population, a fact which is profoundly

suggestive of waning influence." Rev. Dr. Fuller, of the *Atlantic Methodist Advocate* says that it is no better in the Southern States. In thirty-five years the M. E. Church South has not doubled, while the population has nearly tripled. He adds that, owing to the laxity of the conditions and the pressure for new members, irreligious persons have been brought in with damaging effect.

## Appointments.

### UPPER COLUMBIA CAMP-MEETING.

THE Upper Columbia Conference will hold its first annual Camp-meeting, the Lord willing, in Jesse Day's Park, at Dayton, Columbia county, W. T., June, 1-7, 1881. Eld. J. H. Waggoner is expected, and others are also invited. We expect God's blessing. Let there be an earnest effort to attend this annual gathering of the Seventh-day Adventists of this new field.

G. W. COLCORD, } U. C.  
WM. GOODWIN, } Conf.  
AMBROSE JOHNSON, } Com.

### UPPER COLUMBIA T. AND M. SOCIETY.

THE first annual meeting of the Upper Columbia T. and M. Society will be held at the Camp-meeting at Dayton, June 1-7, 1881. All officers and members are requested to make an effort to attend that will be in keeping with the importance of this branch of our work. G. W. COLCORD, Pres.

### UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE.

THE first annual meeting of the Upper Columbia Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists is appointed to be held on the Dayton Camp-ground, June 1-7, 1881. All of our churches should elect their delegates in season, provide them with credentials, and furnish them with reports of the standing and condition of their respective bodies. Let each partially organized company send a representative. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

## TEMPERANCE TRACTS.

TEN CENTS will secure a select package of stirring Temperance Tracts, containing one hundred pages of facts, figures and pointed arguments against intemperance in all its forms. The following constitute the package:—

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