

# 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.

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THE Rome correspondent of the New York *Observer* writes to that journal that the denizens of the eternal city are jealous of the influence of the Jesuits in the councils of the Papacy. This powerful society in many cases has gained possession by intrigue or influence of the property belonging to the suppressed Brotherhoods, while the priests are left in their poor and unhealthy abodes and are expected to say the masses and attend the funerals for small pay. Every new house opened or new privilege accorded to the Jesuits arouses the jealousy of the lower clergy.

THE *Evangelist* of December 13 has an article on Christianizing New York City, in which its call is not for means and churches, but men. It says: "The work to be done is of a sort for which our city pastors in general are wholly unfitted." "What is needed here is that divine power of sympathy, in the presence of which all distinctions are nothing. That is the magnetism which flows like an electric current from heart to heart." Emphatically true. And why are not just such men needed in the great churches? Would Jesus of Nazareth be so highly educated and trained that he could not go out and preach to the poor? Or would he need a "professional education" in order to meet the demand in our great and popular temples, called churches? What is needed by the world is converted men, men converted to Christ and his truth, both in the great churches and in the mission hall.

At the Washington Convention of the National Sunday Association, the chairman, Col. Elliott F. Shepard, said that he was "glad to welcome the Roman Catholics in any work in which they could be induced to join." Some will be moved to ask whether the Sunday movement is a Protestant movement or not. If it is Protestant, then is there any difference between Protestant and Catholic? If professed Protestants are glad to welcome Roman Catholics in any work in which they can be induced to join, do they not thereby cease to be Protestants? We commend to those who are courting Roman Catholic influence and help, the following editorial utterance from *America*, under date of December 6, 1888:—

"If anyone believes that there has come a change over the policy and purposes of the Vatican, because the Pope indorses the President's Thanksgiving proclamation, he must forget the motto of the church, *Semper idem*, and that history proves that Rome never changes. It modifies its means, but it never surrenders its aims. It stoops to conquer. Woe to the republic which accepts its patronizing condescension as significant of approval of republican institutions!"

The Russian mission to the Vatican has obtained from the Pope important concessions. Leo sanctions the deportation of Bishop of Vilna to Siberia, accepts Government candidates for certain important positions in the Roman Church in Russia, and consents to the use of the Russian language in the Catholic Churches in that country. The concessions are thought to be due to French influence.

THE *Jewish Times and Observer* thinks "that Judaism has a great mission before it," but it concludes that "if a part of that mission is to transform the Jewish Sabbath [Sabbath of Jehovah] into Sunday services we think the slower the progress the better it will be for Judaism." And we say, *Amen*. One of the hopeful signs to Protestants that the Jews are soon to embrace Christianity is that many no longer keep the Sabbath, and now hold Sunday services. If conversion to Christianity means the transgression of a single command of God's holy law, deliver the Jews from Christianity. But it does not mean this. Christ died to redeem men, not only from sin (Matt. 1:21), but from sinning (Tit. 2:14; 1 John 2:6; 3:6); and sin is the transgression of the law. 1 John 3:4; Rom. 7:7. If the Jews are to be converted, or are to make progress, it will not be in the direction of violation, but observance, of God's law; and God's law can only be observed through the grace of Christ.

On the 24th ult. the Pope delivered an address to the Sacred College, which is said to have been unusually violent and bitter. The "great infallible" said that he was thankful for the blessing that had come to him on the occasion of his jubilee, but he complained bitterly of the treatment which the Papacy has received from the Italian Government. He said, "The whole world sees in what a painful situation I am placed." Again in referring to hostile acts of the Italian Government, he said, "One can only ask, How far will they go?" "At the present time," says the dispatch, "a systematic war is being waged. Even the person of the Pope is exposed to the threats of the mob." The fact that the bishops in other lands are laboring for the restoration of the Pope's temporal power was referred to as showing that the interests of the whole Catholic Church are bound up in the cause of the Papacy.

It is evident that not only the Pope, but the whole Catholic world, is terribly in earnest in urging the restoration of the temporal power of the Papacy, and indications are by no means lacking which show that Leo's frequent bids for active sympathy are not in vain. With only two exceptions, all the great powers of the world have virtually acknowledged the Pope as a civil ruler, and it would not be a matter of surprise at any time if a majority, if not all of them, were to unite in demanding of Italy a practical recognition of the political "rights" of the supreme pontiff. The Papal head of the great beast of Rev. 13:1 has been "as it were wounded to death," but the deadly wound will be healed, and all the world shall wonder after the beast." Verse 3.

## A Happy New Year.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

"I COME, I come, the glad New Year!  
O welcome me to your friendship dear;  
O give me room by the social hearth,  
Where the holy joys of home have birth;  
Let me come with love that shall ne'er grow cold,  
As comes a friend that is prized of old;  
Let me whisper of help from the Lord above  
To the toiling heart in its work of love,  
And point to the peace and bliss of Heaven,  
The crown to the faithful mother given,  
Shining with jewels forever fair,  
She won to Christ by her holy care."

Another year of life is now in the past. A new year is opening before us. What will be its record? What will we each inscribe upon its spotless pages? The manner in which we spend each passing day will decide this question. Fathers and mothers, while you wish your children a Happy New Year, will you strive in the fear of God to make it a happy year? Will you seek to lead your dear ones to the true source of peace and joy? Will you consecrate your own hearts to God, that you may exert a sanctifying influence upon your children? Will you separate them from sin and sinners, and by living faith connect them with God?

It should be the work of every parent to cultivate all that is good, and true, and noble, in his children. It is his duty to correct their faults, to restrain their waywardness, even as the Lord required Eli to restrain his sons. Fathers and mothers, make the word of God your guide in the education of your children, ever considering what will be for their future good, rather than what is for your present convenience. The mother may bestow upon her daughters an education that will be invaluable, by training them to bear their share of the family burdens. The father may give his sons a capital of more worth than gold or lands, by teaching them to love useful employment, instead of seeking happiness in idle amusements or dissipation. Parents, now is the time to form in your children habits of industry, self-reliance, and self-control; to cultivate economy and business tact. Now is the time to teach them courtesy and benevolence toward their fellow-men, and reverence and love for God.

You may make a happy new year for your children, if you faithfully discharge your duty. Home should be the most sunny and attractive spot on earth; and it may be made such



by pleasant words and kind acts, and, underlying all, a steadfast adherence to the right.

By their neglect to exercise proper restraint, many parents are creating great unhappiness for their children. The youth who are left to constantly seek for pleasure in amusement or selfish gratification are not happy, and never can be happy while following this course. Fathers and mothers, teach your children that the only way to be truly happy is to love and fear God; and enforce the lesson by your example. Let them see that the peace of Christ is ruling in your heart, and that his love pervades your life. Practical religion is the need of the present hour. You cannot teach this to your children unless you possess it yourselves.

Let us enter upon the new year with our hearts cleansed from the defilement of selfishness and pride. Let us put away every sinful indulgence, and seek to become faithful, diligent learners in the school of Christ. A new year opens its unsullied pages before us. What shall we write upon them?

Children, you greet your father and mother with a "Happy New Year," but will you make it a happy year to them? It is in your power to do this. Your conduct, more than everything besides, will make a happy or an unhappy year for your parents. You may cause their hearts to throb with joy or pain. Whatever dishonors your Saviour, whatever causes a stain upon your character, brings anxiety and distress to the heart of godly parents. You cannot give them a happy new year if you live only for self-gratification.

Seek to begin this year with right purposes and pure motives, as beings who are accountable to God. Ever bear in mind that your acts are daily passing into history by the pen of the recording angel. You must meet them again when the Judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened.

How often your lips utter the kindly greeting, "I wish you a happy new year," and then in a few moments speak impatient, fretful words. How many children are ever ready to dispute about trifles, unwilling to make the smallest sacrifice for others. To such the new year will bring no real happiness. They may indulge in boisterous mirth, but their hearts know no peace nor joy. Will you not come with penitence and humility to Jesus, that he may cleanse you from the impurity of sin, and fit you for his heavenly kingdom? All who do this will have the happiest new year that they ever experienced. It will bring joy in Heaven and joy on earth.

Many have been seeking some rare gift to bestow upon their friends. Will you not, children, bring to Jesus the gift which he prizes above all others—the gift of your heart? While others at the holiday season adorn themselves to please the eye of their friends, will you not seek the adorning which Heaven values—the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit? If we bring to God the first gift, the value of every other is enhanced; for love makes it not merely a passing compliment, but a precious offering. From the softened heart in which the peace of Christ abides, will flow forth sincere wishes, kindly words and deeds, and worthy, appropriate offerings.

Many are the gifts and greetings that have been exchanged on New Year's day, by parents and children, husbands and wives, broth-

ers and sisters, friends and acquaintances. When it is over, many feel a sense of relief. They have discharged their duty in bestowing presents, and smiles, and compliments for the occasion, and there the matter is supposed to end. The next day, and the next, and onward to the end of the year, bring fretful, passionate words, fault-finding, recrimination, and careless neglect of the dear ones of the household. Oh, such a new year is one that angels will be grieved and ashamed to register! It is anything but happy. Friends and relatives bestow a gift of sorrow, a burden of unkindness, that crushes out hope, and makes the grave look desirable.

Do we truly wish our loved ones a happy new year? Then let us make it such to them by kindness, by sympathy, by cheerfulness, by unselfish devotion. If we connect with God, the source of peace, and light, and truth, his Spirit will flow through us as a channel, to refresh and bless all around us. This may be the last year of life to us. Shall we not enter upon it with thoughtful consideration? Shall not sincerity, respect, benevolence, mark our deportment toward all?

Let us withhold nothing from Him who gave His precious life for us. Fathers and mothers, bring to Him your children, in the freshness and bloom of youth, and devote them to His service. Let us all consecrate to God the property he has intrusted to us. Above all, let us give him ourselves, a free-will offering. Let us do his will, live for his glory, and he will give us a happy new year.

#### LOVE AS A PASSION AND AS A PRINCIPLE.

THAT word *passion* has a signification which should be carefully noted. The old grammars define a verb as a word denoting "action, *passion*, or being," and the older writers speak of the "passion" of Christ. The word denotes subjection to force. So a man in a "passion" is not one who is exerting strength, but one who is acted upon by a powerful influence, who is driven along by an external force, as a vessel, over which the sailors have lost control, hopelessly drifts before the wind or tide. Passion implies inaction, it shows weakness, it is a slavery.

Thus love as simply a passion is ignoble. So far as one is merely "attracted" or "drawn" to a given object, his affection is merely selfish. When one says that he "loves" this or that article of food he means that from it he can obtain pleasure for himself. And much of love of romance is of the same selfish kind. Even though it may not take the gross form of heartless lust, the lover may be seeking merely his own happiness, caring nothing for the interests of the one of whom he seeks to possess himself. We sometimes read in the papers of a young man's killing the girl who has refused his addresses, he showing by his crime that his love was not for her but for himself alone, that he cared nothing for her welfare, but only for his own gratification. He loved her simply as the beast loves the husks on which he feeds; he was attracted simply as the tiger is attracted to his prey. When Samson was chided for seeking a heathen bride, his defense was, "She pleaseth me." Many a young man to-day makes a foolish marriage in the same spirit, not using his judgment,

but being swept along by his whims and fancies as helplessly as a log is borne on the current. Passion is not true love, it is mere selfishness.

Contrast with the foregoing the love shown by the mother in untiringly watching over a feeble-minded child, or by the affectionate daughter in ministering to a parent that has grown not only old but also fretful, unreasonable, and thoroughly unlovely. This love is not selfish, seeking merely one's own pleasure, but self-sacrificing, seeking purely the good of the loved one. This is true love, the love which is grounded not in passion but in principle. Of course the active and the passive element may be combined, as when the child the mother watches over is peculiarly attractive. But love of the highest form is that in which one seeks not his own pleasure in the possession of the loved object, but the good of the one loved.

And in like manner true religion or love to God is a matter not of passive emotion but of active principle. With too many persons religion is merely a matter of feeling and personal enjoyment. When religious exercises are pleasurable to them they are very devout, but when duty becomes burdensome they relapse into coldness. When there is a "big revival," with stirring preaching and arousing singing, and all the pleasurable thrill of great crowds and exciting incidents, they are tremendously religious. But when the novelty and excitement are over, and nothing remains but hum-drum, every-day work, their spirituality is a dried-up brook. In other words, when religion will yield them personal pleasure they are active in it, but when it becomes a matter of self-sacrifice they abandon it. They are acted upon from without, not acting from within. They drift on the current of emotion like a fragment of a wrecked boat, which goes up stream with the flood-tide and comes down with the ebb, when they should be like the steam craft, which goes along the same whether wind and tide be with or against it. Our religion should be, not passive and merely emotional, a movement under outside forces, but active, an inward principle, exerting itself always the same.—*Christian Inquirer*.

#### A SOLEMN QUESTION.

If your probation should close this hour, would it be well with your soul? If you were told that in an hour your case would be forever decided, would it arouse consternation in your breast? Would you want to take back those hasty, impatient words that you spoke this morning? Would you tremble to think of the Judge finding you committing the act which you did last night, or are even now contemplating? If so, then you are in a dangerous condition, for you know not but this may be your last hour. There will come a last hour for you, and you have no warrant that it will be different from the present. How necessary, then, that we ever live in the light of God's countenance. What a blessing to the world such a life would be. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

TALENTS are nurtured best in solitude, but character on life's tempestuous sea.



## THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

O FLEETING years! though oft the theme  
Of poet's song and waking dream,  
Still, oft as changing seasons bring  
The burden of their offering,  
And winter covers hedge and tree  
With robes like loving charity,  
As oft doth memory linger round  
The past, as on enchanted ground,  
And muses join to sing the praise,  
Or chant the dirge of by-gone days.

If we could know all that has been,  
Or, could all scenes of joy or sin,  
Which the old year has seen and known,  
In panoramic views be shown—  
What lights and shades of life would be  
Depicted in that scenery!  
There side by side with wealth and fame,  
And cultured mind, and honored name,  
Would be such views of want and sin,  
That hearts would ache to look within;  
And scenes where love and beauty reign  
Be followed close by scenes of pain.

For chimes of merry marriage bells  
Have mingled with sad funeral knells;  
And those who dreamed earth's joys their own,  
Have waked to find earth's hopes have flown;  
And aching hearts and empty arms,  
To whom the world has lost its charms,  
Long for loved voices, though they know  
The white lips rest beneath the snow;  
And where were peace and joy before  
Are homes that will be homes no more;  
For life and death, and woe and mirth  
Dwell side by side o'er all the earth.

But we will not 'mid shadows dwell,  
But on the sunshine look as well.  
No day so clouded but some light  
Has cheered its darkness ere the night;  
No life so cheerless but some rays  
Of God's love light its darkest days.  
And the old year much joy has brought,  
And powers unseen much good have wrought.  
And some have sought the path of right  
Which leads from darkness into light,  
Who long had wandered far astray,  
And follow now the narrow way.  
And all in some way have been blessed,  
By many a wayside fount refreshed,  
And pleasant memories of the past  
Will linger long as life shall last;  
And if some crosses have been given,  
They serve as stepping-stones to Heaven.

Sometimes we mourn in bitterness,  
And sadly question why it is  
That joy is always mixed with pain  
And loved ones ne'er will come again.  
The troubled spirit finds its rest  
In the sweet answer, "God knows best."  
For not a sparrow earthward falls  
Without his notice, and through all  
His wisdom and his love are shown;  
He surely careth for his own.

And now the old year's brightest hours  
Have faded with the summer flowers;  
May all its bitterness and woe  
Be buried 'neath its winter's snow;  
And chastened hearts, tried as by fire,  
Rise in new strength, fresh zeal inspire;  
Hope bid each doubting thought be gone,  
And gird the New Year's armor on,  
And labor still, for o'er the land  
The ripe fields wait the reaper's hand.

And labors past will not suffice  
For present duty, when there lies  
Within the reach of everyone  
Work for the Master to be done.  
Some heart to cheer 'mid toil and strife,  
Someone to lead to the fount of life,  
Some burden to bear for a weak one tried,  
And a world to tell that Christ has died.

The work is great, but our strength is sure,  
And the hope of reward to those who endure.  
Not all can be reapers on life's great plain,  
But they can be gleaners of golden grain;  
And the life that is richest in deeds of love  
Shall be richer far in the home above—

Where we'll bring our sheaves to the Master's  
feet

When the work he has given is all complete,  
When the old years fade from mortal view,  
And the years to come are forever new.

—Sarah E. Clough, in *Woman at Work*.

## WHAT IT IS.

COMMENTING upon Mrs. Kane's recent so-called exposure of Spiritualism, the *Good Way* says:—

All this may be very well, but it comes very far from furnishing a satisfactory explanation of the phenomena of the modern delusion of Spiritualism. There is an occult power behind these phenomena, intelligent and depraved, and their misleading and corrupting and soul-damning influence is not to be counteracted or arrested by a catchpenny exposure, even though it may come from those who became the first willing instruments in introducing the delusion.

The plain truth is that Spiritualism is devilism, and whoever is deceived thereby is deceived by the devil. The Bible plainly points to our times as the period when the spirits of devils shall go forth to deceive men, and believers in the Bible have no trouble in identifying modern Spiritualism as a Satanic delusion. The power of Satan will continue to work by this and other means till the end. The people of God have from the beginning been warned against the sin of necromancy, and that warning needs to be heeded now as much as ever in the past.

Spiritualism is ancient necromancy modernized to suit the changed tastes and conditions of society. The only reliable safeguard against the evil is to obey God, and resist the devil. Whoever touches pitch will be defiled— whoever tampers with Spiritualism will become demonized. "Abhor that which is evil." "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

## CONFIDENCE TOWARD GOD.

"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." Ps. 5:3. Thus wrote the psalmist David, in the innocence and integrity of his soul. He could not have written thus if he had not been able to write as in verse 1: "Give ear to my words, O Lord; consider my meditation." Looking up is a sign of hope and courage, and of a clear conscience. The guilty child hangs its head, and the criminal is afraid to look the officer of the law in the face. Thus Ezra, when identifying himself with his people, said: "I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head." Ezra 9:6. But the man whose heart is pure, whose thoughts are of God, and who meditates in his law day and night, can look up, not in self-confidence, but in the strength of Christ. "But thou, O Lord," says David, "art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." Ps. 3:3. He whose heart is free from guile may look up, and he shall behold the beauty of the Lord, for the pure in heart shall see God.

We can do more good in being good than in any other way.—Rowland Hill.

## LOOK UP.

THE Lord does not want people to look down. If they do, like Bunyan's man with the muck rake, they will see only the straws, the sticks, and the rubbish of earth, and not the crown that is above them. God is in Heaven; but that which is of the earth is earthy. By beholding we become changed. So then if we look down, we become groveling in our disposition; if we look up, we may behold the glory of the Lord, and be changed into the same image. Here is an argument against despondency. The discouraged, despondent man hangs his head. But when he does that he can see only himself, and so he adds to his despondency. Not only so, but by beholding only that which is imperfect, he becomes more and more assimilated to that which is imperfect. Satan makes an easy prey of the doubting, despondent man. How much better to say with the psalmist: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." Ps. 121:1, 2. Besides this we are expressly enjoined to look up at this time. After speaking of the signs of his coming, Christ said: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. Who are living so that they can daily rejoice in hope of the glory of God?

## AN EVOLUTION BUBBLE PUNCTURED.

THE emptiness of the evolution theory of man's origin is well shown in the following reply by Dr. Henry C. McCook to an elaborate lecture on evolution, as recorded in the *N. Y. Evangelist* of December 13, 1888:—

Now they tell us that the ages of geological time included about as many millions of years as you choose to write out on the slate. Well, all those millions of years ago certain spiders spun their webs, and certain ants taught the sluggards their lessons. Now, says Dr. McCook, the fossils of those very spiders that spun their webs between the fence-rails so many million years ago, agree exactly with the spiders that make their festoons in the corners of our porches to-day. All these million-million years have not availed to start them on their evolutionary career. The same is true of the ants. So it appears that our enthusiastic evolutionists need a few successive eternities for the outworking of their theory. Would it not be well for them to appoint a standing committee to watch the processes of nature, and report on the subject, say five million-million years hence? If the committee grew uneasy with *standing*, they might be permitted to *sit* on the subject every alternate million years.

"THE power of wealth has a tendency to corrupt and destroy; the power of force is strong to do hurt; but the excellence and value of pure love consists in its efficiency to do good, and to do nothing else than good."

"WHATSOEVER is done out of pure love, be it ever so little or contemptible in the sight of men, is wholly fruitful; for God regards more with how much love one worketh, than the amount he doeth."



## THERE IS HELP IN GOD.

THE Lord of hosts is the present help of those who put their trust in him. The arm of man is too feeble to help us in trouble, even when he is disposed to do his utmost for us. Those therefore do greatly err who put their trust even in princes. And why should we ever commit an error of this kind? Has not God invited us to trust in him? and has he not warned us not to trust in the arm of flesh?

God knows our sorrows as man cannot know them. To him all hearts are open. He knows our temptations, he understands our errors and faults. He is able to succor in the hour of our extremity, and he has promised to do it. There is no arm like his. If he is for us, he is more than all that can be against us. There is but one thing that will prevent him from extending help to us, and that is sin. And even sin cannot hinder God from helping us, if we will truly repent of it. But true repentance always involves a change of conduct. We must leave off our transgressions and turn from them to a course of true obedience.

Now God does not deny his mercy and his favor to penitent sinners. These are the very persons who may trust in him. All his promises are made to this class. We must not forget this fact, for it is of priceless value. God does not reject us because we have sinned, but because we refuse to put away our sins by repentance. If we could keep this fact before our minds, it would be a constant strength and support to us. We could then take hold of God's arm for help, and we should never be disappointed in the result. But we have an adversary who knows how to thwart our efforts in the great struggle for eternal life. He puts forth his utmost effort in every way to lead us into sin, and if he succeeds to any extent in his temptation, he then becomes our accuser, that he may cause us to distrust God's mercy, and to neglect to come to him for pardon and for salvation. This is a most cruel temptation, and its effect in paralyzing our strength is great.

But we need not be thus thwarted in our efforts to seek God. When we seek him with all our hearts, he promises to receive us. It is our duty to believe that he is as good as his word. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55:7. These are exceedingly precious words, and they were written on purpose that our faith may take hold on them. God is infinitely and supremely good. It is our privilege to trust him when every earthly refuge has failed us.

The Saviour says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 11:28-30. This invitation is addressed to all who feel the burden of their sins. Though Satan will attempt to hinder us from accepting it by urging the fact that our burden of sin renders us unworthy of the Saviour's notice, yet the invitation is addressed to none but those who feel this burden.

Those who feel no need of relief are offered none by Christ. We need not stay away because of the burden upon our souls. We are the ones invited, and we may be sure that it is our privilege to accept the offer of mercy. He will in nowise cast out him that cometh to him. This is the very Saviour we need. We can find salvation through him. We can trust in him with the assurance that he will save us. We must indeed accept his yoke, but it is a privilege to accept it. We must leave our sins, for they are the very cause of our burden, and in the end they will ruin us if we do not put them away. Let us thank God for such a Saviour. Let us prove ourselves true to him and to his cause. He will never leave us; let us see that we never forsake him. We can trust in him always if we will but keep his sayings; and he will assuredly guide us with his counsel, and afterwards receive us to glory.—*J. N. Andrews.*

## "HOW WAS THE DAY CHOSEN?"

WHAT day? Why, the 25th day of December for Christmas! This is answered, in a way, in "Dunn's Quarterly and Concert Exercises," on pages two and three. The editor, Rev. John O. Foster, starts off as follows:—

"It would take too long to trace the many reasons which probably led to the choice of the 25th of December. It was doubtless connected by a process of deduction with the day which had already been generally accepted as the common date of the annunciation, and of the creation of the world."

Now, whether owing to some inherent quality of mind, or to long observation, or to a little of both, this deponent cannot say; but in reading for facts, when a writer begins to say a thing is "probably" on this wise, or it was "doubtless" after this fashion, then he sniffs ignorance in the air, and looks elsewhere for his facts. But let us, for the nonce, follow up this champion for Christmas a little farther. His next sentence commences with—

"Assuming that the world was made in the spring [leaving out his reasons], it was natural, though somewhat naive, to fix upon the vernal equinox (according to the Julian calendar March 25) as the exact date of the creation. He who would question the value of such straightforward and scriptural argument as this must have had more logic and less piety than belonged to the early Christians; and once having discovered by this easy method the very day on which the world came into being, and the glorious light sprang out of darkness, what more simple than to assume that it was the same day on which the power of the Almighty overshadowed Mary, and the Day-spring from on high began his entrance into the world? Nothing could be plainer. Even the least imaginative of chronographers could reckon forward from this fixed point, and arrive at December 25 as the day of the nativity."

Of course he could. When Mr. Foster asks the question, "What more simple than to assume," etc., we give it up. Haven't seen anything "more simple" for a long time. Again he says:—

"And here another wonderful coincidence meets him. This [December 25] is the day of the winter solstice, the day when the world's darkness begins to lessen, and the world's light to grow; the day which the ancient [heathen] world had long celebrated as the birthday of the sun, what more appropriate

day could be found for the birth of the Sun of Righteousness? . . . St. John the Baptist is born on June 25 [Who says so?], the summer solstice, when the sun begins to decline. The Lord Jesus is born on December 25, the winter solstice, when the sun begins to ascend; and in this is fulfilled the saying, 'He must increase, but I must decrease.'"

I never knew before that John, when he gave that saying, meant to tell us that he was born on June 25, and that Jesus was born on December 25! Well, well! "Live and learn." To be sure!

If the above arguments, founded on the "probably," the "assuming and assume" and "doubtless" of Mr. Foster, are not believed, does it follow that we unbelievers are blessed, or cursed, with more logic and less piety than has Mr. Foster and the early Christians? So he seems to teach.

He goes on to tell us that the earliest mention of this 25th of December as Christmas "is found in an ancient catalogue of church festivals about 354 A. D.," and from thence on it spread. In another article he tells us: "Long before the Christian era, the 25th of December was religiously observed by the sun-worshippers." Farther on he says that when Christ came, many of the sun-worshippers became his followers; but when the old sun-feast came around, they were liable to be drawn away to the dances and excesses so common to it; so the Christian leaders adopted this old heathen feast and called it Christmas. Here Mr. Foster comes out of the fog of conjecture into the realm of fact. But such a fact! The Christian churches celebrating a pagan day!

Two things are noteworthy. The author of the last article quoted from (not Mr. Foster, but T. N. Madden), says of keeping Christmas, "It mattered not whether the 25th of December was the birthday of Christ or not, the effect was the same." And so say they all. And then, secondly, they make brave endeavors to prove that Christ was born on that day, as though it was all-important. And the above is the best proof they can bring—which is no proof at all.—*J. L. Barlow, in Christian Cynosure.*

## THE CHRISTIAN'S LEVER.

ARCHIMEDES is quoted as saying: "Give me a place on which to rest my lever, and I will move the world." But the Christian has a lever that is infinitely greater than that, for it will move not only the earth, but Heaven also. And he has a place on which to rest it, too. That lever is faith, and its resting-place is the throne of the eternal God. Hear what David says of the time when he was in deep trouble, and cried unto the Lord. "He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind." "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters." Ps. 18:9, 10, 16. Read verses 1-19. Truly "there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." Deut. 33:26.

ALL the doors that lead inward in the secret places of the Most High are the doors outward—out of self, out of smallness—out of wrong.—*George MacDonald.*



## WHAT USE DO YOU MAKE OF THEM?

THERE are many who will say that they believe the prophecies of Scripture, who do not recognize the fulfillment of those which have been fulfilled in the most obvious manner. Such faith can be of no practical use. But there are those who can point out the fulfillment of the great lines of prophecy which describe the great kingdoms of the earth in their order of succession, from the reign of ancient Babylon down to the divided state of the Roman Empire. Those profess faith, not only a vague faith in the truth of prophecy, but a definite faith in its fulfillment.

To this class I address the question, What use do you make of the prophecies of Rev. 13:11-18 and 14:9-12? As these are prophecies which evidently relate to the very close of our world's history, and the coming of Christ, no others are of greater importance. Here the last persecution of the church is described; and also the last warning, by heeding of which we may stand in this last persecution and escape the unmingled wrath of God which is to follow. All ought to understand these prophecies. What use do you make of them?

You have learned from the prophecies of Daniel and of Revelation that a beast is a symbol of some great earthly dominion. Hence the beast with two horns like a lamb represents some remarkable Government of earth existing in the last days, and which is to act a conspicuous part in the closing scene of the earth's drama. You believe we are near the close of time. Believing the fulfillment of these lines of consecutive prophecy, you cannot doubt it. What Government, then, is described under the symbol of the two-horned beast?

There is to be a conflict on earth which has not yet been seen. An image of the Papal beast will demand that all shall worship that beast, or suffer deprivation of common rights, and even death itself. On the other hand, we are forewarned of God, by a special proclamation, that if we do yield to the demands of the image, by worshiping the beast and his image, and receiving his mark, we shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God without mixture. This test has never come upon men in any age of the world; but the prophecy being sure, it must come. And it will come just before the coming of Christ, as symbolized by one like the Son of man upon the white cloud, with a sickle in his hand to reap the harvest of the earth. You believe that the coming of Christ is at the door. By the prophecies and promised signs fulfilled, you know it is so. But what will you do with these predictions of the word of God? Will earth's history close, and the grand consummating event come, and they have no fulfillment? Will the "loud voice" of the last message not be heard at all? Impossible! The last warning will be heard by those who have ears to hear. And who knows that it is not already in the world? There are those who believe that it is. They are found in almost, if not quite, every State and Territory in our Union. There are some in the British Isles, in almost every country of Europe, in Egypt, Australia, and the islands of the Pacific. They are distinguished by the characteristics given in the prophecy, namely,

"Here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." In patience and expectation they are waiting for the return of the Lord, while they acknowledge their obligation to keep every commandment of the moral law of God, and every precept taught by Jesus Christ as obedience to the gospel.

The worship and mark of the beast are, in the prophecy, put in contrast with the keeping of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Hence we know that this worship and mark are directly opposed to these commandments and faith; and therefore those who keep these, will not worship the beast nor receive his mark.

The present work, which is believed to be the fulfillment of the promised message, from a small beginning over thirty years ago, is now spreading over the whole earth. Besides being proclaimed by word of mouth, it is being published by the press from six or seven different points, and in nine or ten different languages. My brother, my sister, is not this the message promised in the word of God? If not, we shall be obliged to wait for another. If this is not genuine, how shall we know the genuine, when it shall come?

R. F. COTTRELL.

—♦♦♦—  
THERE are no trifles in the lives  
Of men, for seeming trifles oft are powers  
That act with potent force for weal or woe;  
And what is great or small we know not now,  
Or what shall lead to weal or what to woe.  
But in our blindness this we surely know:  
The happiest one is he who, doing right,  
With child-like faith goes on, and, well content,  
Leaves all the future in the hands of God.

—John Lascelles.

## ROME RULE IN NEW YORK.

THE following from the New York *Mail and Express*, of November 7, presents the power of Rome in the metropolis of our country, and it is not a greatly overdrawn picture of many other cities:—

The Roman Catholics have taken the city. Their hand was in the sale of the Coogan party to Hugh J. Grant.

They already have every member of the board of tax commissioners.

They have for years had, and still have, the control of the board of aldermen.

They have the mayor, the sheriff, the comptroller, the counsel to the corporation, the whole board of tax assessors, the commissioner of public works, the superintendent of the street cleaning department, the clerk to the board of aldermen, the superintendent of the bureau of elections, several of the justices of the Supreme, Superior, and Common Pleas Courts, the control of the board of estimate and apportionment, the majority in many of the ward boards of school trustees, a large portion of the board of education, the control of the department of charities and correction, the majority in the police force, the control of the fire department, of the board of street openings, the whole of the armory board, the register of deeds, the commissioner of jurors, one-half of the commissioners of accounts, supervisor of the city record, the collector of the port, the sub-treasury, majority of the commissioners of the sinking fund, the majority of the delega-

tion in Congress and in the State Senate and Assembly.

The Church of Rome is nothing if not political. It is the dominant party in this city. The majority of voters in this city belong to that party. The head and leader of this party is Archbishop Corrigan.

## WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

It is to be feared that the charge made against Goldsmith might be repeated truly enough against many a Christian, viz.: "He wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll." . . . Now would it not be well for the church to revive this lost art of inspiring conversation—directing it at the same time upon divine truths and seasoning it with the salt of divine grace? Here is one of the grandest and most fruitful fields for improvement, and it lies open to every follower of the Master. There is deep significance in the record that while the two disciples talked together on their journey to Emmaus concerning Jesus—his crucifixion, resurrection, and the like—they were joined by another, whose words caused their hearts to burn within them, and their eyes to be unsealed to the discovery of the presence of Christ himself as the risen Redeemer and Conqueror of death.

And again, when, on another occasion, the eleven were discoursing of him, he suddenly appeared among them, though the doors were shut. It is as sweet as it is true to think that wherever any two or more are earnestly engaged in conversing upon the interests of the heavenly kingdom, there the invisible Head and Lord of that kingdom is certain to come with his own elevating and revealing influence. As the fire flies from the flint under an iron hammer, so many of the loftiest purposes and far-reaching plans have been struck from Christian hearts under the friction of noble words made energetic and mighty by the indefinable force of personal power. Progress lies through the gateway of speech not less than through the cultivation of solitary thought. It is the Heaven-appointed agency for stirring up the gift within us, for interchanging our best sentiments, for disseminating truth, for reaching with transforming influence the springs of character and of action for proclaiming God. "Go home to thy friends," said our Saviour to the restored demoniac, "and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee and hath had compassion on thee."

To tell others about himself, his grace, his willingness to save, his good tidings, is exactly what the Master wishes each one of us to do, and in the doing of which he has promised great reward. Words fitly spoken act as an inspiration and guide long after the speaker forgets them. A college president once let fall a few sentences, in a casual way, about the wants of his institution, and lo! these sentences proved the seed-corn that ripened into a legacy of \$50,000 in the hearer's will for the benefit of education. The tongue is the mightiest instrument within the power of man. It scatters blessings or curses, according to the disposition wielding it. Guard it well, O Christian, that it be not a flaming dart "set on fire of hell," but rather a source of light to illumine the pathway to Heaven.—*Christian at Work.*



# The Signs of the Times.

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

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OAKLAND, CAL., SECOND-DAY, JANUARY 7, 1886.

## THE PENALTY ETERNAL.

In a letter recently received, a clergyman in Nebraska intimates that he has objections to the doctrine that "the penalty of the transgression of the moral law is not eternal," seeming to have the idea that we hold to that view. We are happy to say that we do not believe any such doctrine; and we hope he never will believe that the penalty for sin—the transgression of the moral law—is not eternal. If he now believes that the penalty is eternal, he is correct, but he may be in error as to what that penalty is. However, the Bible is very plain on that point, as a few texts will show. First we quote the Saviour's words in Matt. 25:46:—

"And these [the wicked] shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

This is plain. The word "everlasting" is from the same Greek word as "eternal," in the same verse, and the statement shows that the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the righteous will be of equal duration. Now read what this punishment of the wicked is to be. The apostle Paul says that—

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. 1:7-9.

These two texts are sufficient to decide the matter. In addition we quote the words of Paul: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23. The penalty for the transgression of the law is death, and that death, when once inflicted, will be as lasting as the Government of God. This follows from the fact that the day of grace will then have passed. There will be no more pardon for sin, and so of course those upon whom the death penalty is inflicted, must rest under it forever.

The popular error concerning the punishment of the wicked lies in the supposition that it consists solely of torment. But that is a mistake. The wicked are likened to "the chaff which the wind driveth away" (Ps. 1:4), and we are told that Christ will "burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matt. 3:12.

It is not in the nature of man to exist eternally in the midst of fire; but the wicked are to be cast into a lake of fire. Rev. 21:8. The psalmist says of the Lord: "A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about." Ps. 97:3. And again: "But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Ps. 37:20. The prophet Nahum also says of the wicked: "For while they be folded together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry." Nahum 1:10.

That there will be torment and anguish in connection with the punishment of the wicked would naturally follow from the fact that fire is to be the agent of their destruction. Not only so, but the apostle Paul expressly declares that God will render "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Rom. 2:8, 9. But this tribulation and anguish is not the sum of the punishment of the wicked, for the same apostle declares, as already quoted, that it is to be everlasting

destruction. When the penalty is death, a man may suffer greatly in dying, but it cannot be said that he has received his punishment until death ensues. And when death shall have taken place in the case of the finally impenitent, it will be everlasting. "They shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is The Lord of hosts." Jer. 51:57. "They shall be as though they had not been." Obadiah 16.

W.

## PRAISE YE THE LORD.

It is recorded but once that the apostle Paul sang. And that instance was not such an one as would naturally inspire song. It was not after a pleasant, happy, unmolested meeting, or at the social board, or to while away weary hours; it was in the dark, damp, cold prison cell, with back ridged and raw from lashes, and feet fast in the stocks—a position most intolerable. The feet must be elevated to be put in the stocks, and the only easy position is to lie down. But Paul and Silas were deprived of any rest even in this way; for their backs were sore from the beating. But prayer brought a greater victory than was wrought by Samson's strength; faith claimed the promise, and the wearied prisoners "sang praises unto God." The grace and peace of God swallowed up all the pain and unpleasant surroundings.

Paul's great Prototype, for whom he suffered joyfully, is recorded as having sung but once. And when was that? on the mount of transfiguration? or after his resurrection? No; it was just before his betrayal, just before the agony of Gethsemane, just before the darkness of the cross. And Jesus knew that these sufferings were before him; yet with faith in that Father who was too wise to err, too good to prove unkind, he could sing: "Praise ye the Lord." "The Lord is my strength and my song, and is become my salvation." "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; because his mercy endureth forever,"—expressions found in Psalms 113 to 118, which were sung on paschal occasions. If there was more praise to "Him from whom all blessings flow," there would be greater blessings. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me," saith the Lord. Truly "it is good to sing praises unto our God."

## A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST.

ROMANS 1:1.

THERE are some words and expressions which, by their very frequency of occurrence, make but little impression upon us. We are so familiar with them that we read them and speak them as a matter of course, scarcely thinking that they have any meaning. One such expression is that which begins the epistle to the Romans, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." Two other of Paul's epistles, the one to the Philippians, and the one to Titus, as also Peter's second letter and the epistles of James and Jude, begin in the same way, and in other places the apostles style themselves, or are styled, the servants of God and of Christ. The prophets, also, and Old Testament worthies, as Moses, Joshua, etc., are called servants of God. That this is more than a catch phrase, and that it is of the deepest significance, will be apparent as we study it.

The Greek word which is translated "servant" in these instances is *δοῦλος* *doulos*, and is defined by Liddell and Scott as "properly a born bondman, or slave." It was the regular Greek word for a slave, and was often used of the Persians and other nations subject to a despot. The Revised Version has "bond servant" in the margin of Rom. 1:1, as the equivalent of the word rendered "servant."

We may accept the word "slave," therefore, as the one which the apostle uses to show the completeness of his subjection to Christ. We have, therefore, only to study the condition of a slave, to know not only how Paul regarded himself, but how all who really serve God must hold themselves.

A slave is one who is the entire property of another. He cannot dispose of his time nor his actions as he

will, but only as his master directs. Neither can he hold property in his own right. His strength is his master's; and if he earns anything, that which he receives belongs to his master. In the days of American slavery, negroes were often hired out to men who were not their masters, and often they earned large wages, but not a cent of it could they call their own. When their master bought them, they brought no property of their own, and all that they could expect for their service was enough to sustain life. Their time and strength were as absolutely their master's as were those of the horses with which they worked.

Now compare this with what we find set forth in the Scriptures as the proper condition of Christians, who are servants of Christ. Says the apostle Paul: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body." 1 Cor. 6:19, 20. Notice the completeness of the subjection. We are not our own, and therefore we cannot have a word to say as to what we shall do. The will of God, and his glory, is to direct us in everything. So the apostle says: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31.

But there is another thought suggested by the word "slave," as applied to Christians, and that is that they have been reduced to servitude from a previous condition of rebellion. Although, as the Lexicon says, the Greek word for "slave" signifies "a born bondman," it is a fact that by natural birth no person is a servant of God. By nature we are all the children of wrath. Paul classes himself with us when he says: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." Titus 3:3. And in another place he thus contrasts the different kinds of servitude in which men may live:—

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Rom. 6:16-18.

Before any man becomes the born bondman of Christ, he has to be born again. But this new birth implies a previous death, and that death is by crucifixion. See Gal. 2:20. Now crucifixion was a form of punishment inflicted on only the worst class of men, and its use as applied to those who thereby become Christ's, shows a previous condition of rebellion. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. The words of the Lord to Isaiah, concerning the people of Israel, describe the condition of all men by nature:—

"Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever: that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord." Isa. 30:8, 9.

From this rebellious state we are brought into the condition of servants. As it has aptly been expressed, we capitulate, and accept the terms of peace. We become subject to God. The word "subject" or "subjection" carries with it also the relation which we should sustain to God. It comes from two Latin words meaning "under the yoke," and is derived from the Roman custom of erecting a yoke and causing those whom they had conquered in battle to pass under it, as a token of their complete surrender. This ancient custom also explains the act of David, in putting the men of Rabbah "under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron," and making them pass through the brick kiln. 2 Sam. 12:31. It was the same as making them pass under the yoke, as a token of their being his servants. So Christ calls to us, "Take my yoke upon you." Taking the yoke of Christ upon us is to yield ourselves completely to him, for him henceforth to rule



every act and every thought. As Paul expresses it, it is "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:5.

Right here it should be noticed that true service to Christ is willing service. We are his bond-servants, brought into captivity to him, but it was love that brought us, so that we gladly submit. As Olshausen says of Paul: "He had been overcome by the Redeemer, conquered and subdued by his higher power. But as one not merely outwardly conquered, and still disposed to resist, but inwardly subdued, Paul had at the same time become a willing instrument for executing the purposes of the Lord as an apostle."

Moreover, although the word rendered "servant" signifies one subject to a despot, that only indicates the completeness of the control which God has over those who are truly his servants, but does not carry with it any idea of degradation. It makes a vast amount of difference to whom one is a servant. The servant of a poor, ignorant, coarse man would be a most abject creature. The slave of such a monarch as Nebuchadnezzar might be a high officer of State. So to be a servant of the Most High God is the highest honor that any creature can have in the universe. Angels in Heaven, that excel in strength, do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word, and are glad to declare themselves only fellow-servants with those who on earth are wholly devoted to Christ. Rev. 22:9.

Again, the slave of Christ is the only free man in the world. Paul says: "He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." 1 Cor. 7:22, 23. David says: "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds." Ps. 116:16. Here we have bondage and freedom. The man out of Christ is an abject slave; he is "holden with the cords of his sins." But the moment he yields himself unconditionally to Christ to be his servant, the body of sin is destroyed, and henceforth, if he continues to be the Lord's servant, sin has no more dominion over him. He is free to do right. His bondage is the bondage of love, and he finds the yoke easy.

The Lord will not accept divided service. He will not go into partnership with the devil, each having an equal share in a servant. A man must be wholly the Lord's, or he is not the Lord's at all. Says Christ: "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. 6:24. If, then, we have given ourselves to the Lord as his servants, and then seek in anything to please ourselves only, we rob him of service which is his due. Our strength, both of mind and body, belongs to the Lord, for he says:—

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Luke 10:27, with verse 28.

Now suppose a man indulges a habit which destroys his strength of body and vigor of mind; he is not then the Lord's slave; he is the slave of sinful indulgence. One man eats more than is good for him, more than he needs. He does so, simply because the food tastes good. That extra quantity of food, instead of increasing his strength, is a tax upon it. Strength that he should have to devote to the Lord is perverted to the service of appetite. Now it matters not what that man's profession may be, he is not the bond-servant of Christ. If he were, he would glorify God in eating and drinking, as well as in every other act of life.

Here is a test by which we may settle every question as to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of an act: Will it glorify God? If it will it is not only lawful but necessary. The man who is honest with himself before God in this question can settle which things are unlawful for him, and how far he may go in things that are necessary, as in eating and drinking.

"But what a hardship," says one, "to be obliged to rein ourselves up to such a test." Well, that de-

pends on whether or not we are really the slaves of Christ; whether or not we have willingly, gladly capitulated, accepting his terms, and yielding to his service. If we have, then it is not a task to inquire what will be to his glory, and to do it. We have yielded to him because in his infinite love and mercy he has enabled us to see that there is more to be desired in his service than in our own; and we have made his will our own. He has made us new creatures, giving us a new heart, and new purposes, so that when we do his will we are simply doing our own, for his will is ours, and our will is his.

"But suppose our will is his, and we have only one longing, supreme desire, namely, to do his will and glorify him, how can we always do it?" That is answered in the very fact that we are his, wholly his. We are not our own, but have resigned ourselves into his hands as simple instruments of his will. We have no power in ourselves, but he has all power, and can make us what he wishes. And here comes in the encouragement of the thought that we serve a mighty Master, one against whom all the powers of earth and hell combined can do nothing. So when the fierce temptation arises, when the infirmity of the flesh would cause us to fall, we, having the mind of our Master, to hate sin, flee to him for strength, and his strength does what our weakness cannot.

What comfort in the thought that the whole thing is comprised in simple submission to God. "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Rom. 6:13. God wants us to live holy lives; he has shown the strength of his desire for us to be delivered from evil, by giving his Son to die for us. And since God has such an infinite longing for us to be free from sin, and has such infinite power to accomplish his desires, what can hinder the accomplishment of those desires, if we but yield ourselves to him? No matter how fully we may have been the servants of sin, we now, having become servants to God, are made free from sin, having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Rom. 6:22.

No wonder that Paul was able to accomplish such wonderful things. He was the Lord's slave, wholly and without reserve, and the Lord simply worked through him. Even while the most conscious of his own weakness, he could say: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

God is not partial; he is no respecter of persons. He is as ready to strengthen us with all might, according to his glorious power, as he was the apostle Paul. And so no matter what our inherited or acquired weakness, we may be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; and when that salvation is revealed, we may be sealed as his servants, to see his face, and stand before his throne, serving him day and night in his temple. Glorious service! Who would not prefer that to the poor, miserable service of self?

#### NARCOTIZED BY SIN.

In discussing the fact of the non-church attendance of the masses the *Occident* says:—

"The masses on this coast do not attend church because fear is not awakened in them. It is in them as sure as conscience is in them, but it is not aroused. It is narcotized by long sinning and insidious unbelief."

This is the exact truth, and is only giving in other words the reason which we assigned a week or two ago, namely, that people do not attend church because of a lack of interest in spiritual things. The *Occident* says, too, that the consciences of the people are becoming more stupid, but that they "can be aroused." No doubt they could be aroused, but the question is, Will they be? There is small ground for hoping that such will be the case. Nothing can arouse consciences narcotized by sin except the plain, cutting truths of the word of God, and as the time has come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but having itching ears are heaping to themselves teachers after their own lusts, the probability of there being any general arousing does not seem very great.

#### QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

An explanation is asked of the following scriptures: Matt. 3:9; 16:18, 19; 18:18; 21:44; and 22:31, 32.

1. Matt. 3:9: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

The scripture is very plain of itself. The Jews thought that their salvation, greatness, and glory were assured, because they were the literal descendants of Abraham. John taught them that it was just as necessary for them to repent as for others. Jesus rebuked them in a similar way in John 8:33-44. They were sinners by nature even as others. Rom. 3:9. Their only hope of salvation was genuine repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They could flatter themselves that they were the seed of Abraham, but it would do them no good. God was not dependent upon them for the fulfillment of his promises to Abraham. He who had originally created man out of the dust of the earth could raise up from stones children unto Abraham. The lesson we should learn from the text is, that privileges of birth, pious parents, good reputation, or external circumstances, will not save us. Personal holiness, through Christ, will alone avail. Eze. 14:20; Heb. 12:14.

2. Matt. 16:18, 19; 18:18. The first reads as follows: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." The second reads: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven."

"Peter" comes from the Greek word *petros*, meaning "a stone." Liddell and Scott say of this word, "a stone and thus distinguished from *petra*." The word "rock" comes from this latter word, *petra*. Of this the same standard authority says, "There is no example, in good authors, of *petra* in the sense of *petros* a stone." The reason for using these two distinctive words is evident. The one signifies a rock, the other a stone.

Now "no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not . . . by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1:20, 21. Therefore, to understand a prophecy, we must compare it with other scriptures. The same Spirit inspired all. We will learn the meaning of this scripture by comparing it with parallel and related passages.

What then was the foundation upon which the church of Christ was built? Paul furnishes the reply: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3:11. Again he says of Christians, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," or "corner foundation." Eph. 2:20. Christ is the rock upon which the temple stands, he being the one who spoke through both apostles and prophets. John 14:26; 1 Pet. 1:10, 11. Isaiah bears testimony to the same (chapter 28:16): "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." Again, the psalmist says, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." Ps. 118:22. Peter himself applies this to Christ in Acts 4:11, as he also does Isa. 28:16 in his first epistle, chapter 2.

The term "stone" is, it is true, applied to Christ in Isaiah, Acts, Psalms, 1 Peter, and other scriptures; but it comes not from *petros*, the word applied to Peter, but from *lithos*, a word used of stones in general, and also of Christ and his children. When the vital relation of one to the other is intended, the same word, *lithos*, is used; but when the distinction is to be made between the foundation and that



built on the foundation, two words of different meaning are used, namely, *petra* (rock), and *petros* (stone). Christ is the foundation stone or rock (Matt. 7:24, 25), Peter one of the many stones built into a spiritual temple on that foundation. So the apostle himself, who heard Christ's words, testifies: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone [Christ], disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively [living] stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And then the apostle proceeds to quote Isa. 28:16 in proof of his statement. 1 Pet. 2:5, 6.

The Saviour therefore declares to Peter in Matt. 16:18, Thou art a stone which will be built up in that great spiritual temple, which will be founded upon me, the Rock of whom the prophets have spoken, and whom you have just confessed.

The gates, or powers (for gate is a symbol of power and authority), of hell (*hades*, the grave) shall not prevail against the church of Jesus Christ. It may seem to do so. The grave may close its portals over sleeping saints, yea, over the Head of the church, but divine power will triumph over all. 1 Cor. 15:51-57.

The giving of the keys to Peter may have had reference to his being chosen as the first, after the resurrection, to present to both Jews and Gentiles the conditions on which men could have a part in the church of Christ. The day of Pentecost he preached Jesus to the Jews. He afterward formally opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. Acts 15:7, 14. The binding and loosing did not have reference to any arbitrary power existing in Peter as an individual, but had reference to the conditions of acceptance by Christ, and the consequence of rejecting these conditions. Peter's message which he should bear to the world was not to be indefinite or uncertain. It was to be a savor of life or death. If men accepted of it with all their heart, they would be loosed from sin (John 8:32, 36), and bound, or united, to Christ. John 15:1-8. If men rejected this message they were left in the bonds of sin and condemnation. John 8:34; Rom. 6:16; John 3:18. It was in this way that Jeremiah was set "over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Jer. 1:10, compared with 18:7-10.

The same principle will apply to Matt. 18:18, where reference is made to the whole church. And we may further add, that when the church, united to her divine Head, walking in the light, acting in harmony with the word of God, deals with its members, such action, whether it be to bind or loose, to acquit or condemn, will be ratified by Heaven. It means no more than this. A church acting contrary to God's word is apostate or backslidden, and is herself a subject of condemnation. And such most emphatically is the Church of Rome, which arrogantly and presumptuously claims the power to bind or loose at will. The Lord designates that church as "the mystery of iniquity." 2 Thess. 2:7.

3. Matt. 21:44: "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

By referring to the forty-second verse, and comparing with Ps. 118:22 and Acts 4:11, it will be seen that the stone refers to Christ. The grinding to powder is easily understood. Christ is brought to view in Dan. 2 as the stone "cut out of the mountain without hands," which broke in pieces the various metals composing the image, symbolizing the nations of earth, and they "became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them." This breaking and grinding is "the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. 6:16) against those who have rejected every overture of mercy, despised "the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering," and have treasured up wrath against "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Rom. 2:4, 5.

Falling on the stone and being broken signifies an

opposite work—a work of mercy and reconciliation. Falling is voluntary on the part of the sinner. It is the gracious privilege which a gracious God gives to all. Being broken has reference to the repentance, contrition, and sorrow for sin which is manifested in every believer in Jesus Christ. It is a breaking away from the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life. 1 John 2:16. It is the broken and contrite heart which is not despised of God. Ps. 51:17. It is the "contrite and humble spirit" which God will revive. Isa. 57:15. It is the heart that mourns, the poor in spirit, who shall be comforted and shall see God. Matt. 5:3, 4. Such will become united to the Foundation Stone by his healing power, and will be a living stone in the great spiritual temple of God. 1 Pet. 2.

4. Matt. 22:31, 32: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

The question at issue was the resurrection. One great sect of the Jews had been confounded by Jesus (verses 15-22), and now the Sadducees attempt to confound him. They do not believe in the resurrection. The only scriptures which they hold as of divine authority are the books of Moses; and they do not believe that Moses taught the resurrection. And so from a case based on the law of Moses, they endeavor to confound our Saviour by an argument against the resurrection. Bear in mind that it is not the intermediate state that is in question, or that our Saviour must prove, or be confounded. It is as to whether the dead rise. First, he shows that his questioners do not know the scriptures nor the power of God. The same social relations need not to exist in the resurrection life. The elect number will be complete, and, as all will live forever, they do not need to multiply more. Secondly, he shows that the dead do rise by an appeal to the writings of Moses. Why, God is not the God of the dead or those who are not; he is the God of the living. This was a truth accepted by all. But God says that he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; now how can this be if they are dead? They are dead, but they are sleeping in faith. Therefore they are not, in the wisdom and power of God, counted as dead, for in his purpose they will live. It is thus that God "calloeth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17), because they exist in his purpose. While the dead do not live unto themselves, they "all live unto him" (Luke 20:38); for in his purpose all will be surely raised to life. The multitude were astonished at his wisdom, and the learned scribes perceived that he had answered well. The Sadducees were confounded at the wisdom of the lowly Nazarene, "who spake as never man spake." M. C. W.

#### INSTITUTIONS VERSUS INDIVIDUALS.

"We want a Sunday law to protect Christians in their worship on that day," is one of the utterances often heard from National Reformers. It is done to catch the popular favor; for all know that Christians are thus protected now. What State is there in all this commonwealth that does not have laws for the protection of its subjects in their religious worship? Where are Sunday congregations broken up by the lawless without laying themselves liable to heavy penalties? There is quite a difference between protecting the individual who observes an institution and protecting the institution which he observes. All have a right to the first protection. It is the Government's duty to grant it. It is a mere question of equal rights. But if it is the duty of the Government to protect one religious institution of its subjects, it is its duty to protect all; and thus would follow inextricable confusion; for the number of the institutions is legion, and their name, Babel. We would have transubstantiation, consubstantiation, real presence, and the symbolic view of the eucharist all legalized by the Government. Immersion and

sprinkling and pouring would all be baptism by law. The first day and seventh day would both be legal Sabbaths. But no, this would never do; for the overwhelming majority of the Christians of "the land" "demand the legal protection of but one day, and that the first day of the week."—*Rev. C. M. Westlake, of N. Y.* That is just what the clamor for protection to religious institutions means,—the protection of "me and mine," the equal rights of—a "majority of Christians." Rome believed in the equal rights of Romanists. The Puritans believed in the equal rights of Puritans. And the religious rights and liberty promised those who may dissent from the authorized code of the future, is of the same merciful character which Rome extended to heretics, and Puritans to Quakers.

#### THE COMING OF THE LORD.

THERE is no doctrine any more plainly taught in the sacred Scriptures than is the doctrine of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Jude tells us that Enoch prophesied of the glorious advent of Christ, when he shall come "to execute judgment upon all." Jude 15. The patriarch Job, standing, as it were, upon the brink of the grave, exclaimed: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job 19:25, 26. And to the same intent is the testimony of the psalmist: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." Ps. 50:3. This can refer only to the coming spoken of by Enoch and by Job, for it is at that time that the dead are raised, and that judgment is executed upon the ungodly.

It is, however, in the New Testament that the light of divine truth shines most clearly upon this important doctrine. There is recorded the promise of the Saviour himself: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." John 14:3. Also the words of the angels to the sorrowing disciples: "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." Acts 1:11. These, together with many other texts in the Gospels and the Epistles, present the doctrine of the second literal appearing of our Lord in a way that cannot be misunderstood. Indeed, it is one of the few points upon which almost all denominations of Christians are agreed; there may be difference in opinion as to the manner of the Lord's coming, and as to the time of his coming, whether it will be pre-millennial or post-millennial, and as to the object of his coming, but there is practically no difference as to the fact of his coming; all receive literally the words of the apostle: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

But the text just quoted not only asserts the fact of the second coming of Christ; it also asserts the object of that coming; the latter fact is not, however, so generally recognized as the former. In his first advent Christ came to die for his people, but not to afford them deliverance at once from the consequences of sin; he came, not to take them out of the world, but to teach them that while living in the world they were to be separate from the world. But when he comes again it will be to receive them unto himself, that where he is there they may be also. John 14:3. This is also stated by the apostle, who says: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

It is not necessary to dwell upon this point; the texts cited show as plainly as can be shown that when the Lord comes the second time he comes that



his people may be with him; and this at least infers that they cannot be with him till he does come. That this is really true will appear from several considerations. It is evident that though the Lord is with his people at all times by his Spirit, the living cannot in this life be with him in the sense in which the term is used in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. In order that they be with him bodily he must come and take them, as the Scripture says that he will do. But how is it with the dead? may they not be with Christ before his coming? Certainly not. Says the psalmist: "The dead praise not the Lord" (Ps. 115:17), and with this agree the words of Ezekiah, Isa. 38:18, 19. Surely if they were with him they could praise him; but, as before remarked, even the words of the Saviour, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also," clearly imply that his followers can be with him in no other way. Christ knew that those to whom he spoke would die; he gave not the least intimation, however, that they should be with them by that means; but he did promise to come again that they might be with him. How he will come was stated by the angels,—he will come in like manner as he went away, come literally, visibly, personally, "and every eye shall see him." Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7.

Notice too the agreement of Paul's words with those of our Saviour. Says the apostle: "The Lord himself shall descend;" "the dead in Christ shall rise;" "then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Speaking of this same time the prophet says: "He will swallow up death in victory. . . . And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." In view of these things surely every Christian heart can, with the beloved disciple upon the lonely isle of Patmos, respond heartily to the Lord's assurance of his coming, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

What the Scriptures teach in regard to the time of the Lord's coming must be reserved for another article. C. P. B.

### "THE KINGDOM OF RAVENNA."

In an article published some time since in the SIGNS, I find the following remark about Sir Isaac Newton's enumeration of the ten kingdoms:—

"We know not at what date Sir Isaac found these, only that, as he names 'the kingdom [exarchate] of Ravenna,' it must have been somewhere between A. D. 554 and 752, for that is the time of the existence of the exarchate of Ravenna."

Thinking that many readers may desire to know what Sir Isaac did say upon this subject, I submit the following:—

Sir Isaac Newton was far from being definite in regard to the rise of the ten kingdoms, as he gives, not the time when kingdoms were established within the territory of Western Rome, but the time of the reign of certain kings of the several nations, whether before or after they entered that territory. But the dates gathered from his comments are as follows: Vandals and Alans, Spain and Africa, 407-533; Suevians, Spain, 407-585; Visigoths, 400; Alans, Gaulia, 407-511; Burgundians, 407-700; Franks, 407; Britons, 407; Huns, 406; Lombards, 395-774; Ravenna, 408-800.

Why he gives the Britons 407 is not easy to imagine. Honorius renounced his dominion over Britain in 414, releasing the inhabitants from their allegiance, because he was not able to spare soldiers to defend it. However, some help was sent in 416, and also in 418; but the Roman soldiers took their final leave in 420. ("History of Great Britain," Robert Henry, D. D., London, 1771.) The Saxons took possession in 449.

The most singular part of his comments is his views of the plucking up of the three kingdoms. He gives them as follows: Ravenna, 752; Lombards, 774; Senate of Rome, 800! Thus he has three of the original kingdoms overthrown before

the three are plucked up, and one of the three plucked up did not belong to the ten, except as a part of another of the three, for in his comments he included the city and Senate of Rome in the kingdom of Ravenna.

The plucking up of the last of the three which he names—Senate of Rome—he has accomplished by Charlemagne, A. D. 800, at which date the saints and times and laws were given into the hands of the Papacy. According to that, the 1260 years began at that time, and would end A. D. 2060. After the expiration of that period he thinks the kingdom and dominion will be given—"but by degrees"—to the people of the saints of the Most High.

This system, if it can be called a system, might be considered a curiosity if it had been written in the present century. The copy from which I take these items was printed in London in 1733,—more than half a century before the beast received its deadly wound. Still there are some things in these comments for which no good reason can be offered.

Had Sir Isaac Newton—and others as well—kept in view two expressions of the prophecy, he would of necessity have given a more consistent exposition: "There came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots." Dan. 7:8.

J. H. W.

### AUSTRALIA.

WE have now been in this country over four months. I had the misfortune, the evening of our arrival, on the ride through the city, to lose the points of compass, and the result was that I became "turned around" half way, and north seems south. Consequently the sun appears to rise in the west and to set in the east. This is not more confusing than the seasons, which are also turned half way around. It is quite difficult to realize the time of year, and that now, while we are needing the lightest clothing that the law will allow, our friends at home are banking up their houses and making preparations to meet a sturdy winter. Last Friday, November 23, the thermometer indicated 102° in the shade, and 147° in the sun. This happily proved to be the climax, and in the evening a delightful breeze sprang up, and the weather remains very agreeable. The present season is a very dry one, and great damage has already resulted. The prices of all kinds of produce are advancing, and in the interior many cattle and sheep are perishing.

It is the same thing all the world over, a thousand vicissitudes await the results of toil, the earth is groaning under the curse, and the transgression thereof is heavy upon it. Were our hopes all centered here we could but look with anxiety to the future.

But that in which we feel the greatest interest is the advancement of the cause of truth, and we are thankful to be able to realize that the final success of this work does not depend upon any earthly condition. It is evident to our minds that God is at work here for his own cause. Our forces are exceedingly small, there is no laborer in this colony, and yet there is hardly a week passes but someone embraces the truth. And quite a number that we know of not of our faith are engaged in sending abroad our reading. Sermons and articles frequently appear in opposition to the truth, which shows that something is being done. Two weeks since the most extensive fruit preserver in the colonies, who employs over six hundred men in his factories, met with us on the Sabbath, and stated that he had begun the observance of the Sabbath of the Lord. For some time he had been privately keeping it, but now he came out and took a strong stand, and stated that henceforth his factories would be closed upon the Sabbath day. These factories are located in Melbourne, Sydney, Hobart, and New Zealand. The closing of them will have a wide influence, and there are few men in the colonies better known than the owner. It has been his custom for years to open the factories each day with prayer.

The tent season is just now opening. Brother W. D. Curtis is holding a series of meetings in Adelaide;

and Brother Israel will soon open a series in Tasmania. These are all the preachers we have in a field as large as the United States as for territory. There are many urgent calls for laborers.

We also feel that God is helping us in the building work. Our first building is up, and that and the lot are paid for, and the way to erect the main building appears to be open. The contract is let to one of our own brethren, and sometime in February we hope to be located in our own premises, where we shall have good facilities for the publishing work, and also have a place of our own in which to meet as often as we choose. We are now removing to the press-room, where we shall try to carry on the business until the other building is completed.

We find the brethren here as ready to help to the full extent of their means as in any place we have ever been. But as we look upon the vast work to be done, a feeling of utter dependence upon the Lord of the harvest rests upon us. Hitherto he has carried forward his own work, and we can trust him for the future. It would be a great encouragement, I have often thought, to those who have sacrificed for the cause in this field if they could hear some of the earnest gratitude expressed in prayer by the brethren to "those dear brethren in America who have been the means of sending the truth to them."

G. C. T.

## The Sabbath-School.

### Old Testament History.

#### RESISTING THE TRUTH.

(Lesson 3, January 19, 1889.)

(Concluded.)

1. RELATE what we have already learned of the work of Pharaoh's magicians.
2. What have we learned that they could not do?
3. What was the second plague that was brought on the land of Egypt?
4. When this plague was stayed, did Pharaoh keep his promise?

"And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried unto the Lord because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields. And they gathered them together upon heaps; and the land stank. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said." Ex. 8:12-15.

5. What was the next plague?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so: for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt." Verses 16, 17.

6. Could the magicians repeat this miracle?

"And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not; so there were lice upon man, and upon beast." Verse 18.

7. What were they forced to acknowledge to Pharaoh?

"Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God." Verse 19, first part.

8. In so saying, what did they virtually admit concerning their own work?

9. "What does Paul say will be the character of men in the last days?"

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." 2 Tim. 3:1-4.



10. Among what people will this wickedness exist?

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." Verse 5.

11. What will this sort of people do?

"For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Verses 6, 7.

12. How will they resist the truth?

"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." Verse 8.

13. What other prophecy have we of miracles to be wrought for the purpose of deceiving?

"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Rev. 13:13, 14.

14. What did the Saviour say on this point?

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24.

15. By what agency are these lying miracles wrought?

"For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16:14.

16. What name is given to those who in this age do the work which the ancient magicians and sorcerers did? *Ans.*—Spiritualist mediums.

17. Is there now any indication that the deceptions of Spiritualism will find a place among those who profess godliness? See notes.

18. What does Paul say of those who shall resist the truth by their lying wonders?

"But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was." 2 Tim. 3:9.

19. How was the folly of Pharaoh's magicians made manifest?

"And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not; so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said." Ex. 8:18, 19.

"And they took ashes for the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians." Ex. 9:10, 11.

### NOTES.

It is evident that wherever the principles of Spiritualism are held, whatever manifestations may accompany it will sooner or later be accepted. That almost the whole professedly Christian world is fast getting into a position to readily receive as of heavenly origin all the deceptions of Spiritualism, is evident from the following extracts, which show how universally the principles of modern Spiritualism are held.

In the month of September, 1885, Monsignor Capel, the celebrated Roman Catholic propagandist, delivered a lecture in San Francisco, concerning Spiritualism, of which the *S. F. Chronicle*, of September 7, gave a report, in which it was said:—

"Monsignor Capel denied that he had expressed a disbelief in Spiritualism. He had simply left out of the category of possible supernatural manifestations all biological phenomena. Aside from these, Spiritualism was but a misrepresentation of Catholic teaching, and it had been in the world from the beginning."

He said, further, that to Catholics the spirit world was as clear as the light of a gas jet; that the dead

were but disembodied spirits, with whom they were in daily communication, and to whom they prayed. Thus the great Roman Catholic Church is essentially at one with Spiritualism.

The *Sunday School Times*, of August 29, 1885, had a long editorial entitled, "What Our Dead Do for Us," in which the following occurred, among much more of the same nature:—

"Much of the best work of the world is done through the present, personal influence of the dead."

As a practical fact, and as a great spiritual truth, our dead do for us as constantly and as variously as they could do for us if they were still here in the flesh; and they do for us very much that they could not do unless they were dead."

"Our living friends do much for us, but perhaps our dead friends do yet more."

The *New York Christian Advocate*, of September 8, 1887, contained an article on the death of Dr. Daniel Curry, in which it was said:—

"But he is not gone. We will not say 'Good-bye' to him. We will keep him among us still. Reserve that seat in the front pew of the conference. Let the old place be kept sacred. He was not the man to leave his friends. In the thick battle, in the time of danger, or holy communion, in the solemn hour of crisis, he will be there. 'Are they not ministering spirits?'"

The *Christian Union* of November 3, 1887, contained a sermon preached by Dr. Henry M. Field (Presbyterian) at Cornell University, in which he said:—

"Oh, may the dead ever be with us, walking by our side, taking us by the hand, smoothing the cares from the troubled brow, and pointing us upward to the regions of everlasting light and peace."

Many similar passages could be quoted from representatives of all denominations.

THE folly of Pharaoh's magicians was made manifest by their inability to counterfeit all the miracles which Moses performed. So, says Paul, it will be with the last-day wonder-workers. Satan, through his agents, as well as in person, will "show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24. The miracles which in the past have been given as proof of the power of God, and the signs of the coming of the Lord, will be counterfeited. But they will be cut short in their deceptive career, by mighty wonders which will strike terror to their hearts. The mountains and islands will be moved out of their places, the earth shall be turned "upside down," the heavens shall depart as a scroll when it is rolled together, and as the deceivers vainly seek for the rocks to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, they will be forced to acknowledge that "this is the finger of God."

### DANGER OF RESISTING TRUTH.

TRUTH is of God; error is of the devil. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5), therefore the truth of God is the light of the world. Christ, who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), said also, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12. That truth is light and error is darkness, is shown also by the words of Jesus to Nicodemus:—

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." John 3:19-21.

The idea is that those who do the truth will be willing to have the light of truth shine upon them; but they who do evil do not love to come in contact with the truth, because that would reveal the error of their course. There are many more in this condition than is commonly supposed. Some people who condemn others as boldly resisting truth, and rejecting light, are doing the same thing themselves. How many are there who congratulate themselves that "we have the truth," who have not often shrunk from reading some portions of the Bible, or

from some of the plainest and most direct portions of the testimonies of His Spirit? How many are there who have not, at times at least, felt nervous lest some particular sin should be pointed out in plain terms by the servant of God? Such ones are dreading the light, lest the evil that they are cherishing deep in their hearts, scarcely acknowledging to themselves, should be reproved.

The Lord desires "truth in the inward parts."

It matters not how much truth one may possess, how firmly one may hold the theory, if he cherishes evil in his inmost heart, so that he dreads the searching light of God's word, he is resisting the truth just as surely as was Pharaoh, who said, "I know not the Lord; neither will I let Israel go." He is serving gods of his own devising, just the same as Pharaoh was.

Having thus briefly noted how one may resist truth, let us look at the danger of such a course. Said Jesus:—

"Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." John 12:35.

The opposite of light is darkness. It needs no argument, therefore, to show that when one rejects light, he chooses darkness. God is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness, yet his Spirit will not always strive with man. He will plead with a man, will stretch out his hands a long time, but when the man hugs his sin to his bosom, persistently refusing to see the light that would show its deformity, the light will be withdrawn. The man who, in the face of the light which God gives, cherishes impure desires and imaginings, and refuses to let them go, is getting ready to shut the last ray of light away from himself.

And what will be the result? He will soon walk in darkness, and will not know whither he goes. The light that is in him will become darkness, and then how great his darkness will be. All this will come to the man whose eye is not single; that is, who has not one aim and only one thing before him, namely, to serve God in spirit and in truth.

When a man has thus shut light away from him, there is nothing bad that he may not be expected to do. How can he be expected to distinguish between truth and error when he is walking in darkness of his own choosing. He may be, in a certain sense, sincere; that is, he may think that he is doing just right, because he is in the dark and all things look alike. There are men to-day in the ranks of blaspheming Spiritualists and blatant infidels, who once preached the plain truth of God's word, and they are as earnest in their advocacy of error as they were once in their defense of truth. They cannot by any possibility see that which once looked so plain to them. It is now impossible for them to believe truth. Why? Because they received not the love of the truth. They cherished some secret sin which the light of truth condemned. They yielded themselves to the service of Satan, and now they are led captive by him at his will.

Yet such an one will talk about morality, and will imagine that he is continually rising higher in the scale. How is this? Simply because his standard of truth and morality is constantly being lowered. He is continually drawing nearer his ideal, and so becoming nearer and nearer satisfied with himself, because as he sinks in the scale of morality, his ideal is lowered to a still greater degree. Terrible delusion! Fighting God and his truth, yet imagining that he is serving God; and what is worse than all, having no power ever again to know what is truth. How can those upon whom the truth shines as clear as the noonday sun, avoid this fate? Only by cherishing every ray of that light. Let it light up every corner of the heart. Say, with the psalmist, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Then shall your path be as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day.

W.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."



## Notes on the International Lesson.

## A SABBATH IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

(January 13.—Mark 1:21-34.)

IMMEDIATELY after his baptism by John in Jordan, Jesus was "led by the Spirit into the wilderness," where he was "forty days tempted of the devil." Following this he spent probably six months in Judea, after which he went into Galilee accompanied by Andrew, Peter, James, and John. "And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."

THE scribes, who were the teachers of the people, had but an imperfect understanding of the Scriptures, and their teachings were vague and involved, better calculated to befog the mind than to assist it to an understanding of the inspired writings. Not knowing the truth themselves, they certainly could not intelligently instruct others. With Jesus, however, the case was different. "He taught as being authorized by his own right and power to teach." He not only knew the truth, but he had been divinely commissioned to proclaim it; he had received the special anointing of the Holy Spirit at his baptism, and the testimony of some who heard him was, "Never man spake like this man." His words were with power, and they struck home to the hearts of those who heard as the cold and formal teaching of the scribes had no power to do. These teachers explained the law as a matter of custom, but their own hearts were unconverted, and their words had no power to move their hearers.

WHILE at Cana, Christ had healed the ruler's son who lay sick at Capernaum, and on this occasion the synagogue was filled with people who were anxious to see and hear one who had such power. Some were there, no doubt, from mere curiosity, but others from a desire to hear the truth; and as the multitude hung upon his gracious words, a man in the congregation who had an unclean spirit, cried out, saying, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him."

AFTER leaving the synagogue the Saviour healed Simon's wife's mother, and then the same evening after the setting of the sun, which marked the close of the Sabbath, great multitudes came unto him "and he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils." The influence of the Pharisees who accused the Saviour of breaking the Sabbath, "prevented many from applying to Jesus for relief from their infirmities upon the Sabbath day. They feared being stigmatized as transgressors of the law. But no sooner had the sun passed out of sight in the west than the diseased flocked to him from every quarter." And Jesus in his infinite compassion healed them. This circumstance suggests the question, "How did Christ regard the Sabbath, and what is his relation to it?" The Saviour said, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day;" the Pharisees said that in working miracles upon that day he violated the Sabbath; what saith the Scriptures?

"THE Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27), therefore that which is for man's highest good is lawful upon that day. "What is the chief end of man?" is a question asked in an old catechism, and it is well answered in these words, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever;" and it is as a means to this end that "the Sabbath was made for man," i. e., for the race. In order to glorify God, men must know and remember him as God, and it was that they might do this that the Sabbath was instituted in the

beginning. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth," is the divine command and the divine reason for the command. And to the same intent are the words of the Lord relative to the children of Israel: "I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." And as the design of the Sabbath is to keep in memory the work of the creation and the true God, it follows that whatever tends in the same direction is proper on the Sabbath. In this category must come assemblies for the worship of God even though they involve some labor, and manifestations of the divine power such as the working of miracles. The command specifies, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work," but healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, etc., is not man's work, but God's work, and they who see in it a desecration of the Sabbath have more zeal for human traditions than for the honor of him who is the Lord of the Sabbath. But aside from these considerations, the fact that Christ did these things upon the Sabbath proves that they were not violations of the divine law. He came not to destroy the law (Matt. 5:17), but to magnify and make it honorable (Isa. 42:21), and just before his crucifixion he testified to his disciples that he had kept his Father's commandments. John 15:10. Therefore we know that in no sense nor in any case did he break the Sabbath.

BUT the Jews charged repeatedly that the Saviour did break the Sabbath, and some even who call themselves by his name, bring against him the same accusation, but he himself has most explicitly denied the charge. To those who made it anciently he said: "If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless" (Matt. 12:7), and his word says the same to-day. Christ *was* and *is* Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28), not to abolish it, or to desecrate it, but as its author, the one to whom it belongs. He it was by whom the worlds were made (Heb. 1:2; John 1:3; Col. 1:16), and he it was who rested upon the seventh day at the close of creation week, and who blessed and sanctified it, setting it apart as the memorial of that work. To keep it in the proper spirit is to honor him even as we honor the Father (John 7:23), and to disregard it is to say by our acts that we do not recognize him as the Creator.

C. P. B.

## The Missionary.

## NEW ZEALAND.

THE winter has passed, and we are now holding a series of meetings in Napier, a small yet picturesque town of the North Island, bordered on one side by the sea and on the other by tall, dark mountains that rise to bathe their snowy crests in the flush of the morning cloud. Brother Daniells spent a few weeks in Melbourne, where a Conference was being organized, but returned in time to let us pitch our tent and start meetings before the end of October. The attendance and interest have been very encouraging, and promise well for a company of Sabbath keepers in Napier. Fourteen have already taken their stand as the result of Bible-readings and tent work, and many others are thinking of taking the same steps. We believe God will raise up a people here who will be waiting for the Master.

There has been considerable opposition manifested by the enemies of the truth. The papers are teeming with warnings and anathemas against Adventists and Adventism, but this is nothing more than we may expect, and nothing more than every reform has had

to meet. The message must go and God will take care of his truth.

The churches at Auckland and Kaeo are beginning to see more importance in the message, and the Sabbath-schools are deepening in their interest; but we long to realize more fully the converting power of God, and to reach the standard to which he would have his people attain.

The canvassing is progressing, there having been nearly \$2,000 worth of books disposed of since July, the tent sales alone amounting to \$140. We are glad to see the good reports from other fields, and pray that the great Lord of the harvest will bless the seed sown in weakness.

R. HARE.

Napier, New Zealand.

## AMONG THE CHURCHES IN NEVADA.

IN company with Brother Shannon I visited all the companies of Sabbath keepers in Nevada. It was a pleasure to visit the old friends once more and make new acquaintances of those who have lately embraced the truth.

We spent some days with the friends at Reno, Carson, Dayton, and St. Clair, and held two meetings at Virginia City. We endeavored to impress upon the minds of the people the importance of living holy lives in order to be fitted not only for Heaven, but to prove a blessing to others.

As we unitedly drew nigh unto God, we realized his promise that he would draw nigh unto us. Confessions were made, hearts were united, backsliders were reclaimed, and all were benefited.

The missionary work had our attention, and all heartily indorsed the new method of uniting the prayer and missionary meeting, and mailing the papers the same evening. All could see readily the importance of sending out our "able minister" fresh from the press.

Eighty-six copies of the SIGNS were added to the list, and fifty-two missionary boxes were gladly taken, in which to deposit their offerings each first day as God prospers them. Brother Shannon was a good help to me, and we spent over one month together with profit to each other, and left all that we visited much encouraged; and if the vows are kept that were made, and witnessed by the Spirit of God, we shall expect to see an advance movement of the cause of truth in Nevada.

WILLIAM INGS.

BE faithful in little things. Delude not yourself with the idea that you can be uncertain and untrue in trifles, and yet be reliable and trustworthy in great matters. Trifles make up our life, and are the ultimate test of fidelity. The best will cannot ripen into permanent greatness when the fearful power of negligent habit in trivial things has given bent and character to the soul. God's laws are not broken with impunity. Character is not constituted by a brilliant dash now and then, but is what we make it by the use of our powers in the routine affairs of current life. Only those who are faithful in the few things of common life are to rule over many things in the exalted stations of the heavenly realms.—*Michigan Christian Advocate*.

WORK and play are necessary to each other, but they should not be mixed.



## The Home Circle.

### A SONG AT MIDNIGHT.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

THERE can come no sorrow  
To this heart of mine,  
But will bring me pity  
From the heart divine.

There can fall no shadow  
O'er the way I wend,  
But my Father's presence  
Will its brightness lend.

I can know no anguish  
But he has a part,  
Ev'ry woe he shareth  
That can touch my heart.

In my grief I trust him  
Though I cannot trace,  
Words of peace he speaketh  
Though he hides his face.

Though my eyes are weeping,  
Though my soul is sore,  
Still at heart I praise him  
And his grace adore.

Nought can be my portion  
But his love doth know,  
All for good is working  
Be it weal or woe.

—R. M. Offord, in N. Y. Observer.

### MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.

#### A NEW YEAR'S STORY.

"I WONDER what I shall get for a New Year's gift?" said Ellen Grant, on the day before New Year's.

"I'll tell you what I'd like to have," said little Mary. "I'd like to have one of the biggest wax dolls that could be found. As big as a real baby, and a great deal bigger, too. Wouldn't you, sister?"

"No; but I would like to have—let me see what I would like to have;" and Ellen sat and thought for a few moments. "Yes, I'd like to have a shawl just like Aunt Mary's."

"And I'd like to have a pony," spoke up Harry. "Oh! I wish father would buy me a pony for a New Year's gift."

Thus the children talked, first wishing for one thing and then for another, while Aunt Prudence sat knitting and listening to what they said. At last little bright-eyed Mary, the merry pet of the house, came and leaning her arms on the knees of Aunt Prudence, looked up into her face, and said:—

"What are you going to give me for a New Year's gift, Aunt Prudence?"

"A kiss, dear," replied Aunt Prudence, "won't that do?"

"I want something besides a kiss. I get kisses every day."

"Oh, yes, and what are you going to give me?" spoke up Ellen.

"And me, aunty?" said Harry.

"Wait until to-morrow, and we'll see. But I don't hear anything about what you are to give, only about what you expect to receive. Now, ain't that a little selfish? I am sure you might make somebody a present of something, and then be made to feel how true the words are, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. What do you say, children? You've got a good many dimes in your money boxes, and can make New Year's presents as well as anybody else."

"Sure enough!" exclaimed Ellen, "so we

can. I never thought of that. I have got two dollars in my money box. What shall I buy? Mother shall have a present and so shall father."

"Can't you think of somebody," replied the aunt, "to whom you might make a New Year's present that would be useful? There are many people who have not the comforts of life, much less its luxuries. There are hundreds of poor children who never think of toys, and for whom New Year's day comes and goes without bringing a present of any kind."

Not far from where Mr. Grant, the father of these children, resided, lived a poor man named Barker, who from sickness had not been able to do any work for many months. He had four children. The two oldest, William and Jane, were only ten and twelve years of age, and Hetty and Philip were much younger. Since her father's sickness, Jane had got herself a place in a family to look after some children, for which she received a dollar a week. This, with about two dollars a week which the mother earned by sewing, was all the family had to live upon.

New Year's day came with a sober face to the inmates of poor Mr. Barker's comfortless home. The children looked for no presents, for even a full supply of nourishing food was lacking, and their clothing was now worn almost to tatters.

For breakfast they had some milk and water and a dish of fried potatoes. Hunger made these sweet to the taste, and they ate with a keen relish. After the table was cleared away, and the room swept up, Mrs. Barker sat down at her sewing—there was no holiday for her—and Mr. Barker took a book, as he lay on his bed, and gave each of his children a lesson.

"I wish they would let Jane come home to-day," he said, after he had given the lessons. "It is New Year's, and they might give the poor child a few hours' holiday."

As he finished speaking, the door opened, and Jane came in. The smiles that half awoke upon the father's lips died away as he saw that tears were in the eyes and glistened upon the cheeks of his child.

"Jane, dear," said he tenderly, "what is the matter?" as the child came hastily across the room, the moment she closed the door, and, sinking down upon a chair by the bed, hid her face among the clothes and sobbed.

Mrs. Barker threw aside her work, and came and laid her hand gently on the neck of her daughter, repeating what the father had said, with yet a more earnest and tender expression:—

"Jane, dear, what is the matter?"

But it was some time before Jane could find voice to express her grief. At last, putting her hand in her pocket, she took out a dollar, her last week's wages, and, handing it to her mother, said in broken accents:—

"They've sent me home, mother."

"Why, dear?" asked Mrs. Barker.

"Because my clothes are so poor, and my boots are all worn out so, they say I'm not fit to be seen in a decent body's house."

And the child wept and sobbed again.

Poor Mr. Barker caught his breath several times, like a person who tries to conceal the emotion that nearly overmasters him; and Mrs. Barker, unable to contain her feelings,

laid her head down upon Jane's shoulder to hide her tears.

At last Mrs. Barker, feeling that such weakness on her part was not right, raised herself up, and said, with a voice as steady as she could command:—

"Don't take it so to heart, Jane. We will buy you a pair of boots with this money, and I will alter you one of my old frocks to-day, so that you can go back to-morrow looking quite smart."

"But you need the money, mother, in the family," replied Jane looking up and drying her tears. "It won't do for me to spend it all for a pair of boots."

"You must have boots, you know, my child. These you have are all worn out. We can't expect people to keep you if you have not decent clothes. So we will buy the boots, and trust that Providence will help us to get along. If we use the money in the family this week, you cannot earn us anything next week, nor, perhaps, at all; but if we buy the boots, and you go back, you will bring us home a dollar next week, and so on week after week. It is therefore best for us that you should have the boots. Don't you think so?"

And Mrs. Barker turned to her husband.

"I do certainly," he replied.

And so it was determined that the boots should be bought, and that Jane should see about the house and cook their frugal dinner, while the mother altered one of her old frocks to fit her.

The frock was brought down from a closet upstairs, turned over and over by Mrs. Barker, and examined in every part, before she put the scissors into it. It was very thin in many places and worn clear through in others.

"It isn't worth the labor of making over," she at length said, letting it fall into her lap. "I am sure it won't hold together two weeks."

Just as she said this, someone knocked at the door, and William ran and opened it. A colored man stepped in, and, putting down a large hamper on the floor, said:—

"I was told to leave this here," and he turned and went out before anyone could ask him a question.

"What does this mean?" asked Mr. Barker, raising himself from the bed. "There must be some mistake."

"We will soon see," replied his wife, laying aside her work and taking hold of the hamper, which proved to be heavy. It was covered with a newspaper, which, on removal, showed a package neatly done up, marked, "New Year's gift for Jane."

Jane, to whom it was handed, hurriedly broke the string, and out fell a pair of strong leather boots very little worn, two pairs of stockings—but there was still something else in the package, which, upon examination, proved to be a handsome print frock.

While Jane was examining the contents of her package, the mother was going deeper into the hamper. The next thing taken out was a pair of India rubber shoes, a package of sugar, one of tea, another of coffee, and another containing six or seven pounds of rice, each marked, "A New Year's gift for Mrs. Barker." Then there was a very good jacket and a pair of trousers for William, and shoes and stockings for Philip and Hetty; and last, a paper of sweet Malaga grapes, marked, "For



Mr. Barker," and as much New Year's cake as could be crowded into the hamper between the other things.

Surprised, bewildered, yet happy even to tears, was that poor family on that long-remembered New Year's morning.

"Where are they all from, mother?" asked Mr. Barker, as soon as he could speak, after the excitement of the first surprise was over.

"Heaven only knows," replied Mrs. Barker. "They are sent from above."

"And to God we are thankful," said the sick man, lifting his eyes upward. "He that feedeth the ravens will not suffer us to want."

"I know where they came from!" exclaimed Jane, breaking in upon her father's expression of thankfulness, and holding up the frock she had received at the moment she stood so much in need of one. "This is Ellen Grant's dress; I remember it very well. She wore it the day I went there, a few weeks ago."

"And this is Harry Grant's jacket," said Willie.

"Are you sure?" asked Mrs. Barker.

"Oh, yes, I know it right well. I've seen him wear it many a time."

"Bless the children!" ejaculated Mr. Barker, whose mind had a strong suspicion of the truth. "If it is their presents—if they have remembered us in their happiness—may Heaven reward them a hundred-fold."

Jane tried on her frock and shoes and they fitted her as well as if they had been made for her. She staid at home a couple of hours, and then went back to her place, looking so much smarter than when she went away that the lady said:—

"You should have worn those clothes before."

"But I didn't have them," replied Jane.

"Where did they come from?" asked the lady.

Thus questioned, Jane related, in the most artless yet touching manner, the distress of her father and mother when she went home; and then told of the timely relief that came from friends unknown.

We cannot stop to tell of all the beautiful presents that Ellen Grant, and Mary, and Harry received on New Year's day. Papa and mamma had not forgotten them. Nor had papa and mamma been forgotten by the children, who, under the direction of Aunt Prudence, had laid out all the money in their money boxes in order to buy presents; and in bestowing them they did indeed prove it to be true that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Evening had come—the evening of New Year's day—and all the children were in the parlor with papa and mamma and Aunt Prudence, when a servant brought in a note directed to Mr. and Mrs. Grant. On breaking the seal, Mr. Grant read aloud:—

"TO MR. AND MRS. GRANT: For your generous kindness to us this day, our hearts are full of gratitude. Your presents came in a moment of great need, when we knew not which way to turn, and fully supplied that need. Jane was sent home from her place this morning because her boots were worn out, and her clothes not decent for her to be seen in a respectable family. The frock and boots just fit her, and she went back with a light heart. Comfortable boots and warm stockings were needed by the children above all things. You have supplied them, and may Heaven reward you a hundred-fold. Forgive this expression of our gratitude; but I felt that I could not sleep to-night without letting you know the real good you have done, and the warmth of our thankfulness.

MARY BARKER."

"What does all this mean?" asked Mr. Grant. "Do you understand it, mother?"

"Not a word of it," replied Mrs. Grant, with a look of surprise. "There is some mistake. We are receiving thanks for benefits conferred by others. It is good to remember the poor, but we have forgotten them this day. That touching letter of Mrs. Barker rebukes me deeply."

"Why, what's the matter, Ellen? and Harry? and Mary? What ails you children?" asked Mr. Grant, looking from face to face of the little ones, and being unable to comprehend the expression that rested upon each.

"Let me explain," said Aunt Prudence. And she told how the children had spent their money in buying things for a New Year's present to the family of poor Mr. Barker, and how they had sent clothing also, that she had picked out from such as they had outgrown or thrown aside. But how Mrs. Barker knew where they came from was more than she could tell.

"And my children have done this!" said Mr. Grant, with much emotion, drawing them to his side, and pressing his lips tightly upon their pure young foreheads. "How happy they have made me! And they, too, are happy—happier in thus giving than they ever were in receiving."—*T. S. Arthur.*

#### REVERIE.

In the dear old chamber at grandmother's, and alone. Time, twilight; the day has been close and muggy; now a gentle breeze sways the leafy boughs overhead, and as I sit in the little old-fashioned rocker at the window, how my thoughts go wool-gathering! Back to the happy days of childhood, when life was all sunshine, and the future appeared so brilliant! And a dreamy, peaceful something whispers, Make the most of each moment; time flies, and wasted opportunities ne'er return. And a devout thankfulness to God fills my heart, for many things—just now for solitude. Often we most appreciate a congenial companion, truly we should; at other times nothing suffices but an hour all alone; it is fully as needful; but are we alone? Memory brings myriads of loved ones, gone on perhaps beyond the gates, but not forgotten; it may be that thoughts less kind crowd in upon us, for, alas! who has not regrets?

Dear heart, look not back upon the past, except it be to avoid like quicksands in the future.

In the last great day, when all alike may perchance see what the mistake of life has been, great the rejoicing of that soul who, not dwelling upon the things gone by, pressing forward with new courage and fresh life from the Giver of all good, marks a record in excellence surpassing all his first fond hopes. Take then the motto—only to-day—and waste no golden moments in regrets. A sincere prayer to the Father above will bring the needed strength when another sun rises, and "to-morrow" becomes "to-day."—*Christian at Work.*

Oh, what a load of struggle and distress  
Falls off before the cross! The feverish  
care;

The wish that we were other than we are;  
The sick regrets; the yearnings numberless.

—*Chauncey Hare Townshend.*

## Health and Temperance.

### THE HYGIENE OF OLD AGE.

H. C. Wood, M. D., has an excellent article under the foregoing title in the December *Good Health*, from which the following, relative to food and how it should be eaten, is an extract:—

The first question is in regard to food. The teeth in old age are, of course, lost, and they should, unless under exceptional circumstances, be replaced by artificial teeth; for the thorough chewing of food is even more necessary in the old man than in the young, because in the old the digestive powers are apt to fail. With the best artificial teeth, mastication is apt to be imperfectly performed; hence, the food of the aged should be soft and readily comminuted, and especially should it be of easy digestion. Very few old people need stimulating diet; very many are injured by an excess of nitrogenous food. The kidneys, like all other organs, are feeble; and if meats and other rich foods are used in excess, they greatly increase the strain upon these organs. Milk and milk products, or preparations of breadstuffs cooked with milk, should form a very large porportion of the food of the ordinary aged individual; but individual peculiarities differ so much that personal medical counsel should in all cases be taken, so that the diet may be regulated to the needs of the individual case. Very many old people are hurt by the use of food in excessive quantity; but little exercise can be taken, all growth has ceased, and the bodily furnaces which make heat are able to destroy but very little of food fuel.

### CONSUMPTION AND TIGHT LACING.

THE unnatural and most injurious habit of contracting the waist and chest by stays, in a vice-like grip, interferes with the functions of all the abdominal, pelvic, and thoracic organs. The circulation and proper function of the liver and spleen are greatly interfered with, digestion and chyliification are impaired, the pelvic organs are depressed below their normal level, the diaphragm is prevented from proper play, and the ribs cannot expand the chest walls; and the inevitable consequence is deficient respiration and aeration of the blood [and consumption].

Under five years of age, the census of 1870 and 1880 show more deaths of males than females from this disease. They also show a gradual increase of females after that age, to ten years; and after that to fifteen the increase is quite rapid, so that at the latter age the census of 1870 gives deaths of males, five hundred and one, and of females, one thousand and fifty-six; and for 1880 the disproportion is still greater. Between the ages of fifteen and twenty it is considerably more than double. This is the tribute females pay to fashion at that age. Females continue to hold the ascendancy till thirty-five years, in the census of 1870, and to the fortieth year in that of 1880, when the males again come to the front, and lead the list the balance of life.—*St. Louis Courier of Medicine.*

"EAT ye that which is good." Isa. 55:2.



## News and Notes.

### RELIGIOUS.

—Illinois has 298 Christian Endeavor societies, with a membership of over 12,000.

—A new church edifice of Chicago has on its corner-stone the words, "We preach Christ crucified."

—A conference between committees of the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches, looking to perfect co-operation instead of union, was held in New York on the 28th ult.

—The Catholic priest whose occupancy of a part of one of the public school buildings in Pittsburg, Pa., for parochial school purposes, caused so much feeling in that and other Pennsylvania cities, has decided to vacate the building.

—It is said that the Hebrews of New York City this year quite generally observed Christmas. Religious services were held in the synagogues, and in most other respects the day was observed according to the general custom of those who make the day a semi-religious festival.

—A recent Eastern dispatch states that the trustees of the Normal College of New Jersey are considering the preparation of an amendment to the State Constitution prohibiting the establishment of schools, the purpose of which is to withdraw pupils from the public schools. The amendment is directly aimed at the parochial schools.

—On the evening of the 28th ult. the Presbyterian Union of New York gave a reception to the committee on the reunion of the Northern and Southern General Assemblies. Addresses were made by Revs. Howard Crosby, Charles L. Thompson, Moses H. Hoge of Richmond, and Joseph T. Smith of Baltimore. Dr. Hoge expressed the hope that the Northern and Southern assemblies would soon be together under one general head.

—The topics suggested by the Evangelical Alliance for the week of prayer, January 6 to 13, are: Monday, January 7, Thanksgiving and Confession; Tuesday, The Holy Spirit; Wednesday, The Family and the Church; Thursday, Reforms; Friday, Missions; Saturday, Nations. Sermons are suggested for Sunday, January 6, from Isa. 60:1; Rom. 13:14; John 15:5; Phil. 4:13; and for Sunday, January 13, from 1 Cor. 3:9 and 15:58.

—At the convention of theological professors in New York on the 27th ult. a national academy of theology was founded. The object of the academy is the prosecution of theology as a science. These officers were elected: President, Prof. James Strong, D. D., of the Drew Theological Seminary; vice-president, Prof. E. V. Gerhart, D. D., of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church, Lancaster, Pa.; register, Prof. Marcus D. Buell, of the Boston University and School of Theology; secretary, Prof. C. D. Hartland, D. D., of the Hartford Theological Seminary; treasurer, Prof. F. Gardner, D. D., of the Berkeley Divinity School, Middletown, Conn.

### SECULAR.

—December 28 an earthquake-shock was felt in England.

—Snow-slides are causing trouble on the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

—The Russian Budget for 1889 shows a surplus income of 2,000,000 roubles.

—Several shocks of earthquake were felt in Southern Spain on the 27th ult.

—December 27 the town of Audubon, D. T., was nearly wiped out of existence by fire.

—Steps are being taken to develop the oil field known to exist near Gallup, New Mexico.

—Trains on the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad are successfully heated by steam from the engines.

—During his recent visit to Victoria, B. C., the evangelist Moody established a coffee-house in that city for sailors.

—The entire business portion of Marblehead, Mass., was burned on the 26th ult. The loss is estimated at \$750,000.

—Thread from nettle fiber is now spun so fine that it requires sixty miles of it to weigh two and one-half pounds. Nettle fiber is also extensively used in making ropes.

—The official journal of the French Government announces an increase in the army of 15,000 foot chasseurs, by the addition of two companies to each thirty battalions.

—The Hebrews who entered Utah with Johnson's army in 1868 have built a commodious synagogue in Salt Lake.

—A sister of Lord Dunallarey was thrown from her saddle and dragged to death while hunting in Ireland on the 28th ult.

—Bauereisen, the Burlington and Quincy dynamiter, has been found guilty and sentenced to two years in the penitentiary.

—On the 28th ult. a shell burst in a powder magazine at Messina, Sicily, killing twenty-two soldiers and injuring many others.

—A young man who entered a burning house near Nebraska City, Neb., on the 26th ult., to secure some clothing, was burned to death.

—December 23 the Italian Chamber of Deputies, by a vote of 175 to 32, passed a bill authorizing a credit of 145,000,000 lire for defenses.

—News has recently been received in this country of two more battles in Samoa. The killed and wounded numbered some two hundred.

—The most powerful artificial light in the world is at St. Catherine's light-house, in the Isle of Wight. It is estimated at more than 7,000,000 candle-power.

—Four men were instantly killed and two others fatally injured at Denver, Col., on the 26th ult., by the caving of the bank of a ditch in which they were working.

—Edison is working on an invention which he claims will enable him to produce electricity directly from burning coal without the use of boilers, engines, or dynamos.

—December 25 six out of seven members of a boating party on San Francisco Bay were drowned by the capsizing of their boat some distance off South San Francisco.

—A house in Harrisburg, Pa., in which a party of colored people were engaged in dancing, was blown up with dynamite on the night of the 27th ult. A number of the inmates were seriously injured.

—Nearly the entire village of Hermansville, Mich., was destroyed by fire on the 22d ult. No lives were lost, but owing to the severe weather and the poor shelter available many of the people suffered intensely.

—Dr. Alexander McDonald, general superintendent of the insane asylum on Ward's Island, has become insane. The doctor was one of the experts whose testimony convicted Guiteau, the assassin of President Garfield.

—The second inquiry into the recent accident to the Czar's train at Horkier resulted in attributing the disaster to a criminal conspiracy. All of the recently discharged railway employees will shortly be arrested.

—The attorney-general of Pennsylvania has begun suit against the Western Union and the Baltimore and Ohio Telegraph Companies for the forfeiture of their charters for violation of the constitution of the State by consolidating.

—The great strike of coal miners at Newcastle, New South Wales, was settled recently and the men returned to work after thirteen weeks of enforced idleness. The loss to mine owners and strikers is estimated at \$1,500,000.

—From 1827 to 1852 suicides increased in France from 48 per million inhabitants to 102 per million, and since the latter date the increase has been scarcely less rapid. In Saxony the rate had in 1877 reached 391 per million.

—Work continues on the Panama Canal, and it is stated that there are at the present time about 9,000 laborers employed upon it. Notwithstanding the serious embarrassment of the company, it is thought that the canal will be completed.

—It is said that General Boulanger is rapidly gaining in influence in French affairs. He aspires to the presidency of the republic, and his cause has recently been espoused by General Montalban, a very influential man in the councils of the nation.

—As to the number of children being educated in Anarchist Sunday-schools, the *Pilot* says, "Nearly 1,200 children, ranging from four to sixteen years, are gathered into those schools in Chicago to be brought up in antagonism to all religion and to all law."

—It is said that Mormons have been evading the law in Idaho and receiving the privilege of voting by being excommunicated from the church just before an election and being re-instated just after. The Legislature proposes to remedy this by requiring the test oath to declare the affiant's separation from the church to have taken place at least two years prior to the application to vote.

—The report of the Illinois Railroad and Warehouse Commission for the year shows that 601 persons were killed, and 1,974 injured, on the Illinois railroads. The total income of the roads from all sources is \$61,338,000, an increase of \$4,500,000 over last year.

—The question of the probabilities of a European war are again being discussed by foreign papers. A late dispatch says that a tone of anxious expectancy is heard everywhere in all circles throughout Europe and that scarcely any sudden development would surprise the people.

—The steamer *Haytien Republic*, seized some weeks since by the authorities of Hayti for violation of the blockade, has on demand of this Government been delivered up to the American men-of-war sent to secure her release. The people of that country consider the action of the United States as an abuse of power against a weak nation.

—Recent advices from South America state that Chili has a second time interfered to prevent the settlement of the foreign debt of Peru, and it is now very plain that she will permit nothing to be done that will interfere with her purpose to annex the prostrate republic and extend her boundary along the entire west coast of the continent.

—Sunday morning, December 23, the steamer *Kate Adams* was burned on the Mississippi River, near Commerce, Miss., and fourteen lives were lost. The following day the propeller *Lief Erickson* was burned near Seattle, W. T., with a loss of seven lives. This was followed by the burning of the steamer *John H. Hanna* on Christmas-day, near Plaquemine, La., with the loss of some forty lives.

—The late school election in Boston, in which some 20,000 women voted, was held in connection with the regular election of city officers, and as the ballots for both elections were the same size and on the same colored paper, quite a number of women, either by mistake or designedly, voted the entire municipal ticket. Election contests will result, and the whole election may be declared void.

—A Central Pacific express car was robbed on the night of the 21st ult. near Clipper Gap, Placer County, in this State. The robbery was accomplished while the train was running between stations, the thieves having secreted themselves on top of the express car while the engine was taking water near the scene of the robbery. The amount of booty secured is placed by the express company at only a little over \$3,000.

—December 23 three small boys entered a powder magazine near Mount Vernon, Ohio, for the purpose of smoking. Two of them seemed to realize the danger and ran away, but the eldest, a boy of fourteen years, remained, probably to show his bravery. In a short time an explosion took place, killing the boy who caused it, and doing immense damage to property. Seventeen men were badly injured, and several houses within a mile were wrecked. There were in the magazine 10 cases of dynamite and 210 kegs of powder.

—On the 23d ult. some Chicago Anarchists were prevented by the police from holding a meeting at a certain place in that city; it seems, however, that they had provided for just such a contingency as police interference, and the delegates repaired to a quiet saloon on West Randolph Street, where, in accordance with their program, they completed their formal organization. Before adjourning they elected Mayor Roche, Chief of Police Hubbard, and Inspector Bonfield honorary members of the Arbeiter Bund. The fact that the meeting was held was not learned until a late hour. The police were somewhat chagrined.

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The January *Sentinel* contains: "The Illinois Sunday Convention," "Principles, Not Parties," "A National Reform Ally," "Freedom in Religion," "The National Sunday Convention," "Sunday-law Arguments," "The Amended Sunday Bill," "Our Position Again Stated," etc.

The publishers have already printed 100,000 copies of the January issue, and say that they would like to make the circulation a quarter of a million (250,000) copies. Will you aid in this laudable work? The papers will be mailed for \$1.50 per 100 or \$12 per 1,000 copies. Order from the Secretary of your State Tract Society, or address the publishers, *American Sentinel*, 1059 Castro St., Oakland, Cal.

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# The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., SECOND-DAY, JANUARY 7, 1889.

We send no papers from this office without pay in advance unless by special arrangement. When persons receive copies without ordering them, they are sent by other parties, and we can give no information in regard to them. Persons thus receiving copies of the SIGNS are not indebted to the office, and will not be called upon for pay. Please read the papers and hand them to your friends to read.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR.

We do not say this to our readers simply because it is customary, any more than we say, "Good-morning," to our friends simply because that is the conventional expression. From the heart we hope that this new year may be to all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a happy one.

We do not wish them such happiness as the world gives, but that true happiness which the servants of God enjoy; that happiness that continues even in the midst of trial and distress, because that very tribulation brings to them in larger measure, and makes more real and precious, the power of Christ; that happiness which does not depend on external circumstances, but which dwells within the individual, so that in the multitude of his thoughts within him the comforts of the Lord may delight his soul.

The past year has been one of great blessings and mercies. God has in a special manner blessed the workers in the office of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and we feel of good courage as we begin another volume. We do not contemplate any new departure, but we do expect that the blessing of God will be with us in an increased degree, and that the SIGNS will be made much more efficient than ever before in the line of work which it has been following.

While we shall endeavor to the best of our ability to give comfort, encouragement, and instruction in the way of life and practical godliness, and thus to do our share towards making this a happy new year for our friends, we hope that we may at least have the benefit of their prayers to a throne of grace. Not long shall we have to battle with the powers of darkness; soon shall the King descend and crown his waiting people with glory, according to "the exceeding riches of his grace," and then will begin a glad new year, the joy of which shall continue throughout eternity.

"CHRISTMAS AND NATIONAL REFORM" is the title of a leading article in the *Christian Nation* of December 19; and the first sentence of the article is, "There is no necessary connection between Christmas and National Reform, and yet there is a natural relation which writers on Christmas do not seem able to escape." True; there is a natural relation. Both are of the Papacy. Christmas being compounded from "Christ," a name of our Lord, and "mass," the Catholic name of a most idolatrous rite. And National Reform is the unholy perversion of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the usurpation of his authority by man. There is a natural relation. That was a happy thought, Mr Editor.

We are receiving reports from quite a number of churches in regard to the services during the week of prayer, and the holiday contributions to foreign missions. We have made no report of our meetings in Oakland, because we wished all the reports, as far as possible, to appear at the same time. Next week we shall publish all the reports that we have, and we hope to have them all in by that time. If any churches have not reported, they will please do so immediately.

The *California Prohibitionist* chronicles with evident gratitude the rumor that the saloon men of San Bernardino will soon close their saloons during divine service on Sundays. What a victory for prohibition and the churches! Now we suppose all the churches will have rest.

# THE Signs of the Times

FOR 1889.

A Sixteen-Page Paper, Published Weekly, at Oakland, Cal.,

FOR THE



International Tract Society.



WITH the beginning of the year 1889 the SIGNS OF THE TIMES enters upon its fifteenth volume, which the publishers are determined shall be the best ever published. It will consist of fifty numbers of sixteen pages each, making, in the course of the year, 800 pages of the choicest reading matter, classified each week as Editorial, Missionary, Sabbath-school, Temperance, General Matter, and Secular and Religious News, besides Editorial Notes.

## EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

The editorial force upon the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been increased, and for this and other reasons the publishers feel warranted in promising for the coming year a greater amount and a better variety of matter in the Editorial Department than ever before. In this part of the paper will be discussed in an interesting and readable manner the various phases of practical Christian life and doctrine, embracing the evidence of the divinity of the Scriptures; the fulfillment of prophecy; the signs of the times; the harmony of the law and the gospel; together with everything that pertains to a thorough knowledge of our duties to God and to each other. Educational, social and political questions will also be discussed, the latter, however, only so far as they relate to matters of religion, for with politics as such the SIGNS has nothing to do.

## THE SABBATH-SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

The Sabbath-school Department will be largely a running commentary, by the editors, upon two series of lessons, one of which is the regular International Series. These lessons will be of such a character that they will not only be of great service to students in the preparation of their lessons, but will also be perused with interest and profit by the general reader.

## MISSION DEPARTMENT.

In the Missionary Department will be published reports from the various-mission fields, both home and foreign, together with brief descriptions of the fields and their wants.

## TEMPERANCE DEPARTMENT.

In the past no part of the paper has met with more favor than the Temperance Department. Many temperance societies have used the SIGNS regularly in their meetings, and the publishers hope to make this feature of it still more interesting in the future than it has been in the past. This Department will contain not only the very best temperance matter obtainable, but also short articles relating to the preservation of health, including the discussion of proper food and dress, and correct habits of working, eating, sleeping, etc.

## HOME CIRCLE DEPARTMENT.

This department is fully described by its name. In it will be published short stories of an elevated character, besides short sketches of history, travel, and biography. Altogether, it will be a most interesting and instructive part of the paper, especially for the young folks, though all can read it with profit.

## RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR NEWS.

This department will be maintained in perfect keeping with the high moral tone of the paper. The news published will be carefully selected and everything of a low or sensational nature carefully excluded. The design of this department is to enable the reader to keep abreast of the times in the current news of the day without reading a mass of objectionable and offensive matter usually found in the public prints.

## ARTICLES ON THE BOOK OF ROMANS.

With the first number of the new volume we begin a series of articles upon the book of Romans, which will form a most interesting commentary upon this portion of the word of God. These articles will be distinct, each one being as nearly complete in itself as it is possible to make it. Under the heading of each article will appear the reference to that portion of the epistle covered by the comment, which will enable those who desire to do so to keep the connection of thought; this feature will also be appreciated by those who wish to preserve the articles for future reference, either by clipping and pasting in a scrap-book or by filing the papers which contain them. One object of these articles will be to make it impossible for the careful reader to peruse the epistle to the Romans without getting at least a general understanding of its scope and object.

## GENERAL ARTICLES.

The general articles published in the SIGNS are the very best selected and original matter obtainable. The articles are usually short, and always clear and pointed. Much of the matter in this department is written especially for this paper, but selections are also carefully made from the leading religious papers, only the very best being taken. Altogether the publishers feel safe in saying that no other paper published will furnish so great a variety of equally good matter for the year 1889 as will the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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