

THE Sims of the Times

Sec. Gen. Conf.

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:13.

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The Signs of the Times.

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THE (N. Y.) *Voice* quotes the *Brewers' Journal* as authority that \$45,000,000 worth of breweries have been bought in this country. It is a pity they cannot be taken away and sunk in the depths of the sea.

UNIONS and federations are the orders of the day. The latest is the partial federation between the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' and Laborers' Union, at St. Louis, the 6th instant. The N. Y. *World* correspondent thinks that soon a union of all in one body will take place. And these unions will be used for political and religious purposes.

SENATOR H. W. BLAIR, of New Hampshire, is on hand as usual with his Sunday bill, "to secure to the people the privileges of rest and religious worship, free from disturbances by others on the first day of the week." It was introduced December 9, and the same day the W. C. T. U. of Washington held a meeting in advocacy of this bill. Mrs. J. C. Bateham was present. We will give our readers the full text of the bill as soon as we obtain it. Senator Blair has also introduced bills to amend our naturalization laws, an educational bill, and also amendments to the Constitution regarding prohibition and woman suffrage.

SAID Dr. A. J. Nelson, in speaking on the Sunday law some time ago, as reported in the *California Christian Advocate* of September 18: "Give us the Sunday-Rest law and the world will move forward another one thousand years."

The Doctor evidently measures moral worth and progress by the standard of the Dark Ages. One thousand years ago was a halcyon time for just such legislation. These are facts. The Doctor made a mistake; he meant backward instead of forward. He says again in speaking of what he says was the teaching of Christ, "That man was bigger than the Sabbath, bigger than the State, bigger than the church." If this is true, as Mr. Nelson declares, what right, human or divine, has the State, or Church, or both, to compel any man or men to observe a day for a Sabbath contrary to his desires or conscientious scruples? If he is bigger than the Sabbath, cannot he choose or refuse as he pleases? Have his fellows the right to

compel him to humble himself and become subservient to something beneath him? Have they a right to compel him to rest when he does not wish to do so? Admitting this statement of what Mr. Nelson says Christ's teaching was, to be correct, how can he or his brotherhood of the American Sabbath Union justify Sunday legislation?

DANIEL DOUGHERTY, at the Catholic Laymen's Congress, claimed that a Catholic could not be elected President of the United States, on account of prejudice against them. The reason why a Catholic could not be elected President, is well stated by Dr. McGlynn recently:—

"The American people will not elect a Catholic to be President until it shall become much clearer than it is to-day that a man can be a good Catholic, and at the same time a true American. It is not clear to-day. The American people believe in the preamble of the Declaration of Independence; the pope and the pope's men do not."

THERE seems to be a sentiment in favor of Prohibition in the old Bay State, which the elections last autumn did not seem to warrant. On the election of the 3d instant nineteen of Massachusetts' twenty-five cities voted upon the question of license or no license. The Australian ballot system gave every suffragist the privilege of voting as he desired with none to let or hinder. Last year these cities cast an aggregate majority of 1,000 in favor of licensing the saloon; this year their aggregate majority was 3,000 against it. The secret-ballot system did not give the saloon power the opportunity to gather in the floaters.

WE have before remarked the indifference there is manifested to human life and safety on the part of great corporations. Street-car dummies, unprotected, unguarded railway crossings, and electric light, telegraph, and telephone wires, have proved veritable demons of destruction in some of our large cities, with entire indifference on the part of the corporations immediately concerned, and with no change in their plans involving any great expense or loss of means. Rev. J. C. Grimm, at the burial of Peter Clausen, the last victim of the electric wires in New York, uttered the solemn truth when he said:—

"If the deadly wire had dropped at the door of one of those who employed this man, the danger would soon have been removed. Nay, even pet animals would have been protected."

"This is no mysterious Providence. The law has been transgressed. Blame there is somewhere. There was no necessity for this sacrifice. The electric light dispels the gloom of night, but if electricity turns into a Moloch to feed on human blood, in the name of God let us do away with it. God's law has been broken by cruel greed. The transgressor will at last be called before the judgment bar of the Most High. The cause of slavery called for a deluge of blood. Rome crumbled and decayed when the individual life was of no more consequence."

CHRIST IS COME.

CHRIST is come to be my Friend,
Leading, loving, to the end;
Christ is come to be my King,
Ordering, ruling everything;
Christ is come! enough for me,
Lonely though the pathway be.

Christ is come to be thy Light,
Shining through the darkest night;
He will make thy pilgrim way
Shine unto the perfect day.
Take the message! let it be
Full of Christmas joy to thee!

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

WHAT WAS SECURED BY THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

IT became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in the redemption of the world to save sinners by the blood of the Lamb. The great sacrifice of the Son of God was neither too great nor too small to accomplish the work. In the wisdom of God it was complete; and the atonement made testifies to every son and daughter of Adam the immutability of God's law. The value of the law of Jehovah is to be estimated by the immense price that was paid in the death of the Son of God to maintain its sacredness.

The law of God is a transcript of his character; it portrays the nature of God. As in Christ we behold the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, so also in the law the attributes of the Father are unfolded. Although the law is unchangeable, his having provided a means of salvation for the law-breaker does not in the least detract from the dignity of the character of God, since the penalty of man's transgression was borne by a divine Substitute. The Father himself suffered with the Son; for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Man, with his human, finite judgment, cannot safely question the wisdom of God. Hence it is unbecoming for him to criticise the plan of salvation. Before the theme of redemption, let man lay his wisdom in the dust, and accept the plans of Him whose wisdom is infinite.

God grants men a probation in this world, that their principles may become firmly established in the right, thus precluding the possibility of sin in the future life, and so assuring the happiness and security of all. Through the atonement of the Son of God

alone could power be given to man to establish him in righteousness, and make him a fit subject for heaven. The blood of Christ is the eternal antidote for sin. The offensive character of sin is seen in what it cost the Son of God in humiliation, in suffering and death. All the worlds behold in him a living testimony to the malignity of sin, for in his divine form he bears the marks of the curse. He is in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that hath been slain. The redeemed will ever be vividly impressed with the hateful character of sin, as they behold Him who died for their transgressions. The preciousness of the Offering will be more fully realized as the blood-washed throng more fully comprehend how God has made a new and living way for the salvation of men, through the union of the human and the divine in Christ.

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God. The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in his beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of his law, and still save the transgressor. Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of his shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin. There are many who will be lost, because they depend on legal religion, or mere repentance for sin. But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. Man cannot be saved by his own works. Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can

never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion.

God saves man through the blood of Christ alone, and man's belief in, and allegiance to, Christ is salvation. It is no marvel to angels that the infinite sacrifice made by the Son of God was ample enough to bring salvation to a fallen race, but that this atoning sacrifice should have been made is a wonder to the universe. It is a mystery which angels desire to look into. The angels are amazed at the indifference and coldness manifested by those for whom so great a salvation has been provided. They look with grief and holy indignation upon those who do not seek to appreciate the unspeakable gift of God. Instead of offering adoration to God, finite men think themselves capable, without divine unction, of determining what is worthy of praise or blame in their fellow-men. But to be glorified by man is no glory. We should learn to value the praise of man at what it is worth. The Lord says, "Them that honor me I will honor." Let every breath of praise, every word of exaltation, flow to him who is worthy, flow to Jesus, the Prince of life, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Elevate the cross of Christ. Elevate the Mediator. Lift up Jesus. In him is everything noble. Contemplate God in Christ. He is surrounded with angels, cherubim and seraphim continually behold him. Angelic voices day and night cry before him: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. . . . Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee." But although God only is holy and worthy to be praised, human tongues are perverted to praise and glorify man rather than God.

The greatest gift that God could bestow upon men was bestowed in the gift of his beloved Son. The apostle says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" There was nothing held in reserve. No second probation will ever be provided. If the unspeakable gift of God does not lead man to repentance, there is nothing that ever will move his heart. There is no power held in reserve to act upon his mind, and arouse his sensibilities. The whole character of God was revealed in his Son, the whole range of the possibilities of heaven is displayed for the acceptance of man in the Son of the Infinite One. The way for man's return to God and heaven has no barriers. The matchless depths of the Saviour's love have been demonstrated; and if this manifestation of God's love for the children of men does not prevail to draw men to himself, there is nothing that ever will.

Those who will be saved in the kingdom of God will be those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of

the Lamb. The image of Christ will be perfected in every soul who accepts the gift of his grace, and those who are perfected through his grace, will stand before God equal in elevation, in power and purity, to the angels, and will be honored with them before the eternal throne. The angels of heaven will love those whom Christ has loved, and has bought with his own precious blood.

The attention of all the inhabitants of all worlds will be directed to the cross of Christ, around which will cluster the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The imagination becomes exhausted in its stretch to comprehend the wonderful work of redemption. The plan of salvation is too high to be fully reached by human thought. It is too grand to be fully embraced by finite comprehension. The apostle says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Can we wonder that Heaven is amazed because men act as though the gift of God were valueless? What will be the eternal loss of those who reject so great a salvation, offered freely through the merits of God's only-begotten and well-beloved Son!

ROME AND RELIGIOUS TOLERATION.

LAST week we briefly commented on one of Mr. Dougherty's assertions against American Protestants, made in his fiery address at the recent Catholic Congress at Baltimore, and repeated since at the Academy of Music in this city. His speech was crowded with statements that are open to question, but we have space here to notice only one of them:—

"We assert that we are pre-eminently Americans; that there would be no America, that the continent would be to-day unknown, had it not been for the Roman Catholics, and the Roman Catholic Church; that that liberty which is the essence of all liberty,—freedom to worship God,—was first established in America by Roman Catholics, and Roman Catholics alone."

We shall not call in question the facts that Christopher Columbus discovered San Salvador and other West India islands in 1492, and that he was a Catholic; but we are more than dubious in regard to the assertion that "freedom to worship God was first established in America by Roman Catholics and by Roman Catholics alone."

In 1627 Gustavus Adolphus, the Lutheran king of Sweden, authorized an expedition to settle in America, for the express purpose of establishing a colony in which freedom to worship God might be enjoyed by all, while he himself left Sweden to lead his army in Germany to fight for that same religious freedom against the forces of Roman Catholic Austria and Spain, who carried on the thirty years' war for the purpose of suppressing religious freedom and toleration in Protestant Germany.

The expedition authorized by Gustavus Adolphus was sent, after his death, by Oxenstiern, his prime minister, and established the colony of New Sweden, on both sides of the Delaware, from Cape Henlopen to the Falls of Trenton, having purchased the lands from the Indians. This was the first establishment of religious freedom on the American continent, and it was established by Lutherans from Sweden, long before the Catholic colony of Lord Calvert adopted an act of re-

ligious toleration for the inhabitants of Maryland, which occurred in 1649. Many persons, not acquainted with the historic facts, award the credit of a peace policy with the Indians, and of religious toleration in Pennsylvania, to William Penn; but the truth is that the Swedes had inaugurated and established that humane and Christian policy nearly fifty years before Penn and his colony landed at Philadelphia, which was in 1682.

We do not wish to withhold from the Catholic Lord Baltimore any of the credit due him for the policy of religious toleration established in the colony of Maryland. We give him due honor for that wise and Christian policy. But we do object to Mr. Dougherty's citing him as the *first* to establish freedom of worship in America, because it is not in accordance with historic fact.

For a Roman Catholic to boast that a Roman Catholic colony had established religious freedom and toleration in America, is such an anomaly in Roman Catholic history that it may well attract unusual attention. There is not now, and there has not been in past history, a Catholic country on earth in which equal religious freedom has been enjoyed by Protestants, and in which the Catholic Church has had the power to suppress it. Spain and Austria are Catholic countries, but Protestants in those countries do not enjoy freedom of worship. And if the temporal power were now restored to the pope, as he so persistently demands, freedom of worship in Rome would cease, and the intolerant and persecuting *régime* of former years would doubtless be again established.

If the entire North American continent had been *first* colonized by Catholics, like Mexico and South America, no intelligent person would believe that religious freedom and toleration would have been extended to Protestants, any more than it was in the countries of South America settled by them, or than it is now in any country in which the Roman Catholic Church has the power to prevent it. The Roman Catholics are indebted to Protestants for the equal religious freedom which they and all other citizens enjoy in our country, and except the colony of Maryland, we believe there is no instance in history in which the Roman Church in power ever granted equal rights of worship to Protestants without being forced to do so.—*Lutheran Observer*.

TIMES ARE CHANGED.

MR. SPURGEON has been, and is, a tower dauntless for the truth. He deserves all praise. He has stood like a bulwark against error. He still blows his bugle blasts. He says: "We are more than ever forced into this fight to-day. Thirty years ago things were very different from what they are now. It was easy to gather a congregation then compared with what it is now; the spirit of hearing is departing from our cities. Cavilers and questioners are to-day far more numerous than they were thirty years ago. One finds among Christian professors shoals of infidels. Ministers are, in large numbers, sowers of doubt. One who is reputed to preach evangelically told his young men the other day that a page of Huxley was worth all that Moses had written in Genesis. I know a

convert from Mahomedanism who has been greatly staggered while in England by what he has heard from Christian teachers. Many ministers are more at home in undermining the gospel than in the conversion of souls. Let us, therefore, look well to our weapons, and be in earnest to defend the truth of God. I charge you, each one, to do his part, and play the man in this evil day."—*Selected*.

TALK WITH TIME AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

"TIME, old Time, with the forelock gray,
While the year in its dotage doth pass away,
Come, sit by my hearth, ere the embers fail,
And hang the scythe on yon empty nail,
And tell me a tale 'neath this wint'ry sky
Of the deeds thou hast done as its months swept by."

"I have cradled the babe in the church-yard wide;
From the husband's arms I have taken the bride;
I have cloven a path through the ocean's floor,
Where many have sunk to return no more;
I have humbled the strong with their dauntless breast,
And laid the old with his staff to rest.

"I have loosened the stone on the ruin's height,
Where the curtaining ivy grew rank and bright;
I have startled the maid in her couch of down,
With a sprinkle of white 'mid her tresses brown;
I have rent from his idols the proud man's hold,
And scattered the hoard of the miser's gold."

"Is this all? Are thy chronicles traced alone
On the riven heart and burial-stone?"
"No; love's young chain I have twined with flowers,
Have awakened a song in the rose-crowned bowers;
Proud trophies have reared to the sons of fame,
And paved the road for the cars of flame.

"Look to yon child, it hath learned of me
The word that it lisps at its mother's knee;
Look to the sage, who from me hath caught
Intenser fire for his heavenward thought;
Look to the saint, who hath nearer trod
T'ward the angel hosts near the throne of God.

"I have planted seeds in the soul, that bear
The fruits of heaven in a world of care;
I have breathed on the tear till its orb grew bright
As the diamond-drop in the realms of light;
Question thy heart, hath it e'er confest
A germ so pure, or a tear so blest?"

But the clock struck twelve from the steeple gray,
And he seized his hour-glass and strode away;
Yet his hand at parting I feared to clasp,
For I saw the scythe in its earnest grasp,
And read in the glance of his upward eye
His secret league with eternity.

—Mrs. L. H. Sigourney.

TWO GREAT MISTAKES.

Two of the greatest enemies of God's work in the earth are two brethren whose names are I-Can-Do-Everything and I-Can't-Do-Anything. Although professedly opposed to each other, they are always found stalking about hand in hand, and working for the same object, viz., to keep people out of the work of God. Of course they hardly ever show themselves together in the performance of their work, but one starts in on his plan, being encouraged the meanwhile by his friend, then the other completes the job. Virtually, they are a unit in all their operations.

Both of these individuals dwelt with the man Moses, whom, as you know, God chose to deliver his people from Egyptain bondage. By examining the scriptural account of Moses and his work, all will readily see how the above-mentioned brothers manifested themselves.

From a child Moses was instructed in regard to the great work which he was to do. All through those long years of life in the

Egyptain courts, this one thought weighed heavily upon his mind. He enjoyed every opportunity for increasing his stock of knowledge, and when he was forty years of age he "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." Acts 7:22. Just like every other human being who has an abundance of this world's wisdom, Moses knew it. He began to cogitate about his great abilities, and of his achievements both as an orator and commander-in-chief of Egypt's army, and he came to think something like this: "Now, Moses, you are just the man to do this great work of delivering Israel. There is no part of the task for which you are not fitted. I am sure you are now ready to do the whole thing to perfection."

So out he went, this big I-Can-Do-Everything, and started in. "Seeing one of them [his brethren] suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptain; for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his [Moses'] hand would deliver them." But God stepped in right there and put a stop to Moses' work, because he saw that that spirit of I-Can-Do-Everything would only ruin his work, and cast a reproach upon his holy name. Therefore he sent his servant away into the wilderness to teach him lessons in humility.

After forty years of rustic shepherd life were expired, the Lord again appeared to Moses, and said unto him: "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Mr. I-Can-Do-Everything did not step up at this time, and put in his, "All right, I'm ready, I'm the man for that;" oh, no; Moses returned the answer, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?" Now, that answer showed a good spirit, did it not? And if Moses, realizing his own weakness, had only gone forward right then and there, in obedience to God's command, trusting in God's wisdom and power, and knowing that it must be the *right time* for him (Moses) to go and do the work, because God had called upon him to do so, it would have been well. But he did not do that way.

Mr. I-Can't-Do-Anything now stepped in and said: "Moses, you are not the man to do any such work as that. Why, just think, you haven't any education, you cannot talk very well, and, in fact, you are not fitted in any respect for such an undertaking." So the next thing Moses did was to begin to make his excuses. Although the Lord worked miracles before him as evidence that he would sustain him in the work, Moses said, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, . . . but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Then the Lord gave still further encouragement, but Moses gave him to understand that he thought he knew his own abilities, and that it would be a mistake for him to go.

Had not God exerted still further influence, this I-Can't-Do-Anything brother would have kept Moses there in Midian the remainder of his life. "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses" because of the course pursued by him, which proves, beyond all doubt, that it was I-Can't-Do-Anything, not true humility, which was holding back this

man of God; for certainly the Lord never becomes angry over the fact that a man possesses a spirit of humility.

Moses lived and died many hundreds of years ago, but I-Can-Do-Everything and I-Can't-Do-Anything still continue to exist. Shall we not learn a lesson from Moses' experience, and shun their company? Have you been "called" to teach a class in the Sabbath-school? If you have, your work is to lead precious souls from the bondage of sin to the heavenly Canaan. Perhaps you have had many educational advantages, and are "mighty in words and in deeds;" but take heed that you do not go forth in your own strength, letting Mr. I-Can-Do-Everything control you; for just as certainly as God checked Moses in his course of pride, the time will come when you will be separated from the work.

God has "called" all to take a part in his work, and if you are not already actively engaged, you may be called to fill some place at any time. Now, when duty is presented before you, do not begin to plead your inability because you have not been privileged to obtain a good schooling, or that you are too old, or too young, or something of that sort, thus following Moses' example. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord," that the work is to be done. "Who made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go." It is not for us to consider our inability, but to go into the work simply because God has "called" us to do so.

Have you much learning? praise God that you have, and, telling Mr. I-Can-Do-Everything to stand one side, declare, as says Peter, "If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth," and you will succeed. Are you ignorant? thank the Lord that you are not more so, and like Paul say, "By the grace of God I am what I am;" therefore "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Thus you may bid I-Can't-Do-Anything a final good-day, and enter upon a glorious career in saving souls.

Which will you choose, the companionship of God's word, which abideth forever, or the society of the two worthies, who will perish with all other unholy principles? Let us stand on the word of God, obeying its commands because they are reasonable and right.

C. L. TAYLOR.

SIMPLICITY.

ONE of the endearing charms, and much of the power, of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," lies in its short words. Canon Fleming, writing upon simplicity in speaking, says: "Some of the sublimest truths uttered by Him 'who spake as never man spake,' were in words of one syllable—'I am the way, the truth, and the life;' 'I am the light of the world;' 'I am the bread of life.'" The Canon says that he first had his attention drawn to this fact by Mrs. Sewell, the well-known Christian ballad writer, whose "Our Father's Care" has reached a circulation of 776,000, and her "Mother's Last Words," the enormous issue of 1,088,000. This lady said that her practice in composing was to write first as it came to her mind. "I then put the manuscript away

for two or three days, and go over it carefully, cutting out all words that seem to me at all difficult, and I put it away. Then I take it out again, and try to substitute words of two syllables for words of three; and afterwards words of one syllable, if possible, for words of two."—*Selected.*

RELIGIOUS CRABS.

You all know them. They are the unfortunate disciples who are trying to walk up to heaven backwards. They seek to develop Christian character by a careful system of self-examination and review. They seize eagerly upon every anniversary, such as a birthday, New Year's, Lord's Supper, etc., as occasions for retrospection. The effect is doleful enough. They are forever mourning over their slow progress. And what wonder? The crab is not a model of speed or grace, and what could be expected of those who imitate him?

The fact is, men are not constructed for walking backwards, either physically or spiritually. Let anyone try to walk backwards up a long, steep hill, and see what progress he will make. If he attempts to hurry, he will surely stumble. It is not a natural way to walk. God made us to walk with our faces to the front.

It is the same in religious life. If we keep our eyes turned backward, instead of looking forward, we shall surely fall again and again, and our progress will, of necessity, be slow and irregular. Many Christians look back perpetually at some past experience that brought great peace and joy; or they dwell in memory upon some period of unusual activity and consecration, and while their gaze is thus fixed behind them, they pass by present opportunities of service, they neglect the duties of to-day. Others, looking back, see only mistakes and failures, and are discouraged. They fear to undertake present duty, lest in that they should be equally unsuccessful. It matters not whether the past be bright or dark, to dwell upon it only hinders our onward course.

Away with useless retrospection! We have too much of it. There is no strength to be derived from looking backward, nothing but weakness and discouragement. Our strength is in forgetting. Look forward. Progress is the watchword of Christianity, the ideal of Christian life and action. That is no true spirituality that lives wholly in the past.

"Let the dead past bury its dead—
Act, act in the living present."

If we look backward, it should be but to forget the past, not to dwell upon it, to gloat or mourn over it, as the case may be.

It is useless to dwell on our past lives, because we cannot change them. Deeds are immortal. That which is done can never be undone. Pondering upon it will do no good. Judas pondered upon his sin till he was driven to despair and committed another sin. Peter turned away from his sin, and forgot it in earnest service, showing the reality of his repentance and receiving free forgiveness.

To look backward is useless, because no past experience is of present full value. A man may have been a saint a year ago; but if he has forsaken his holy life, if he has ceased to live for God and his fellow-men, and is today engrossed in selfishness and sin, of what

value is his last year's saintliness? The remembrance of it only makes his present condition worse by contrast.

On the other hand, no past experience can hinder our present obedience and salvation. It matters not how sinful or how empty may be the record of the past life, or how many its falls, to every soul that desires God's blessings to-day, that blessing is freely offered.

But the best of all reasons why we should look forward, and not backward, is that there are greater things for us in the future. No Christian need live forever in the light of a past experience, however grand it may have been. Every day may be, and ought to be, brighter and more useful than any day that has preceded it. It matters not how much you may have enjoyed of God's love and power in the past, he is willing and able to give you much richer experiences in the future.

Sir Isaac Newton, toward the close of his life, lamented the fact that, with a whole ocean of truth lying spread out before him, he had, with all his study, only been able to gather a few pebbles from the shore. If this is true of science, how much more of religion. The most noble Christian the world has ever seen has done no more than this. He has but gathered a few pebbles from the shore. Yet how often we are satisfied with these. We toss the pebbles from one hand to the other, and admire their beauty, and we think these are all that we want, while before us rolls the vast ocean of God's love, whose depths are yet unexplored.

It would be well if young Christians could rid themselves of this idea of retrospection. There is a better use for Sundays and anniversaries. Make them occasions for looking forward, adopting the motto of Paul, "Forgetting the things which are behind, . . . I press on."—*Rev. George H. Hubbard, in S. S. Times.*

LIVING CLOSE TO GOD.

THE Rev. T. L. Cuyler, in the *New York Evangelist*, says: "If you ask what we gain by living close to God, I would answer that we gain fresh supplies of strength. The strength of yesterday will not suffice for to-day any more than yesterday's food will sustain me if I neglected to eat my breakfast this morning. God means that we shall be kept in constant dependence, therefore he metes out 'strength equal to the day.' The manna must fall fresh every morning. Lord, give us day by day our daily bread. No Christian can live on an old experience or an old promise made to God in years gone by, or on the divine help that was furnished to him in a past emergency. A new conflict requires a new and immediate interposition of the divine aid. The Christians of Laodicea may once have been healthy and happy; they ceased to live near to God, and he 'spewed them out of his mouth.'

"Security depends upon living close to Jesus. The soldier who keeps the ranks on the march, and behind the ramparts during the assault, is commonly safe; the stragglers are apt to be picked up by the enemy. To this latter class in our churches belong the casualties and the disgraceful desertions which so often shock and shame us. Among this class

of backsliders are the ready victims of the tempter—the men who betray pecuniary trusts, and the weak-kneed time-servers who succumb in times of hard pressure, and those deserters who slip away from God's worship through broken Sabbaths, and all the votaries of self-indulgence who are mostly found in the haunts of 'Vanity Fair.' Drifting away from God, they fall into the hands of the adversary. Need a Christian ever slip or stumble? Need he ever walk in the dark, or lose the roll of his assurance?—No; not if he lives close to Christ, so close that the Shepherd's eye is ever on him, and the light of Christ's countenance illumines his path, and the Almighty arm is ever within reach. Brother, if you or I ever lose Christ, it is not because he has driven us away, or hidden himself from us; it is because we have been drawn away from him."

HOW TO FIND RELIEF.

It is said that a parishioner of Dr. Archibald Alexander once came to him for consolation, saying that he found no relief in the discharge of his religious duties.

"Do you pray?" inquired the doctor.

"Yes," he responded; "I spend whole nights in prayer."

"How do you pray?"

"I pray," he answered, "that the Lord would lift the light of his countenance upon me, and grant me peace."

The doctor responded—

"Go and pray God to glorify his name, and convert sinners to himself."

The troubled man followed the suggestion, and soon came into a peaceful, joyous experience.

There is a lesson for us all right here. Earnest, sincere prayer for others, offered in the name of Jesus, and having in view his glory, is the quickest and most salutary method of scattering the clouds of darkness. So long as we have our minds diverted from Christ and his kingdom in our supplications—even though it be to secure spiritual benefit—we will fail to find the peace we would seek. An upward, hopeful, believing look is everything. Let us remember this in all our supplications.—*Selected.*

THE PROVERBS.

ONE of two things I challenge all men to,—accept these biblical proverbs, or provide better. Do not spend your time in contradicting the Bible, but in writing another. Then we shall examine what are its riches, what are its motives, how much space does it touch. Is it the little invention of a little mind? or is it the mystery of love, the mystery of light? Some men have made up their minds to keep the old Bible until the new one is written. I always advise men who come for my counsel not to resign their present chair until they know where they are going to sit down. Any fool can resign. It ministers to immediate vanity—"I shall resign!"—more fool thou. Do not resign the old Bible until you have examined the new one. Do examine it, read it right through, prove all things, test them, probe them, and then hold fast to that which is good and true. We are simply waiting for the new proverbs. Meanwhile, the old ones

are very quaint, wonderfully profound, far-reaching in their suggestions, and not without comfort to the souls that are looking for the further coming of the kingdom of God.—*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

HE IS COMING.

BY MARY M. BUCKLAND.

HE is coming! precious Saviour,
In the clouds of glory bright,
With a countless host of angels
To attend him in his might,
As he comes to reap the harvest,
Gather out his chosen ones,
Raise the sleeping saints, immortal,
Take them to his heavenly home.

He is coming! precious promise;
We shall see him whom we love;
He will gather all his jewels
To that better home above.
Then all sorrow will be ended,
Days of watching all be o'er,
Prayer be turned to endless praises,
For we then shall sin no more.

He is coming! are we ready?
Is our armor girded on,
And our lamps trimmed, brightly burning,
Waiting for our Lord to come?
Oh! it will be joy to meet him,
When that shining host shall come,
If we hear the words of welcome,
If we hear the glad, "Well done."
Albion, N. Y.

EVERYTHING TO DO WITH THE CASE.

At a recent criminal trial that attracted great attention, one of the witnesses was confronted with statements previously made by him under oath, quite irreconcilable with the testimony he had given. He calmly declared that they were false, and that he knew he was willfully committing perjury in making them. One of the jurors, struck by his shameless confession, asked him, "Do you belong to the church?" "Yes." "What church?" "First Dutch Reformed." "How long have you belonged to it?" "Fourteen years." At this point the judge interrupted the dialogue with the stern question, "What has that to do with the case?"

A very pertinent inquiry, that of the judge. As legal evidence, the questions of the juror were probably what jurists call "irrelevant and incompetent," though they had some tendency to throw light on the character of the witness, which was certainly a relevant matter. But the judge spoke more wisely than he knew. As matters go in these days, what has it to do with the case that a man who has for years been a member of a Christian church is a self-confessed perjurer, an accomplice of swindlers, and a scoundrel generally?

Evidently, it ought to have a great deal to do with the case. There was a time when church membership meant something, when it was a pledge of honesty, sobriety, and good citizenship. Not that cases were unknown of dishonesty and bad conduct on the part of church members, but these cases were so infrequent and roused so much genuine surprise and horror in the community, as testified to their exceptional nature. But now the rule is reversed. It causes neither surprise nor horror to read in one's morning paper that the latest embezzler and swindler was a "pillar" in some Christian church, a prominent "worker," a highly respected Sunday-school

superintendent. One would be surprised, in fact, if the culprit were not a man of this type, for such are the men who naturally work into places of trust, and have opportunities to be rascals on a large scale if they are so disposed. In these days of time locks, and electric alarms, and skillful detectives, it is only now and then that a burglar can get into the vaults of a bank. It is the trusted cashier or teller that makes way with the funds and hies him to Canada to spend them. Not the known thief, but the supposed honest man, is the real danger in these days. We have shut up or muzzled the wolf that runs at large, but the wolf in sheep's clothing ravages the fold worse than ever.

And the reason is that the church has conformed to the world's moral standards, by condoning the type of dishonesty that is most prevalent. There is too slight a separation between the church and the world in this matter of moral ideals. Successful rascality on a large scale rides in carriages, builds churches, endows institutions, sets the pace in society, and wins for itself not merely tolerance but respect, and even admiration and imitation. None but mean-spirited souls can easily think ill of a benefactor. It is no more easy now to rebuke sin in high places than it was ages ago, when in all Judea there was but one Nathan to say to the king who had sinned, "Thou art the man." But it must be done faithfully, wisely, kindly, searchingly, if the church is to be made pure and kept pure; if it is to maintain any distinctive character for righteousness.

A revival of truth, of honesty, of brotherly-kindness, of right living, is greatly needed. Moral distinctions need sharpening; the line between the church and the world needs to be clearly marked, that it may be seen of all. Church membership ought to mean something more than the possession of a comfortable income and a certain social position; it ought to mean a Christian character—a soul redeemed by the blood of Christ, and in process of sanctification by his grace.—*Examiner (Baptist).*

A NUMBER of Chinamen, members of the North Congregational Church Sunday-school of Bridgeport, were arrested Sunday evening, August 18, in a gambling den. They set up in defense that they had been to Sunday-school and went to the laundry to complete their devotion. Ah Moon testified that it was not the Chinese gambling game, fan-tan, but an innocent one in which only a supper was at stake. The game was interspersed with prayers for success. He testified that they cast their specie into a wooden box, cards were then dealt, and after a brief prayer by one of the number chosen by lot to offer it, the game proceeded. These Chinese had not been in the Sunday-school long enough to be cured of "tricks that are vain, and the ways that are dark." The jury deliberated two hours, and the aggregate fines, which were promptly paid, amounted to one hundred dollars. But let not Christian workers among the Chinese be discouraged; we could tell a more profane gambling tale than that of Christian students in a Christian college, which took place within the last three years. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."—*N. Y. Christian Advocate.*

The Signs of the Times.

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

EDITORS,

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ALONZO T. JONES, S. N. HASKELL.

OAKLAND, CAL., SECOND-DAY, DECEMBER 30, 1889.

THE CLOSE OF THE VOLUME.

THE year of 1889 will soon be numbered with the past. In many respects it has been an eventful year; not so much, perhaps, in what has actually eventuated, or occurred, as in the progress which has been made in great movements, and the spread of far-reaching principles, which are rapidly urging on the world to its final crisis.

Famine, flood, and disease have wasted different portions of the Old World, notably China. War has threatened, as it has for years, the nations of Europe. Greater preparations have been made, armaments have been increased, and the preliminary growls of the conflict have been heard from the war dogs of the nations. But God in his mercy still holds the winds of strife. Revolution threatens every nation in Europe. The people have been ground down underneath ruinous taxation and lordly despots too long already, and when the hitherto suppressed forces of revolution are once broken from their fetters, it will be only a merciful Providence which will prevent scenes which will sink into insignificance the horrors of the French revolution.

Great disasters have marked the year in our own land. The fearful blizzards in Minnesota and Dakota of last winter were succeeded by terrible droughts through sections of the prairie States last summer. But these things have not affected the general prosperity of the country. Great fires in the West and East have destroyed millions of dollars' worth of property and some lives. The busy valley of the Conemaugh, in Western Pennsylvania, in which was the city of Johnstown, was desolated by flood, and thousands upon thousands perished in the mad waters. Other parts of the country have been visited by similar disasters.

In the religious world the tendency has been as ever toward the things of this life rather than toward things above. While many godly men and women in all Christian denominations, in all countries, have labored zealously, faithfully, self-denyingly, as far as they had light, for the Master's sake, the great mass have become more worldly. Worldly methods have been adopted, worldly influences bear sway, worldly principles control the life.

Worse than all, the church has cast off Christ and his power, and is endeavoring to unite with the world. The movement for a "civil Sabbath" (as if such a thing could be) is becoming worldwide. The church acknowledges in the action she is taking that she has no longer the power of Christ to enforce these things on the hearts and consciences of man, so she leaves him to whom her vows have been plighted and unites with the world. The only thing thus far which has hindered has been the jealousy of sects, and the unwillingness of the world. But through compromise, these difficulties will soon be obviated.

As an ally in this work, we have the Roman Catholic Church. She knows that every step in this direction places more power in her hand; that in wielding a political religion the daughters cannot hope to cope with the mother. While that church is weak and humiliated just at present

as regards the Italian Government, it was never stronger in influence among the politicians of earth, and especially among representative governments. Rome controls votes and thus controls rulers, while they hate her. And Rome has expressed her willingness to unite with Sunday-law advocates for the legislation of Sunday. Why shouldn't she? Is it not her own?

All these matters the SIGNS has endeavored faithfully to keep before its readers. They are the dark side of the picture. There is a brighter, better side. God's truth is shining from his holy word as never before. All the delusions of the last days are clearly revealed therein. None need to be deceived. Christ, our Advocate, our Helper, our Redeemer, still pleads for a gainsaying world. His light and truth have gone out to the nations of earth, and they will go till every nation has been warned of coming judgments, and pointed to the sure Refuge from all danger, the Living Rock, the Incarnate Word.

The SIGNS will endeavor to present the truth of God as it is in Jesus throughout the year to come. Its mission is to preach the word, to enlighten those in darkness, to confirm those who are walking the narrow way. To do this acceptably to God, we must have his help. We ask the prayers of our readers that we may; that we may so teach God's truth that souls may be saved from error and sin. We also ask them to help us in circulating these precious truths to the world, in bringing them before others. We shall appreciate these favors, and with their help and prayers we shall by God's grace make the SIGNS of 1890 better than ever before. Permit us, dear readers, to appeal to you to make this new year just before you the best of your lives; not in your own strength, not by your own resolve, but in the strength of Him in whom all fullness dwells. If you do this, it will be indeed a HAPPY NEW YEAR to you, and such we earnestly wish it may be.

SUNDAY LAWS AND CHURCH AND STATE.

A GENTLEMAN in Iowa Falls, Iowa, sends us the following kind and candid letter, to which we take pleasure in replying. The question upon which it touches is a live one at the present time, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES designs to give the different phases of it quite full discussion in future numbers:—

"EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES—*Dear Sir and Brother:* Some kind friend has mailed to me several copies of your excellent paper, and I have carefully perused every number. I am much pleased with its vigorous and brainy articles, which flash at me from its columns, and, being an old editor, I admire the make-up and press-work of the paper.

"I notice that you are especially antagonistic to the proposed 'Sunday laws,' and that you fear a union of Church and State is foreshadowed by the passage of such laws. I had not thought much about this feature of the matter, and while I am in the 'formative' state of mind regarding it, I wish to be enlightened on a few points, if you deem them to be of sufficient force to need replies.

"In the first place, are not all human laws based on the divine law? Second, does not every law passed by men seek to enforce a law that has been proclaimed by God to man; for instance—

"We have on our statute-book a law against larceny, being a reflection of the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal.' We have a law against perjury, which is a reflection of the law, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness,' etc. We have a law against the violation of marriage vows, being a reflection of the commandment, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' We have laws compelling children to obey and to provide for (if necessary) their parents, being a reflection of the commandment, 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' etc. We might go on and illustrate further, showing that God's laws as given to us in the Book are but the patterns from which we copy our human laws for the government of man. Now is there any commandment that is above this, 'Thou shalt keep the Sabbath-day holy,' so far as its effect on man's

physical, mental, and moral being is concerned? Is it not absolutely certain that Sabbath desecration means decay of men, families, communities, and nations? Is not the observance of the Sabbath a necessity, vitally so, of man's moral life?

"If this is true, then would it be any more a step towards the union of Church and State to copy this commandment of God into our human statutes and enforce it, than it is to copy other commandments and enforce them?

"Here is where I want light. I am with you entirely on the question of a union of Church and State in America, but I am intensely in favor of a union of God and State. I am not for creeds, but I am for the Bible, and I hold that this government owes all its grandeur to the God of the Bible, and that our human laws should aim to produce in the citizens of this country obedience to the laws of God."

Inasmuch as we can scarcely make a beginning to canvass the whole field in this article, we will confine our reply solely to the points noted in the letter. Fortunately, these touch the very heart of the matter.

In the first place, to the question, "Are not all human laws based on the divine law?" we must answer, No. And why not?—Because the divine law is entirely beyond the scope of human laws. The idea that human laws are based upon, and are an enforcement of, the divine law, is an outgrowth of a misconception of the true nature of the moral law.

We take it for granted that our brother accepts the statement that the moral law is summarily contained in the ten commandments. The decalogue comprehends all human duty, being an expression of the will of God, a transcript of his character. These propositions may be clearly proved by Scripture, but it is probably not necessary to take the space to do it here.

Now the inspired apostle, speaking of this same decalogue, says, "The law is spiritual." Rom. 7: 14. Comparatively few give enough thought to the law of God to consider the full force of this. It means that nothing that is not spiritual is obedience to the divine law. It means that mere outward physical conformity to the precepts of the decalogue, has really nothing to do with the law. This is shown by our Saviour in his sermon on the mount. In that he said: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." Matt. 5: 21, 22. Through the apostle John he also said, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." 1 John 3: 15. What do we learn from this? Is it that Christ has given us rules of life that are higher than the ten commandments?—Not at all. We learn that the sixth commandment means more than that a man should not take his neighbor's life with knife or pistol. We learn that when from the fire and smoke of Sinai God thundered the words, "Thou shalt not kill," he meant that we should not indulge a thought that if allowed to fully develop would result in murder. The sixth commandment reaches to the thoughts and emotions of the soul. That which does not go as deep as this is not obedience.

When the apostle says that "the law is spiritual," he cannot mean anything less. The statement is true of the whole law. It is spiritual, and only spiritual. It is not worth while to spend time showing that this does not mean that outward conformity is non-essential if the spirit of the law is kept; for as the greater includes the less, it is manifest that spiritual obedience—the obedience of the heart—involves conformity to the letter of the law. A man who never harbors an evil thought will not lay violent hands on his neighbor. But let it be understood that if a man does cherish anger, hatred, and envy in his heart, he does not keep the sixth commandment in any sense

whatever. So the man whose mind indulges in lustful thoughts does not in any sense keep the seventh commandment, although so far as any human being knows, he may be a very respectable man. A man may dishonor his parents while supporting them in the finest style.

The idea seems to obtain quite generally that there are two parts to each commandment—an outer and an inner—and that if a man “keeps the commandment outwardly,” he does very well; that such “obedience” will be set down to his credit in the books on high. This comes from confounding respectability with morality. It is assumed that that which gives a man favor with man will likewise give him favor with God. But we think that what we have already written is sufficient to enable the reader to understand that “the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” 1 Sam. 16:7. *Seeing is not being.* The shadow is not the substance.

We might dwell at great length on the nature of the moral law; but what has been said is sufficient to show that “the commandment is exceeding broad.” And so it will be seen that the law on our statute-books against larceny is in no respect a repetition of the divine commandment, “Thou shalt not steal.” The law against violation of the marriage vows is in no sense a repetition of the precept, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” The civil law against murder is not an enforcement of any part of the divine precept which says, “Thou shalt not kill.” The reason is, as already shown, that those commandments are spiritual, and nothing but spiritual life meets in any degree their requirements, while civil government is not spiritual, and is satisfied if men refrain from overt trespass against their fellows. It can require nothing more, and the basis of their requirement is not the moral law, but the natural desire of men for protection.

The State is not charged with the duty of making Christians. It was not to civil magistrates that our Saviour gave the commission to preach the gospel to every creature. The apostles went out taking nothing and asking nothing from the Gentiles.

Having shown that the laws which are already enacted against murder, theft, etc., are not reflections of the divine law, but are simply the expression of the natural desire of man for self-preservation, and that because the commandment is spiritual the State cannot deal with it, the fourth commandment may quickly be disposed of. That commandment is spiritual, as are the others. It is not mere physical rest that the divine law requires. The Sabbath must be kept *holy*. He who does not keep the day holy, does not keep the Sabbath, no matter how much he abstains from labor. In fact, the keeping of the Sabbath according to God's appointment is the mark of the highest spiritual attainment. Hear what the Lord says: “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.” Isa. 58:13, 14. This is true Sabbath-keeping. It is divine worship and spiritual attainment so high that the majority have no conception of it. Much less can the State enforce it.

The matter seems to us so plain that we cannot but think that our brother now sees it as we do; yet we know that there are many phases that we have not touched, and we shall be most happy to consider any further questions that may be asked. We can in this article no more than call attention to the fact that for the State to attempt to enforce the moral law would be a union of Church and State. As a matter of fact, no civil government

has ever yet made laws requiring obedience to anything which God has commanded. When the State has legislated concerning religious observances, it has always required something different from the Scripture precept. But the union of Church and State consists in the State enforcing what it or its advisers conceive to be the divine requirements. This is all that was done during the ages of papal supremacy, which furnishes the most perfect example of Church and State union. A State law designed to enforce the fourth commandment, or anybody's conception of the fourth commandment, is to that extent a union of Church and State. Dr. Schaff (“Progress of Religious Freedom,” p. 82) says, “Some features of a union of Church and State remain in some States even to this day.” If the law is a dead letter, the union is only nominal, but the fact remains the same.

This is a subject of vast and growing importance, and we hope to hear from our brother again.

E. J. W.

PETER'S DENIAL OF CHRIST; WHAT LED TO IT.

PROBABLY in the life of no Scripture character is the instability of human resolution and determination shown as it is in the life of Simon surnamed Peter, one of the disciples of our Lord. That he loved his Lord ardently and impetuously there can be no doubt. He would have given his life for him. He had been the first to boldly confess Jesus as the Christ on more than one occasion. When Jesus was apprehended in the garden of Gethsemane, Peter drew his sword and would have laid down his life in defense of the Master.

There was, however, an element of selfishness in Peter's character which the apostle did not realize. He believed in the ultimate triumph of Christ, but he wanted that triumph to be brought about in his way. So when, as recorded in Matthew 16, Jesus foretold his time of humiliation, his betrayal and death, Peter rebuked him therefor, saying, “Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee.” It would seem from a superficial view that the words of Peter were prompted by his love for Christ. He doubtless thought so himself. But through all the superficiality the Master saw the selfishness, which Peter did not. Christ's humiliation meant the humiliation of his followers. His crucifixion meant to them public disgrace; and Peter was not willing to endure this. Whether he realized it or not, that was his motive.

It was this selfishness which prompted these words which our Saviour rebuked: “Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” It was a cutting reproof, but it was just what the bold, impetuous, unreflecting disciple needed; it was what would confirm his faith in the Master in after days, though not heeded at the time.

That it was not then heeded by Peter is evident from subsequent events. At the last supper, when the lesson of humility had been taught the disciples, especially the sons of Zebedee (Luke 22:24-26 compared with Mark 10:35-42), Jesus again shows his tender regard for Peter: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Luke 22:31, 32.

But the bold disciple was not yet convinced. He replied, “Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.” It was doubtless true, if it could have been in Peter's way. But it was not this bravery which Jesus was impugning. There is a courage which stands unblanched before the greatest physical danger, which will quail and shrink before some moral test. Peter referred to

the one, Jesus to the other. He knew that Peter was morally weak, that while he might face physical danger, he would shrink before that test which would probe his selfish motives. Jesus showed this in his words to the disciple, that Satan desired him to sift him as wheat. The enemy would not come where Peter felt so guarded, but he would assail him, as he does all, in the weaker points. Jesus wished the breach left open in the wall of Peter's heart to be built up. Peter persisted in not seeing the danger.

Then Jesus gives him another proof of his divine presence, which the apostle would remember in after days. After Peter had vehemently stated, “Although all shall be offended, yet will not I,” Jesus says, “Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.” Is not this enough, this solemn asseveration of the Master?—No, Peter thinks that he knows his own heart best. He again declares, “more vehemently,” “If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in anywise.” Mark 14:29-31. And the vehement words were echoed by the rest. Oh, how little they knew of the human heart! How many times is the history of Peter enacted over in the lives of poor mortals now, who think that they know more than God.

Jesus then goes to Gethsemane, taking the disciples with him who had been specially reprov'd on that night, that he might show his love for them, that they might be better prepared by prayer for the conflict, and that he might have their companionship in his darkest hours of trial. But those who had said that they could drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism were sleeping, and even ardent Peter could not watch *one hour* with the Master, whose soul was passing through the agony of death. “Watch and pray,” he tells them, and then mournfully shows the cause of their weakness,—“The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.” He was treading the wine-press alone, and not even his disciples were with him.

The soldiers come after that hour of triumph, led on by servants of the priests. Peter, true to his physical bravery, smites the foremost one and cuts off his right ear. Jesus heals the wound made by his rash follower, and commands Peter to put up his sword. Peter's way was not God's way yet. Instead of accepting with all his heart the admonitions of Christ, Peter becomes offended, and with the others forsakes his Lord. But the impulse to flee is soon overcome on the part of Peter and evidently John. They returned, and it is said of the latter that he “went in *with Jesus* into the palace of the high priest.” John 18:15. He identified himself with Christ. His overpowering love for the Master would not suffer him to do otherwise, and doubtless his acquaintance with the high priest helped him in this matter. But however it was, he kept close to his Lord, and thereby prevented any possibility of denying him.

Not so with Peter. Jesus would not let him have his own way; the disciple is offended. He follows his Lord, partly from his love for him, partly out of curiosity, expecting doubtless that Christ would by his divine power scatter his enemies. But Peter would wait for that before he identified himself in that scoffing crowd with “the lowly Man of Nazareth,” so he followed, but “followed afar off.” Through John's influence he is admitted. When he came in the damsel seeing him brought in by one who came in *with Jesus*, says, “Art not thou *also* one of this man's disciples?” Peter is taken unawares, and he answers, “I am not.” It was the first step. He could not go to Christ after these words, so, instead of making his way to the Master's side, as did John, he, in what he meant should be an indifferent manner, mingled with the servants and soldiers around the fire, builded on that cold spring night.

He stands there warming himself, thinking no doubt of his sore disappointment, instead of watching and praying. He is asked again and again, and again and again he denies, even with cursing and swearing. The Lord heard—he knew it all before. He turns and looks upon Peter, not with anger, but grief, and the disciple's heart is broken. Jesus was divine. Peter knew then how well Christ knew him.

Had Peter heeded the first reproof he would not have fallen. Had he believed the second he would probably have resisted. But he would not, and after repeated reproofs he becomes sensitive, and separating himself from Jesus, he "followed afar off." By three evangelists this is told in circumstantial details; it is implied in the other. It reveals the secret of the denial. It made him susceptible to the enemy's temptation; it made Satan's success possible. Had he been close to Jesus, he would have never been asked the question, "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" Everybody would have known it; every word and act and look would have proclaimed that he loved the "Man of Sorrows" above all earthly flattery or emoluments.

Fellow-Christians, may we not learn a lesson here? When we deny Christ is it not because we have been following "afar off"? Has not reproof made us sensitive in our selfishness, and have we not brooded over this till the Master was far in advance? Are pride, ambition, avarice, pleasure, between us and Christ? Do some need to ask to ascertain if we are Christ's disciples? What assurance then have we that we will not deny the Lord even as did Peter? Let this year, if we have failed to identify ourselves with Christ, mark a new era in our lives. Let us go in "with Jesus," if need be, to the judgment hall, to condemnation, to loss of reputation, to death; at all hazards keep with him, but let us not be found by the adversary following "afar off," or warming ourselves in an indifferent manner in the company of scoffers. The lesson is for us.

M. C. W.

AFRICA AS A MISSION FIELD.

VISIT TO KIMBERLEY.

In speaking of Africa it should be remembered that when the term South Africa is used it signifies an area of 2,300,000 square miles, divided into eight distinct districts, settled more or less by Europeans. The majority of the permanent residents are Dutch, while the English who visit the country come chiefly to add to their wealth and then return to their native land.

Cape Colony was the first place that was settled. Cape Town is its capital, lying upon the sea-shore at the foot of Table Mountain, which rises some three miles from the harbor to an elevation of 3,600 feet. The suburbs of Cape Town are romantic in the extreme. I do not know that I have ever seen more beautiful or more tastefully-arranged villages than Wynberg and Claremont. Kimberley is situated at the termination of the government railroad, and is 648 miles north of Cape Town. About four hundred miles still further north is Johannesburg, which has lately become a rival to all the other towns in the colony on account of the gold reefs that are found so abundantly there.

On September 20 we left Cape Town and took a trip to Kimberley to visit the brethren at that place. It is here that the diamonds are found. After leaving Cape Town we passed through some good country. Much of the soil is devoted to the grape industry. In this section there is usually plenty of rain, the scarcity of which is the great drawback to many places on the continent that would otherwise be fertile. In this vicinity are the cities of Fallington and Worcester. The former is thirty-

six miles from the capital, and the latter about seventy-five. After leaving the last-named place, we crossed the Ex River Mountains. On the peaks of these, snow lies during the greater part of the year. As the train winds round and round among these hills, the scenery reminds one much of that in the Sierra Nevadas, while the desert that lies from the Ex River Hills to Kimberley is very similar to the plains east of the Sierras. In some portions there are abundance of sheep and cattle, while the Angora goats are found 400 miles north of Cape Town. There are hardly any towns of much size along the line. At intervals there are stations with a few houses gathered round them. There are, however, back from the railroad at a distance of from ten to thirty miles small villages averaging in size from a few to 1,500 inhabitants. The ride from Cape Town to Kimberley occupies little less than two days. There are fearful dust-storms on these plains during a greater part of the year, and yet this wind that blows the dust is the redeeming feature of the country, as it cleanses the streets, and carries away many impurities, which if left would soon breed disease, and thus destroy many of the inhabitants.

While in Kimberley we paid a visit to a diamond mine. Through the kindness of Mr. Gardner Williams, the general manager, we were permitted to inspect the "compound" and the "wash" portions, which visitors cannot always have access to. The laws regulating the purchasing of diamonds are very strict; it means seven years' imprisonment to have found on one's person an uncut stone. If a diamond is picked up in the street, the finder must immediately go and have it registered, and then it becomes government property, while he only receives a small per cent. of its value as compensation for his service. The "compound" that we mentioned above is a large inclosure surrounded with an iron fence and containing many sheds. It is here that all the natives in the company's employ are kept during the time that they have contracted to work. They are not permitted to leave the mining area or to have any intercourse with the outer world. The reason of this is that formerly a great many diamonds were stolen by these worthies while at work. They would swallow them when the overseer was not looking, and afterwards sell them to an illicit diamond buyer.

These mines employ a large number of hands. In the De Beers, the one that we visited, there were some eighteen hundred Kaffirs at work, and about four hundred convicts; these, with the drivers and whites, make in all somewhere in the neighborhood of three thousand employes. While in the pulsator buildings, where the stones are washed, Mr. Williams, who, by the way, is an old Californian, took up a diamond about the size of the end of a man's little finger, and handed it to us for inspection. Said he, "That stone is probably worth \$180, but should a native steal it, he would sell it to an illicit diamond buyer for \$25 or \$30."

The process of separating the diamonds from the soil in which they are found, is simply by means of washing. When the stuff is first taken from the mines it is spread out on large flats, called floors, and there left to be decomposed and pulverized by the action of the air. This done, it is placed in large circular machines, which thoroughly wash and further pulverize it. Then it is spread out on tables, and the "searchers" commence their work. They are armed with an instrument something like a small trowel, and with this they keep working over all the soil till the diamonds have all been extracted. The first searcher only takes out the largest stones, and the next the second size, and so on till they are no larger than the head of a pin. Still there are diamonds left in the soil, and so it is given to poor women, who search for these gleamings; but the companies are not as

liberal with these as was Boaz of old with Ruth, the Moabitish maiden, who allowed her all the corn that she picked up; they only give a certain per cent. of the value of the stones that are found.

As we gazed upon these diamonds, we could not see anything in their appearance that to our unaccustomed eyes would warrant such an enormous value as is set upon them. They are only small whitish stones having a glassy appearance. But so it is, the value can only be estimated by the scarcity of the article. After seeing all that we did, we could but feel thankful that the precious jewel of the grace of God is so free to all, and could but regret that so few appreciate its worth. It is certain that there are only a few who appreciate the value of a diamond, but these few would pay almost any price in order to come into possession of one of value. The most precious gem that this earth contains is the grace of God, and that is free to all who believe in its Bestower. It not only gives to the believer happiness in this life and a passport into the kingdom of heaven, but also everlasting bliss around the throne of God, through all the ceaseless cycles of eternity. The diamonds of this earth bring no true happiness, and often much sorrow, and yet it seems that by this means God brings together people so that he can teach them the value of the precious diamond of heavenly grace.

Ten times during the week stage coaches leave Kimberley for the gold-fields of the Transvaal, now being opened up at Johannesburg. These coaches are drawn by sixteen horses, which are driven one hour and then changed. Each of these vehicles carries fifteen passengers besides the mails. The inhabitants of Africa are in a perfect frenzy over these gold reefs. Not only are these coaches crowded to their utmost capacity, but there are private conveyances by the score, and every ship from England lands at Natal hundreds more of these fortune-seekers. Among these there are doubtless some whom the Lord loves, and who one day will do his bidding. There are many honest hearts coming here in quest of gold simply because every avenue of self-support in the mother country is closed against them.

Our meetings at Kimberley were excellent, although we failed to see that anxiety on the part of many to come near to God that we would have wished. And yet they manifest a deep desire to see the message spread, so that the honest may be gathered out. At present there are steps being taken to build a house of worship in Kimberley. A meeting-house is also much needed in Cape Town. We can see no reason why, with judicious labor, there should not be companies raised up to keep God's commandments in many portions of South Africa.

S. N. H.

A BIG UNDERTAKING.

UNDER the head of, "California's Deepest Need—a Day of Rest," the *Pacific*, a Congregationalist paper, says:—

"At a recent meeting of the American Sabbath Association of California it was resolved to proceed at once with a vigorous and well-directed campaign against the present widespread desecration of the Sabbath. A large number of well-known and influential business men of this city showed their interest in the movement, not only by their presence, but by their remarks. The necessity of coping with the growing tendency towards indifference of Sabbath observance was discussed at length, and resulted in the determination to restore, by means of State Legislature, the weekly day of rest to its proper position in the minds of the people."

Without reference to the question as to which day is the Sabbath, what is the "proper position" which the Sabbath should occupy "in the minds of the people"? Manifestly it is the position demanded by the fourth commandment. It should be regarded as holy, and so observed. Now think

of the absurdity of the idea that the State Legislature can restore the Sabbath to its proper position in the minds of the people; that a State law can make men regard and keep the day holy. The men who entertain such ideas must have a very exalted conception of the power of State Legislatures, or very low views of Sabbath observance. The State can compel men to put on an appearance of respect for the day, and that is all that it can do. The objection that we have to the State's interfering in religious matters is it can do nothing but make hypocrites.

The Sabbath-School.

Letter to the Hebrews.

HEBREWS 8:2-6.

(Lesson 15, January 11, 1890.)

1. In the Mosaic dispensation, did God have a dwelling-place among his people?

2. Where was it made? and by whom?

3. What were its two rooms called?

4. Who were permitted to go into the sanctuary? Num. 18:1-7.

5. How often did the priests go into the holy place?

"Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God." Heb. 9:6.

6. Who was permitted to go into the most holy?

"But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." Verse 7.

7. In what does our priest minister?

"A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. 8:2.

8. Where is the sanctuary in which he ministers?

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Verses 1, 2.

9. Who made that sanctuary? Verse 2.

10. Where was the blood of the sin-offerings presented before the Lord?

"And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt-offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." Lev. 4:7.

"And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward; and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat." Lev. 16:14, 15.

11. Could Christ have any priesthood on earth?

"For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law." Heb. 8:4. See note.

12. Who were the priests that served according to the law?—*Ib.* Ex. 28:1.

13. What was the nature of their service?

"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." Heb. 8:5.

14. What is meant by the example and shadow? *Ans.*—They were typical.

15. How was the pattern or example obtained? Same verse, last part.

16. Of what is Christ the mediator?

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Verse 6.

17. How does this compare with the old covenant?—*Ib.*

18. What was the old covenant? See Ex. 19:5-8; 24:3-8.

19. What is a covenant? See note.

20. Upon what was the better covenant established? Heb. 8:6.

21. What was the condition of the covenant in Ex. 19:5-8? *Ans.*—It was that which the Lord called *his covenant*.

22. What was his covenant which he required them to keep?

"And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone." Deut. 4:12, 13.

NOTES.

At first glance it might seem that the reasoning is not good which decides that Christ could have no priesthood on earth; for, if the law which confined the priesthood to the family of Aaron were abolished, what would hinder one serving though he were of another tribe? But it must be remembered that the priesthood and the law ordaining the priesthood stood and fell together. The only law for an earthly priesthood was that law which gave the office exclusively to the family of Aaron, and if any would act as priest on earth he must conform to the law of the earthly priesthood. It was impossible for one of another tribe to act as priest on earth. Further, it must be borne in mind that the service in the temple was still kept up by the Jews at the time when this letter was written, so that the words in this verse were conformable to the facts as they existed, as well as to the facts concerning the change of dispensations. For no one could possibly have then officiated as priest unless he were of the family of Aaron.

WEBSTER gives two principal definitions to the word "covenant." The first is, "A mutual agreement of two or more persons or parties, in writing and under seal, to do or to refrain from some act or thing." The second is, "A writing containing the terms of agreement between parties." But neither of these definitions is extensive enough to cover all the uses of the word in the Bible. For instance, in Gen. 9:9-16 the word "covenant" is used with reference to a promise of God, given without any condition expressed or implied. The common idea of a covenant more nearly fits the transaction recorded in Ex. 19:5-8; yet even here we shall find that the thing called a covenant, which God made with the people, does not in every particular correspond to a contract made between two men. It is only another instance of the impossibility of a perfect comparison between divine and human things. In other places in the Bible the word "testament," or "will," is used with reference to the same transaction, although a *contract* and a *will* are greatly different. The transaction between God and Israel partakes of the nature of both. But it is of little consequence that a human covenant does not perfectly represent the affair, or that the Bible uses the word "covenant" in so widely varying senses. The main point is to understand just what is meant in each instance, and this the Scriptures themselves enable us readily to do.

STILL another sense in which the word "covenant" is used in the Bible, is found in the text under consideration. Ex. 19:5-8. The condition of

the covenant which the Lord made with Israel was that they should keep *his covenant*. Here was something already existing, which God calls "my covenant," concerning which he was about to make a covenant with the people. What God's covenant is may be found from Deut. 4:12, 13. It is the ten commandments. God's law—called his covenant—was the basis of the covenant between him and Israel. The matter is so plain that there is no necessity for confusion. It makes no difference that the same term is applied to both; it is sufficient to know that God's covenant—the ten commandments—antedated and is entirely distinct from the transaction at Horeb—also called a covenant. That to which the apostle refers as the first covenant was, therefore, simply this: A promise on the part of the people to keep his holy law, and a statement on the part of God of the result to them if they should obey him.

Notes on the International Lesson.

THE FORERUNNER ANNOUNCED.

(January 5; Luke 1:5-17.)

THE first four verses of the book of Luke are merely prefatory, giving the author's reason for writing it. It was written for the purpose of instructing a "most excellent" man named Theophilus, that he might "know the certainty" of the things whereof the book treats. Inasmuch as it comes to us as a work of inspiration, we take it that, properly understood, it will teach us to a certainty. Therefore let us enter upon the study of its lessons with full confidence of its truth, and in faith that the same Spirit which actuated the writer may guide in the understanding of the Scripture.

"HEROD, the king of Judea," here spoken of, was Herod the Great, the father of all the Herodian dynasty. He was an Idumean by race, but a Jew in religion. He was a very energetic man, but cruel and selfish. He repaired and enlarged the temple at Jerusalem, which was afterward known by way of distinction as Herod's temple. He died in Jericho, in B.C. 4, aged sixty-nine years, after a reign of thirty-seven years as king of Judea. It may seem strange how he died in B.C. 4, when he was living at the birth of Christ. It must be remembered that our reckoning of A.D. does not go back far enough by four years. This manner of reckoning the years was not instituted until the sixth century, and then in calculating backward a mistake was made which was not discovered until several centuries later, and has never been rectified, so that B.C. 4 was really A.D. 1 or 2.

ZACHARIAS was a priest "of the course Abia." In the twenty-fourth chapter of 1 Chronicles we find the record of the division of the sons of Eleazar and Ithamar into courses by lot for the service of the sanctuary. There were twenty-four of them, and from that time forward they took turns at the service, and the eighth in order was Abijah, called Abia in the New Testament. Not only was Zacharias of the priestly line, but his wife, Elizabeth, was of the daughters of Aaron.

"AND they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Verse 6. From this we learn what constitutes righteousness; it is to walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. So, in Ps. 119:1, those who walk in the law of the Lord are reckoned as being "undefiled," and a blessing awaits them. Just before the coming of the Reward-giver (see Rev. 22:11-14) there comes a time when the characters of the righteous, or undefiled, and the opposite class, or "filthy," will

(Concluded on page 796.)

The Home Circle.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

THERE'S a song in the air!
There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer
And a baby's low cry!

And the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!

There's a tumult of joy
O'er the wonderful birth,
For the virgin's sweet boy
Is the Lord of the earth.

Ay! the star rains its fire, and the beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King.

In the light of that star
Lie the ages imperaled;
And the song from afar
Has swept over the world.

Every hearth is aflame, and the beautiful sing
In the home of the nations that Jesus is King.

We rejoice in the light,
And we echo the song
That comes down through the night
From the heavenly throng.

Ay! we shout to the lovely Evangel they bring,
And we greet in his cradle our Saviour and King.
—J. G. Holland.

MILLICENT'S MISTAKE.

"I CAN be as good a Christian outside the church as in it," said Millicent decidedly. "I don't see why I am in need of making a profession. As the hymn says, I can let my life show forth his praise."

"But, dear, the question is not whether you can be what you say, an humble, hearty Christian outside the pale of the visible church, but whether you have any right to choose for yourself in a matter where the Lord has left you his orders. His words are very plain: 'Whosoever confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father; whosoever is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father.' I do not see that you have a choice, dear."

"I don't think I am ashamed, Miss Mary." Millicent was talking with her Sunday-school teacher, and the two had lingered after the others had gone away from the little room in which their Bible-class gathered every week. "It is just that I don't like to be bound."

"Ah, dear child, then you haven't yet made a full surrender! The Lord bids you to-day to sell all that you have, and come and follow him; but you are holding fast to your personal liberty; you do not love him so deeply and entirely that your being is lost in him; that you are willing to give him whatever he demands, to the uttermost farthing. I am afraid, dear, that you are clinging to some worldly love, some ambition, some pursuit that keeps you away from the Saviour. No man can serve two masters, Millicent. The trial has been made over and over, but it always fails and it always must."

Millicent went home intent on being a Christian after her own pattern. A Sabbath or two later a large number of young people in the church she attended stood up in presence of the congregation to confess Christ. They took upon them the obligations of discipleship in the face of their world,—the people they knew, their school-mates and friends, the men and women of their town. Millicent Davis was not of the number. She went

home from the church before the girls who were her dearest companions had been able to say a word to her. Seated in one of the side pews while the sacrament was going on, Millicent had recognized, as she had never before done, the significance of the vows her friends had made.

"Come out from among them, and be ye separate." A voice from heaven had said this to the others, and, she owned it to her accusing conscience, had made its appeal to her—an appeal she had disregarded.

While the bread and the wine were passing from hand to hand, Millicent, looking on, suddenly realized the rite in its character of pledged faith, the military vow renewed to be true to the great Leader, through all changes, so long as the campaign on earth should last. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," came to her ears, as if someone had spoken audibly.

Everything which the teacher had said to her came to her in a flash of insight, unsought, almost unwelcome. She acknowledged that to be a Christian one must obey Christ, obey him literally, fully, gladly; that consecration could not be partial, but must be complete; that one, in a world of Christ's enemies, must needs take sides, because "he that is not with me, is against me;" that there is immense strength in an army corps, because it multiplies the unit by thousands, the thousand-fold stroke being only the unit reinforced by the impulse of every loyal life, so that the army is only the word of command in action. You would hardly believe how much came, and how forcibly it came, to Millicent, watching the friends, girls and boys, who had been truer and braver than herself, as they sat at the table and feasted with the Master. But the full force of her mistake did not appear to her till later.

She was sitting in the wide, pleasant parlor of her home, partially concealed by a curtain, when her brother Tom and one of his friends came in and took seats by the fire. They did not see Millicent, and, boy-like, took no pains to ascertain whether anyone else was in the room.

"Tom Davis," said the other lad, whose name was Con Lee, "I was surprised that you did not join the church to-day. I think if you had done it I would have done so too, for I've about come to the conclusion that it's the straight thing for a fellow to show his colors, and I'm bound to be on the right side. But you and I have been chums so long that I thought I'd wait and follow your lead."

Tom did not answer very promptly. Millicent, retiring more deeply into the shadow of the heavy curtain, not to embarrass the boys, could see that his face was very grave. When he spoke at last, it was with a touch of hesitation very unlike headlong Tom Davis.

"The fact is, Con," he said, "I meant to have gone forward, but I watched my sister, and I made up my mind to be guided by her. If Milly can be a Christian without joining the church I can, for girls don't have half the temptations that boys do. And it seems that Milly is quite contented in her present position. I felt disappointed when she chose to remain away, but I'm not going to set myself up to be better than Milly."

The room was growing dark, and nobody

but her guardian angel and the Master she had wounded saw the quick blushes which dyed Millicent's cheek, and the hot tears which overflowed her eyes. She stole softly away, leaving the boys to their talk. Another reason why one who is a Christian should join the church, had come strongly to her consciousness. The power of example is a distinct force in the world, and one cannot escape responsibility in the pattern one sets in the sight of others. A verse often repeated came to Milly's mind with a new emphasis: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

"I have kept two disciples from the Master, Tom and Con," she said to herself, sorrowfully—"two of whom I know. There may be others of whom I do not know."

Millicent sought pardon from the Lord before she slept. And when another opportunity came, she, with Tom and friends, did what they ought to have done before, acknowledged Christ's right to their service by joining the church.

They found, what all discover who do their duty, that under every husk of duty done there abides a heart of sweetness. The privilege of belonging to Christ, openly and fully, is too precious to be dispensed with by any who love him. And he reveals himself never so blessedly to his own as when they "do this"—break the bread and taste the wine, "in remembrance of him," for then indeed he brings them into his banqueting house, and his banner over them is love.—*Mrs. M. E. Sangster.*

SOMETHING ABOUT OUR NATIONAL PARK.

"BEAR are getting pretty tame in the National Park," said R. C. Long, a contractor from the Yellowstone, yesterday. "Never a shot is fired at them, and the rules are so strict about the conduct of strangers and natives on the reserve that one almost feels as if one should raise his hat in the presence of bruin. The respectful consideration he receives, however, is demoralizing him. Every night he comes down to the hotels and eats the slops that have been thrown out during the day. Two or three will waddle down at a time and quarrel and growl over the refuse from the table. Away from the hotels the bears kill the small game, and are as destructive to deer, antelope, and elk as hunters would be. The mountain lion lives right royally there too, and stalks unmolested by man or beast."

"The buffalo are increasing in numbers, and there is a herd of at least three hundred and fifty. Outside of the National Park there are very few animals of this breed. On a ranch in Nebraska there are some, and in Manitoba there are others, but the buffalo would be practically extinct were it not for the care and freedom granted in the park. There are very many deer there, and they are so tame that a man may approach them without causing them the slightest fear."

"Travel has been up to the average. This year there have been 7,000 people in the park. Strangely enough, nearly all were foreigners. Americans went to the Paris Exposition. It is expected that there will be a great number of visitors next year, and the syndicate that has the lease of the privileges on the reserva-

tion is building two more hotels. Over one hundred miles of road have been constructed this year, and the government has expended about one hundred thousand dollars in improvements.

"The face of the park is always changing. The geysers rest from their play every year or so, and the direction of the rivers change. A geyser is an easy thing to disturb, and, like the tramp, it hates soap. Some of the visitors who visit the park carry bars of soap with them, which, when thrown into the craters, cause the geysers to vomit forth their waters. This is prohibited, not because it is considered cruel or unkind, but because it disturbs the regularity of the geyser. Sometimes women get scalded when standing around the mouth of a crater. They see the eruption in the hole, but they never know enough to get out of the way, and the boiling water flies up, enveloping them in a cloud of steam.

"The escape of gas proves disastrous to small game, but few bear or deer get caught in Death Gulch. I have seen rabbits, attracted by the salt in the valley, go forward to the veins from which the gas is emitted and fall dead. An effort may be made to inclose the gulch, but that is not likely for some time yet."

THE OYSTER AND THE STAR-FISH.

THE Rev. J. G. Wood says: "No-one would have thought, on placing an oyster and a five-finger side by side, that the star-fish is a relentless foe to the oyster. Those who can remember their first fruitless endeavors to open an oyster may naturally wonder how the star-fish can achieve such a feat. As I have repeatedly seen, it proceeds as follows: Clasp the oyster in its rays, it brings its mouth opposite the hinge. From the mouth it pours a secretion that paralyzes the hinge muscle, and causes the shell to open. It cannot, like a dog-whelk, extract its prey and put it into its stomach, so it reverses the process, and puts its stomach into, or rather over, the oyster, protruding the stomach from its mouth, surrounding the oyster with its coats, digesting it, and then withdrawing the stomach into its body. The wildest fancy of Oriental legends never equaled in grotesque imagination this perfectly true history of the oyster and the star-fish."

TAKING THE CHILDREN.

A LITTLE boy was deeply interested in reading Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," the characters in that wonderful book being all living men and women to him. One day, while his grandma was busy with her needle-work, he took his slate and pencil, and seated himself by her side; and, thinking of what he had been reading, he said: "Grandma, which of all the people in the 'Pilgrim's Progress' do you like the best?"

"I like Christian," was the reply, giving the little boy her reasons. "Which do you like the best?"

Slowly but thoughtfully the little fellow replied, "I like Christiana."

"And why, my boy?" inquired the old lady.

"Because she took the children with her, grandma."

Health and Temperance.

THE MOCKING DEVILS OF DRINK.

How the mocking devils of drink transform a man! I have seen a man of pure life become profane and dirty. I have seen a man who loved his wife and child so debauched by drink that he was mortally offended because his wife did not look cheerful when he came home drunk. I have seen a man debauched by drink look coldly at his wife when she wept, and sneer at her sobs, and then shoot off to the nearest saloon. I have heard her cry, "Where are you going, my darling?" and heard him reply, "You'll find me at the morgue in the morning." I've heard her cry, "Oh, come back, and I'll not complain; I'll be cheerful!" and no answer was vouchsafed but the brutal ringing of his retreating footsteps.

I have seen a man who idolized his children sneak through an alley and try to get into the house without their seeing him. I have seen a man who enjoyed good pictures and good books, when debauched by drink prefer the society obtained in a low dive and playing cards with thieves for partners. I've seen a man who loved and idolized his mother so sunk and debauched by drink that when she knelt and clung to him, and asked him to stay in for one night, he tore her hands away and left her prone on the floor. I have seen a noble man die in an inebriate-asylum, howling like a wild beast. Forty of my own personal friends have so died. Twelve such have died since I began speaking. There are 300 who have died by drink in this twenty-four hours. It's awful, awful! The holocaust of 1889 will number 3,000,000. I have been told that I reasoned like a woman when I said that the liquor traffic ought to be destroyed root and branch. I believe that it's on its way, and more rapidly than many of us think. I hope the country will soon get right and stay right. I hope that it will no longer be a partner in producing the most utter misery of the world.—J. G. Wooley.

MY LAST CIGAR.

ONE Christmas my mother invited her children to her home to spend the day. I went and enjoyed the last Christmas I ever spent with her. After enjoying a real good, old-fashioned Christmas dinner, I went out doors to smoke an extra large and fine Havana, which a friend had given me a few days before for a "Christmas-day smoke." I found the flavor fine, but the tobacco was much stronger than I was accustomed to, so that when only a third of it was smoked I found myself quite dizzy, and compelled to cease operations, though I had used the weed ten years.

So I let the fire go out, and after the dizziness had passed off I went back into my mother's presence, with the unlit cigar between my teeth. As I entered mother looked up and said:—

"My son, I wish you would do something to-day that you will in the future always be glad you did upon this Christmas-day, which will be of permanent good to you through your remaining life, and make your mother happy as well."

"Name it, mother," I replied.

"Throw that cigar into the stove and never smoke another, or use the vile weed in any way; it is a slow but sure poison, besides being an expensive habit."

I took out the cigar from my mouth, looked at it, asked myself, Can I leave off smoking?—then I looked over to mother's chair; her eyes were closed, but her lips moved, and I felt that mother was lifting up her heart to God for me, and the words came to me, "My grace is sufficient," and instantly I raised the stove lid and threw in my Havana, and said—

"Mother, I will do it."

"You will never regret it," she said, and tears of joy rolled down her cheeks. And I am happy to say I have never regretted it. The great wonder to me to-day is how I ever could consent to have endured the slavery of tobacco ten years. Having been a free man fifteen years I have come to despise tobacco in every form in which men use it. And how a father can use the vile weed, and encourage his children to use it, as thousands do in our State, is one of the most astonishing things to me, and one of the saddest things I encounter. And I hope Christian women will wage their war upon tobacco as well as upon rum until it is banished from every home. Mothers, do your duty! Fathers, do it by example as well as by precept, and then the evil will be stamped out, because there is no influence so powerful with a son as a father's and mother's.—*Christian at Work.*

RICE BREAD WHEATEN BREAD.

ALLOW one-pound of rice to four pounds of wheat flour. The rice must be boiled in milk or water till tender enough to mash. Mix it with the flour just as you would rub butter into it, rubbing it between your hands. Dissolve a cake of compressed yeast in a quart of warm water or milk; pour it into the flour and rice, with two teaspoonfuls of salt and three of sugar. The dough should be quite soft to the touch. Knead well and set to rise. When it has risen well, knead it thoroughly and make into loaves, which put into buttered pans; let them rise to twice the bulk and bake in a good oven. This is delicious bread when made with milk, and excellent without.

THE BRAIN.

"It is not intellectual work that injures the brain," says the London *Hospital*, "but emotional excitement. Most men can stand the severest thought and study of which their brains are capable, and be none the worse for it; for neither thought nor study interferes with the recuperative influence of sleep. It is ambition, anxiety, and disappointment, the hopes and fears, the loves and hates, of our lives, that wear out the nervous system, and endanger the balance of the brain."

A SAFE and easy way of rendering window curtains and mosquito nets incombustible is to steep them in a solution of phosphate of ammonia, obtained by mixing a pint of water with three ounces of phosphate. This leaves the color and texture of the fabric unchanged.

(Continued from page 793.)

be unalterably fixed forever. And "of that day and hour knoweth no man;" therefore watch.

THE "ordinances" in which Zacharias walked were the ceremonies incident to the Jewish service, which pointed forward to the sacrifice of Christ, and through which the devout Jew manifested his faith in the coming Messiah. But there are ordinances since the offering of the great Sacrifice, in which it is just as essential for the righteous man to walk as it was for Zacharias to observe those of his day. In Matt. 28:19 is the Lord's command to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And in the next verse is the command to teach them "to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you."

OF the "all things whatsoever" he had commanded, there was the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, which was to be observed in remembrance of him. Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; 1 Corinthians 11. Of this ordinance and baptism we find a quite general recognition, at least nominally. But in the thirteenth chapter of John there is another ordinance described very minutely, which nearly all Christian bodies utterly ignore. This they cannot do, and yet "teach all things" which the Lord commanded his disciples, for it is expressly commanded to them. Why is it ignored?—Because it teaches humility, and in the last days men are to be "lovers of their own selves," etc. 2 Timothy 3.

THE Lord sent an angel, a most honorable one, Gabriel, the same who came to Daniel on a similar errand (Dan 9:21), to tell him that his prayer had been heard. How God honors those who walk "in all his commandments and ordinances"! And his blessings always transcend all that we can ask or think. How paltry would be our supply if our sustenance from heaven were limited to our judgment, or our ideas of God's goodness! He is more willing to give than we are to ask. In this instance, with all of Zacharias' faith, the promise was more than he could believe—it comprised nothing less than that his heir should be the harbinger of the Messiah.

"AND he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias." Elijah, here called Elias, had so perfectly walked in the commandments of God that he was translated to heaven without seeing death. His spirit was a most humble and self-denying one, and such a spirit was becoming the forerunner of the meek and lowly Jesus. The power of Elijah is illustrated in that "he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." James 5:17, 18. Such power with God became the messenger of him who has all power in heaven and on earth committed unto him. Let us study well the characters here brought to view, for the people of God are again to have the spirit and power of Elijah "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Mal. 4:5.

W. N. GLENN.

WE HAVE SEEN HIM.—The *Christian Register* says: "The church parasite—have you seen him? He buries himself in the body of the church and sucks its life, but does not contribute anything to its usefulness."

WHATEVER our place, allotted to us by Providence, that for us is the post of honor and duty. God estimates us not by the position we are in, but by the way in which we fill it.—*Edwards.*

The Missionary.

CONDENSED REPORTS FROM THE FIELD.

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

But a new generation is coming upon the stage of action. Many have rejected Christianity, because they supposed that it was manifested in Catholicism. Now there are calls for Protestant ministers. The Protestant State church can get no support from the State till they have quite a large company raised up, while the various missions of other Protestant bodies make very slow progress on account of the great expense. They do not seem to know how to make their missions, or companies, which they raised up, self-sustaining.

With Seventh-day Adventists the work has been different. Our people in France have been faithful in paying the Lord his own, and so love the truth that they will live on the poorest fare, and walk many miles to meet with others of like precious faith. The French are also much interested in matters of healthful living and hygiene. It is hoped that the truth may reach souls in this way.

Elder Burrill reports from Michigan that eight were added to the church at Seville and three were baptized at Wheeler and will unite with the St. Louis church.

C. McReynolds reports an extensive tour of visiting among the churches of Kansas, besides attending four local camp-meetings. Five were baptized among the churches, and thirty were converted and baptized at the camp-meetings, which were seasons of great blessing. Mr. W. F. Crafts was recently at Wichita, where he promised to answer the *American Sentinel* charges, but when the time came he did not even attempt a reply. The tide seemed to set against Mr. Crafts at Wichita even as at Oakland, the dailies all being friends of religious liberty.

Brother Wilson reports from West Virginia that he has met with much opposition in Wiseburg, in the Sandy Creek district, which a short time ago was flooded with water. The rough element threatened to whip him, and to tear down the tent, but the Lord helped to proclaim his truth faithfully, till opposition was to a great extent disarmed by the "weapons not carnal." Five persons accepted the truth, and the country was stirred for miles around.

A series of successful tent-meetings has just closed in Washington, D. C., conducted by Elder H. E. Robinson. While the weather was cold, damp, and rainy, no meeting was omitted for ten weeks, stoves having been put in the tent to counteract the effect of the damp weather. Seventy-five sermons were

preached, fourteen Bible-readings held, besides fourteen meetings for the children. Sixty dollars' worth of publications were sold, and over eighty dollars were donated to the meetings. Twenty-two have signed the covenant to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The field is an encouraging one, and many are interested in the truth.

Brother M. Wood has been holding meetings in Riverdale, R. I., and nine adults who never even professed religion before have embraced the truth. A thorough reform has been made in respect to the use of tobacco, as well as in other respects, the brethren deciding to give the cause of God what they had spent for appetite. When the power of the truth of God, the Holy Spirit, is present in the life, there will be a breaking away from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

OH, THAT THE PEOPLE OF GOD WERE ONE!

THE *Chinese Recorder* thinks that the prospect in China is almost hopeless, with forty Protestant missionary bodies all working independent of each other. It says:—

"To begin with, we have the Church of England, with her thirty-nine articles, her prayer-book, and her formularies all translated, and she is striving and hoping to impose them in all their entirety upon China. Again, we have the Presbyterians, with the 'Westminster Confession,' their longer and shorter catechisms, their system of church government, also translated, equally zealous and sanguine in their endeavor to lead the Chinese to adopt their system. Further, we have the Methodists, with their elaborate organizations; the Congregationalists, with their form of government; the Baptists, with theirs; the Lutheran Church, seeking to produce in China a fac-simile of itself, nothing less or more; the American Episcopal Church, with a like aim. And so with other denominations. What a spectacle to thoughtful Chinamen! and there are many such. No wonder they say to us, 'Agree among yourselves, and then we will listen to you.' We have three branches of the Episcopal Church, eight different sects of Presbyterians, six sects of Methodists, two Congregationalists, two Baptists, besides several other minor bodies, all acting independently of each other."

WE feeble mortals have the privilege of speaking to our Maker. We utter words here, or pour out our desires in the closet, or when walking in the street, or engaged in our daily employment, we breathe an ejaculation. The word may be scarcely louder than a whisper, it may be inaudible to our neighbor, and yet it cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost through blending with other sounds; nothing can drown it or prevent it from reaching its destination. It passes beyond sun and stars; it enters the presence-chamber of the Almighty. Amid the ceaseless strains of praise, that whisper reaches the divine ear, touches the infinite heart, moves the omnipotent arm. It sets in motion long trains of events, and brings down showers of blessings on those who utter it.—*W. Landels.*

News and Notes.

RELIGIOUS.

—Rev. Wm. Kincaid, a well-known Baptist minister of the Pacific Coast, who recently resigned the pastorate of the First Baptist Church, San Francisco, has received a call to a Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis.

—Dr. Howard Crosby strongly urges the consecration of "Christian capital" for the founding of "good secular newspapers," which shall treat all social and political matters "from a high moral and religious standpoint."

—Referring to the organization of the lower House of Congress, the *New York World* correspondent says: "For no office was there a keener contest than for the chaplaincy, there being a dozen eager candidates. The \$900 prize was captured by Charles B. Ransdell, a young Presbyterian clergyman of Washington."

—There was a celebration of the tenth anniversary of the publication of the *Herald of Truth*, at the First Baptist Church, San Francisco, on the 17th inst. In other words, it was a kind of decennial commemoration of denominational deliverance from Kallouchism on the Pacific Coast, for which good purpose the *Herald* was instituted.

—At one of the sessions of the Evangelical Alliance recently held in Boston, Dr. Green, rector of St. Bartholomew's Church, New York, read a paper on "Christianity and the State." He claimed that, one theory of the State being that it is based on a social compact, neither the Christian religion nor any other religion can have any organic connection with it.

—Rev. C. C. Bateman, a Baptist minister, writing "Oregon Odds and Ends" to a Baptist paper, has this to say about Astoria: "Poor Astoria; founded in 1811, and has never been able to keep a pastor of a Baptist Church, with one exception, for a single year at a time! The city has the reputation of being the 'wickedest' place on the Pacific Coast. There are a few Baptists, but the rest are Methodists, Presbyterians, and 'tough citizens' generally."

—Rev. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, in a recent address before the Evangelical Alliance, expressed himself in sympathy with the old view that the divisions of Christendom were an advantage to the cause of Christ, both at home and in the mission field, although he acknowledged that a divided church was not an ideal church, nor the church founded and prayed for by its divine Master. This sentiment is one of the strange anomalies of the modern church.

SECULAR.

—The Japanese cotton crop is a complete failure this year.

—According to Bradstreet's reports, nearly all the bonds of the United States are held at home.

—Leading educational men, to the number of nine, have incorporated the California Educational Society.

—The czar proposes now to be crowned king of Poland, and the event will come off in the fall of next year.

—A Yokohama publisher has brought out an edition of Darwin's "Origin of the Species" in the Japanese language.

—Natural gas has been struck at a shallow depth, at Salinas City, Cal., and a company has been incorporated to utilize the product.

—A Zanzibar dispatch says: "The chief of the Bushiri has been captured and handed over to the Germans, who intend to hang him."

—It is said that Queen Victoria contemplates a visit of state to Ireland, which is understood to be a matter of policy rather than desire.

—There were 158 desertions from the regular army during the month of November. Of this number 13 were from the Presidio, San Francisco.

—The first Japanese ever convicted of murder in the State of New York has been sentenced to death by electricity, to be executed in February next.

—A China steamer recently landed at San Francisco a cargo of silk valued at \$1,500,000. It was consigned to New York, and made eleven car loads.

—A bill for the formation of Oklahoma Territory was introduced in Congress on the 16th inst.; also a petition for the admission of the State of Wyoming.

—Two men near Butte, Mont., on the 15th inst., had a regular prize-rule fight, just to settle a dispute, which resulted in the death of one of the contestants.

—It has been decided to take the Pan-American delegates on a tour of the Southern States, and then to the Pacific Coast, the journey to begin about February 1.

—England has ordered her naval stores removed from Lisbon in view of possible "strained relations" between her majesty's government and Portugal in regard to their African claims.

—About fifty Sioux Indians have recently been visiting Washington, and called upon the President. They want their reservation lines surveyed, and better schools than are now provided.

—A careful estimate of the expense of running 300 street-cars by horse-power and by electric motor, says the *New York Sun*, shows a balance in favor of the motor power of over four dollars per day per car.

—Placer County's exhibit of citrus fruits in San Francisco during the present month has been highly creditable, and goes a long way toward demonstrating the productive capacity of Northern California.

—The trial of the Dr. Cronin murderers at Chicago has ended. Coughlin, Burke, and O'Sullivan were sentenced to imprisonment for life, Kunze to three years' imprisonment, and Beggs was adjudged not guilty.

—Austria's standing army costs \$47,000,000, Germany's \$86,000,000, Great Britain's \$97,000,000, Italy's \$51,000,000, Russia's \$102,000,000 annually. The United States pays in military pensions, \$100,000,000 a year.

—The State Board of Health complains in its last monthly report of the difficulty of isolating and checking contagious diseases through the unwillingness of citizens, nurses, and even physicians, to report cases that come to their knowledge.

—The unusually open winter in the East is said to have a bad effect on the public health. A Pittsburg dispatch says typhoid fever is on the increase in the Ohio valley, and a scourge of pulmonary diseases is sweeping Blair County, Pennsylvania.

—Dom Pedro's presence in Europe is creating uneasiness among the crowned. As a deposed emperor, he is a constant reminder of the ease with which the empire of Brazil was transformed into a republic, and Republicans take courage.

—Owing to a break in the Sacramento River levee, just below Sacramento, and the formation of a sandbar in the old channel, it is feared that navigation will be permanently impaired, and that a new channel will carry the waters off through the Yolo and Solano tules.

—The inclement weather of the 19th ult. having prevented the Japanese emperor's chrysanthemum party from being held on that day, his majesty ordered that the dinner prepared for the occasion should be given to the inmates of the Tokio asylum for the poor.

—Stanley, the African explorer, gives great credit to the Zanzibar natives who accompanied the late expedition for the relief of Emin Pasha. He says they collected fungi for provisions, and thus kept the Europeans alive. They would eat nothing themselves until all the others had eaten.

—Influenza of a virulent type, which has recently been quite prevalent in Europe, has made its appearance in New York. Eight cases were reported within two days, being friends of a family just returned from Europe. In these cases the disease began with vertigo, followed by headache and chills.

—The provisional president of Brazil is said to be dying, and the matter of a successor may cause trouble. It is possible that the change of government there will not run so smoothly as at first anticipated. A republic is not so easily managed by inexperienced hands as might be supposed.

—British Columbia is greatly alarmed for the fate of its Chinese Restriction act. The Dominion Government has apparently resolved on the repeal of the act at the behest of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, and the citizens of the province understand that they must work for the act if they wish to preserve it.

—By a proclamation of general naturalization in Brazil, all foreigners are declared citizens from the date of the proclamation of the republic unless they refuse it. All foreigners will be considered Brazilian citizens after two years' residence if they accept, and may enjoy all the civil and political rights, but shall not be eligible for the office of chief of the State.

—Emperor William, of Germany, is fond of experimenting with the army, having sudden night calls made to test the alertness of the troops, and other like projects. At Bornstedt, recently, a regiment of cavalry was ordered to advance at full gallop, and the sudden helter-skelter through the streets resulted in killing some of the horses and injuring several unsuspecting people.

—King Humbert, of Italy, has inhaled so many cigarettes that his bronchial tubes have become affected. He now sucks camphor instead of tobacco smoke.

—The Brazilian provisional government has canceled its grant to the ex-emperor of 5,000,000 millreas, and has also suspended his allowance on the civil list. He is now declared banished from the country, together with all the royal family. The governor of Rio Grande do Sul is charged with instigating secession in his State, and has been condemned to transportation.

—The Alaska Commercial Company's twenty years' lease of the seal islands expires next year, and Secretary Windom has decided to award the lease for another term to the highest bidder. The seals are more numerous now than they were at the beginning of the term, and but for the raids of the Victoria and San Francisco poachers they would be so abundant that the annual draft of the lessees upon their numbers could not be missed. The present lease returns to the government \$315,000 a year.

MAPLE SUGAR.

WESTERN parties who wish to get maple sugar true to name, may address me as below. Prices reasonable. A discount to purchasers of large lots. Goods carefully selected, and packages made secure.

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ALL grades of American and Swiss watches will be sold to the friends of the cause at the most reasonable prices; and for any watch sold for less than \$10, we will give 50 cents to the mission; above \$10, we will give \$1.00. Write to A. Vuilleumier, 124 Third Street, Portland, Or.

THE *American Sentinel*, published weekly by the Pacific Press Publishing Co., Oakland, Cal., \$1.00 a year, is doing good service in opposing those narrow-minded advocates of the union of Church and State.—*Wauseon, O., Republican.*

BOUND VOLUMES OF THE "SENTINEL."

THE *American Sentinel* for 1889 can now be obtained neatly bound in a cloth volume, with leather back and corners, for \$2.50, post-paid; bound in heavy paper, for \$1.50, post-paid.

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If so, you will find it to your advantage to write to or call on B. R. Nordyke, Pacific Press, Oakland, Cal., about routes, tickets, etc.

Parties are being formed to go East nearly every week. He has through car arrangements, and excellent accommodations for the traveling public. His next parties for Chicago and New York will leave San Francisco and Oakland, Cal., December 26 and 31.

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We are now living in times plainly pointed out in this prophecy, and it is important to understand it; for Daniel himself says that in the time of the end, the wise shall understand; while, if we fail, we are equally guilty with the Jews, who knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19:42-44), and shall meet a similar fate, 416 pp. Price, \$1.25.

Address, PACIFIC PRESS, Oakland, Cal.

The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., SECOND-DAY, DECEMBER 30, 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.

OUR readers may look out for the text of the Blair Sunday bill next week.

DR. E. J. WAGGONER, who came December 6 instead of November 6, as stated two weeks ago, left for Battle Creek, Michigan, the 20th inst. He goes to teach Hebrew and theology in the College during the remainder of the term, after which he expects to return. He will continue his contributions to the SIGNS. May God bless his labors in the College.

ONE of the resolutions adopted by the American Sabbath Union was a resolution of rejoicing "that Sunday work has been already reduced to the minimum in the army of the United States." If it has been already reduced to the minimum, it cannot be reduced any lower; and we can see no necessity for agitating that question any further.

WE learn that the recent Baptist convention at Ottawa, Canada, passed the following resolution:—

"That in the opinion of this convention the acceptance by the Baptist Churches of the exemption of their church property from municipal taxation is inconsistent with our distinctive principles, and is an impediment to our work of evangelizing the world."

That is the true principle. The church cannot afford to be under obligation to the State; for its work of evangelization is not to be done by the aid of the State, but by the power of the Spirit.

THE last number of our esteemed cotemporary, the *American Sentinel*, December 25, closes its fourth volume, and also its publication on the Pacific Coast. No. 1 of volume 5 will be issued from the New York office, 43 Bond Street. It will have a much larger field in the East, surrounded, as it will be, by the more densely populated States of the Union. While we are sorry to lose the *Sentinel* from Oakland, its mission is needed more in New York than in California. The Golden State is still free from a union of Church and State. She believes in religious liberty. May the *Sentinel* prosper even more abundantly than in the past in its new field.

THE following from the Oakland *Enquirer* of the 19th instant contains facts well worth pondering. Too much care cannot be taken in regard to fires. The fire element once let loose is almost absolutely uncontrollable. In speaking of what has been supposed to be unflammable materials, and the findings of the Boston experts, the *Enquirer* says:

"To look at a massive stone building it would appear that nothing could be more impregnable to fire, and it required many bitter experiences to prove that this confidence was misplaced. Granite, usually considered a type of solidity, is especially dangerous, as it is full of minute cavities which fill with water and explode when the fire becomes very hot. Brownstone, marble, and other rocks, are almost equally unstable when the destroying element approaches them. To show what a fire can do, the Ames building in Boston may be instanced. This was designed by the great architect, H. H. Richardson, and was thought to be fire-proof. It had a solid brownstone front. Between the floor

and ceiling of every story there was a packing of four inches of asbestos, so that if the flooring were fired it could not penetrate to the room below. Yet this great building was wiped out in thirty minutes. Iron is another building material whose defects show themselves in a great fire. When the heat becomes intense the iron pillars in the fronts of buildings expand so much that this movement is alone sufficient to wreck buildings in some cases. And when heated still further they bend and let the building fall."

THERE has lately been figuring in the divorce courts of New York one of the vilest of men, a novelist withal, whose works, dull and stupid as they are said to be, had an immense sale. His theory, deduced doubtless from his own heart, is that there are no decent men in the world. Concerning the sale of his books, the *New York World* says:—

"But what a melancholy commentary upon our character as a people is the fact that this man's novels, in spite of their dullness, have been bought and read by tens of thousands for the sake of their indecency!"

And this is the period which is to usher in a converted world! There are good men in the world, but they are not of it.

IN our Missionary Department is an item from the *Chinese Recorder*, lamenting the lack of union among Christians in the mission work in that field. There is one true basis of union among the different sects of Christians, and that is union with Christ through his truth. Regeneration through faith, and abiding faith based on the word of God, will certainly bring and maintain union with God. And if we are united with God, we will of necessity be united with each other. But such union necessitates the laying aside of all human creeds, and coming direct to the fountain, the Bible. The world would then know, so far as the world could know, that the mission of Christ was divine. John 17:21. Such union would be a power, but it can only be built up between regenerate hearts.

A TRACT has been sent us, entitled, "The Pre-Millennial Advent Disproved," by one W. Gribbon. A sample of the argument is shown by the opening words:—

"The pre-millennial theory of the second advent of Christ is disproved by the following considerations: First, it maintains false views of the kingdom of God. It makes Christ's kingdom a literal one, whereas he says, 'My kingdom is not of this world.'"

If the pre-millennial theory never has to do battle with any heavier argument than this, it will never suffer. Just as though nothing could be literal that was not earthly. In heaven we have "a better and an enduring substance." Heb. 10:34. The writer makes the same mistake that is made by many others; he confounds Christ's present kingly priesthood with his eternal reign. When Christ comes his kingly priesthood ends.

THE eighth of the series of resolutions adopted at the recent annual meeting of the American Sabbath Union, was as follows:—

Resolved, That we observe with pleasure the introduction of the Sunday-Rest law in the Senate of the United States, and that we recommend the widest possible circulation of petitions to both Houses of Congress for its adoption.

They are rather premature in calling the bill which has been introduced a law; but this resolution should serve as a renewed call to action on the part of those who favor religious liberty. It is something more than a coincidence that Senator Blair introduced his Sunday bill December 9, the very day that the American Sabbath Union met in convention. There can be no doubt that the officers of the union had a hand in the preparation of the bill, so that it could not fail to please them.

.....THE.....

Signs of the Times

PROSPECTUS FOR 1890.

WITH this number the SIGNS OF THE TIMES reaches the close of its fifteenth volume. It has proved of unusual interest among its many thousand friends and readers, who everywhere pronounce it a live religious paper, a reliable expositor of Scripture, an energetic defender of Bible truth and inspiration, and a household paper, the contents of which, in every department, are pure and elevating. While it is in no sense a political paper, taking sides with no political party, it will in the future, as it ever has in the past, defend with boldness the principles of religious liberty which were held so sacred by the founders of our government, and which have proved such a blessing to our country in the past. The future promises to be of still greater interest and more intensely thrilling in this respect, as the rights of minorities are more and more disregarded. Especial attention will be given to the subjects of Religious Liberty and National Reform in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the coming year, by one of the best writers on these topics in the United States.

We confidently announce that the columns of the SIGNS will, as heretofore, be filled with interesting and instructive matter, profitable to all classes of readers. Editors and writers whose names and pens have given character and value to the paper in past volumes, will continue their labors and contributions during the year 1890. In short, effort will be put forth to make it a better paper than ever before.

The following departments will still be continued, each of which we shall endeavor to improve in the year to come:—

Editorial.—In this department will be presented the important and leading doctrines of the word of God, the events of the day and their bearing upon the prophecies of the Bible will be discussed; the signs of the times will be kept before the people; all worthy Bible questions will be answered, and articles helpful to a Christian and godly life will appear. Especial prominence will be given to the Sunday-law agitation, and all other phases of the movement tending towards a union of religion and the State. E. J. Waggoner, whose long experience in this line has fitted him for this work, will present before our readers the dangers and duties relative to this soon-to-be-all-absorbing question.

General Articles.—This department will embrace a wide variety of subjects, in articles original and selected, practical, doctrinal, and miscellaneous. Mrs. E. G. White will continue her contributions to this department.

Temperance.—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will not only advocate total abstinence from intoxicating drinks, but that Christian temperance which is worthy to be associated with righteousness and judgment to come. Useful hints and helps will be given in the matter of physical health and training.

The Sabbath-School.—This department will be a live, useful help to an understanding of the lesson. It will not only contain the lesson as published in the lesson pamphlet, but extended and suggestive notes on difficult passages. It will also contain helpful notes on the International Lessons, which cover this year the Gospel of Luke.

Missionary.—The SIGNS is designed to be a missionary publication, to be used by our Tract Societies, and sent to every part of the world where the English language is spoken. It will not only give reports of our own work, but will notice the lives and work of all true reformers and mission workers of all ages, both in the Old World and New.

Home Circle.—This will embrace pleasant and instructive reading for the household, of an elevated and moral character. No serial stories published. Nothing of the sensational style admitted. The object will be to combine the useful, the instructive, the pleasing, and the elevating.

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