

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

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For Terms, See Page 15.

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THE BARREN FIG TREE.

AND on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, He was hungry; and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, He came, if haply He might find anything thereon; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet."

It was not a common thing in the East for a fig tree to present full foliage so early in the season. It is the nature of the fig tree for the fruit to make its appearance before the leaves. Therefore upon a tree covered with leaves one might expect to find well-developed figs. Christ approached the tree, expecting to find fruit upon it; but after searching from the lowest bough to the top-most twig, He found nothing but leaves. And Christ uttered against it a withering curse.

The next morning as the Saviour and His disciples were again wending their way to the city, the blasted branches and drooping leaves attracted their attention. "Master," said Peter, "behold the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away."

This instance in the ministry of Christ was a singular one. It was unlike His ways and works. We trace His life, and see that His acts were ever performed to restore, not to destroy. He scattered mercy wherever He went, in words of counsel and deeds of goodness. He came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. The disciples could not understand this act in punishing a tree for its barrenness, and they said, "Declare unto us the parable of the fig tree."

It was the purpose of Christ that this fig tree should teach His disciples a lesson. He desired to impress upon them the true state of Jerusalem, and her final doom; and to do this He invested the tree with moral qualities, and made it the expositor of divine truth. Just before this Christ had made His triumphal entry

into Jerusalem. For the second time He had cleansed the temple, driving out from its courts the traffickers, saying: "Take these things hence." "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." Dishonest dealing was practised by the men who brought cattle to sell

The Jewish nation had indeed been the favored people of God. The Majesty of heaven had been their leader in the wilderness. He had brought them water out of the flinty rock; He had given them bread from heaven to satisfy their hunger. He had turned from them the wrath of God when their iniquities had called forth His anger. And after more than a thousand years of blessings bestowed and blessings withdrawn, He fulfilled His purpose of coming to the world in person. He veiled His divinity with humanity. Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men.

But thirty years was all that the world could endure of its Redeemer. For thirty years He dwelt in a world all seared and marred with sin, doing the work that no other one ever had done or ever could do. And for three years He waited, and prayed, and worked, and wept, crying, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding." "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him

return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." But the Jewish nation would not receive their Messiah. Throughout the years of His public ministry they sought to put Him to death; and this act was to prove their ruin.

The Gentile world was represented by the leafless, fruitless fig trees. The Gentiles were destitute, as were the Jews, of godliness, but they had not claimed to be in favor with God. They made no boast of exalted spirituality. They were blind in every sense to the ways



THE BARREN FIG TREE.

in the temple courts; but the word of command was given; divinity flashed through humanity, and no trafficker or priest in his gorgeous dress looking on that countenance dared to remain. In haste all fled from the temple courts. Now under the symbol of the blighted tree Christ presents before His disciples the righteous anger of God in the destruction of Jerusalem. That tree flaunting its pretentious foliage in the very face of Christ was a symbol of the Jewish nation, who had been separating from God until, in their pride and apostasy, they had lost their power of discernment, and knew not their Redeemer.

and works of God. With them the time for figs was not yet. They were still looking forward to a day which would bring them light and hope.

The Jews as a nation had laid claim to righteousness above every other people, while they stood out in proud defiance of God. As a people they were self-confident, exalted, selfish, and boastful. The barren tree was a fit representation of them. Ambition, and erroneous views in regard to Christ's advent, had deceived the Jewish nation, and when Christ came as the meek and lowly One, they would not receive Him. Israel had perverted the Scriptures, and had taught for doctrine the commandments of men. They made void the law of God through their traditions. That law which they claimed to observe so strictly, they made a yoke of bondage. Satan had put his leaven into the most precious, everlasting truth, to make of none effect God's sacred institution.

The law of God, if observed with heart obedience, would have produced altogether a different influence; but vainglory, selfishness, and oppression marked the character of the Jews. They were proudly displaying their ceremonies before the very face of Christ, who was the foundation and center of the whole Jewish economy, while they rejected the Antitype of all their types, the Substance of all their shadows. They were so blinded by Satan that they knew not the time of their visitation. And God declared, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself."

Christ had often sought the Father in anguish of spirit, as He beheld the situation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Often in the lonely mountains He had prayed with strong crying and tears, because that of all the people on the face of the earth, none were so filled with bitterness and hatred against Him as were those who had been favored with every temporal and spiritual advantage. This was the people for whom the Son of God had done so much, in order that they might become a treasure-house of rich truth, to impart the same to the world. Those who claimed to know God were opening their hearts to the attributes of Satan. In the blighted fig tree Christ sees the ruin of the nation, and the sight draws tears to His eyes.

The bright future of prosperity and glory which Jerusalem might have enjoyed rises before Him. Had Jerusalem but known the time of her visitation, had she accepted the world's Redeemer, she would have been healed of her grievous malady; she would have been exalted as the world's metropolis. No Roman army would have stood at her gates. No Roman yoke would have rested upon her shoulders. As the favored citadel of truth, the dove of peace would have gone forth from her to all the nations of the earth. She would have been as a diadem of glory to her God.

But instead of this, Christ sees Jerusalem surrounded with the besieging army. He sees the inhabitants suffering from starvation, delicate mothers slaying and eating their own children, fathers, mothers, and children contending for a morsel of food, and forcing the fragments from the mouths of their starving relatives. He sees the gates open to the invaders, and those who have defied them and refused to surrender, He sees suffering beneath the scourge, the rack, and the cross. He sees Jerusalem in ruins, the beautiful, costly temple, the pride of the nation, torn down until not one stone is left upon another. Its site is plowed as a field. Terrible picture. The sight calls forth deep emotion from the Son of God.

The explanation of this strange act of Christ

in the cursing of the fig tree was to stand as a living, warning appeal to all Christian churches. The blighted tree was to repeat its lesson in every age to the close of earth's history. God is looking for piety, self-denial, self-sacrifice, compassion for man, and zeal for God. He longs to see in man a deep yearning of soul to save his fellow-man from unbelief and ruin. But the present condition of the Christian churches is similar to the condition of the Jews in Christ's day. The Lord and all heaven beheld the fruitless fig tree. They see men trampling upon the law of Jehovah, making the covenant between Him and His commandment-keeping people a thing of naught. But to the people who trample upon that law which God has ordained, Christ says, as He said to the Jewish nation, "Thou hast destroyed thyself." MRS. E. G. WHITE.

ABOUNDING LOVE.

O, TELL me not that love and might
Are both enthroned above;
There grace and majesty unite,
For God is only love!

On every hand, both sea and land,
His dazzling brightness prove
Whose glory is His goodness, and
Whose pleasure is His love.

There's beauty for the charmed eye,
The eye to beauty given,
And for the ear sweet harmony,
The harmony of heaven.

For every sense His grace supplies
Beatitude divine;
And ever, with His love-lit eyes,
He seeks to kindle thine.

Ah, He it is who piles yon clouds,
Of wondrous form and hue,
In temple, and in pyramid,
And gorgeous palace, too,

That through these fairy gateways we
As glows the sun of even,
May gaze with raptured eye, to see
The battlements of heaven!

There lies the city of our dreams
Depicted on the skies,
And every aspiration seems
Not far to realize.

So, in the setting in of night,
The night of wo and pain,
God watches with thee till the light
Of day returns again.

'Tis of His love the robins sing;
And from the wind-swept tree
Breaks not upon thy listening ear
His sighing sympathy?

The ceaseless throbbing of the sea
Upon the rock-bound strand,—
What is it but those arms of love
Enfolding every land?

E'en in His wrath, which through long years
Burns hot against thy sin,
The flame shall both dry up thy tears
And purge away thy tin.

Nor deem that Wisdom could devise
What is not for thy good;
At each new step some glad surprise
Attests His Fatherhood,

Whose bow of boundless grace appears
High overarching all,
Who stoops from sweeping stars and spheres
To mark the sparrow's fall.

And tho' each blooming hope be crushed,
Love can not be mist;
The seed shall bear an hundred-fold,
Now trampled in the dust.

I see not what insidious snare
Lurks in approaching doom;
But God has placed His rainbow there
To gild the cloud of gloom.

The secret of His dark designs
As yet I can not tell,
Nor read the meaning of those signs
I have not learned to spell.

Yet in this faith I calmly trust,
That what lies now concealed,
When His own breath allays the dust
Shall plainly be revealed.

I know not what reserves of wrath
Earth's final plagues contain,
Nor in their desolating path
What deathly horrors reign.

Yet in the mystery of His ways
Methinks I can discern
Why God in sov'reign love delays
The sons of men to spurn.

Unmeasured mercy seeks to dwell
In all His plans severe;
With justice, pity mingles well,
And hope consorts with fear.

His gentleness shall make them great
Who in that grace confide.
Love's trophies crowd his car of state
And 'neath love's banner ride.

And when I join the blissful choir
Of ransomed souls above,
My hymn shall be, eternally,
His all-embracing love.

THORO HARRIS.

Washington, D. C.

THE GOSPEL IN THE DIET QUESTION.

WHEN we see a streak of lightning we think of the thunder, because we have always associated it in our minds with the lightning. "Train up a child in the way he shall go," for he will unconsciously associate his training with every act of his life. Yet parents say, "I prayed with Johnny day after day, but it did not seem to do any good."

Children may not have been trained to lie or steal, but are they trained to know that every act of their life should be done to the glory of God? For just as soon as they learn this lesson on one plane, God will lift them up to another, and then they will have it again, only in a broader way. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31. So there is such a thing as eating and drinking from principle. In Eccl. 10:17 we may get the principle more in detail: "Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season," for strength, and not for drunkenness! that is, do not eat at irregular times, and God has left it with us to find out how that is. Then we are to eat for strength; but the world has perverted that so as to eat for drunkenness; and since we are to eat for strength and not for drunkenness, it is our duty to learn what kind of food will give us strength. We get our strength from God, but we get it largely through the food, air, and water, and the Bible is the means whereby we learn how to use this strength. How appropriate that we should ask God to bless the food before we partake of it, for His power is in it! But it is only by the miracle of digestion that we can get His strength out of it. The Bible does not tell us in detail what kind of food to eat, but it does bid us to eat for strength, and the responsibility is laid upon us to discover what kind of food contains nourishment and what does not.

If we eat for strength the food will taste good, but if we eat it simply because it tastes good we are eating for drunkenness. It is an important principle that if we simply aim to have a good time we will get misery; but if the purpose be to make others happy we will be sure to reap a good time for ourselves also. We throw a rubber ball on the floor and it rebounds; so with happiness; by making some

one else happy we will be happy ourselves. If we eat a thing just because it tastes good, we eat for drunkenness. But if we eat for the glory of God, so out of this food we may get strength to help others, we are eating from principle.

Prov. 23:1: "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee." If we sit to eat with a man that is not a ruler, does not the same admonition hold good, even if it be the humble meal in our own home?

But suppose we long for his "savory meals," for they are deceitful food? There are thousands of natural flavors that God has put into the foods that He has bidden us to eat. But to multitudes the sense of taste has become so blunted that they fail to recognize these natural flavors, and the perverted taste is only stimulated by the agents, such as mustard, pepper, ginger, etc., that tend to destroy the natural taste of food. What a substitute for God's own delicate flavors in natural food! How appropriate that the Bible should warn us not to long for such savory meats, for how deceitful they are! Little by little the sense of taste, instead of being educated to enjoy the wonderful gifts God has stored up in foods, becomes so chloroformed, so to speak, that nothing short of the most irritating things can arouse it. Yet these very substances contain none of the nutritive properties of foods.

We can not be too diligent in considering the food question. Many would probably look at the piece of bread and think of some better method of slicing it, or perhaps wonder how the frosting on the top of the cake is made. They will wish they could make it as pretty as that at home. And this is about as deeply as many consider the diet question.

People may know a great many things about Pike's Peak, the depth of the Dead Sea, etc., and yet know practically nothing about the very things God told them to learn about.

"Thou puttest a knife to thy throat if thou be a man given to craving desire." Prov. 23:2, Jewish translation. If a man eats for drunkenness he is committing suicide. But possibly such a man may say, "I haven't any faith at all in this truth." But suppose he says he does not believe in the law of gravitation, it does not alter the law at all. God says if a man eats for drunkenness he is committing suicide, and that settles the question.

Many eat a thing largely because it has enough bulk to fill the stomach, but with little regard as to whether it is garbage or not. He who treats his digestive organs in this way insults God, and must reap in his own organism the sure result; for God is not mocked. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

DAVID PAULSON, M.D.

"LET us try to make our lives like songs, brave, cheery, tender, and true, that shall sing themselves into other lives, and so help to lighten burdens and cares."

PREACHERS are pitchers, not fountains. Don't expect them to pour out always if you give them no time to fill up occasionally.—*Bible Reader.*

"A FIRM faith is the best divinity, a good life the best philosophy, a clear conscience the best law, honesty the best policy, temperance the best physic."

KINDNESS is the music of good-will to men, and on this harp the smallest fingers may play heaven's sweetest tunes on earth.—*Elihu Burrill.*



THE PROMISE AND THE LAW.

Gal. 3:15-22.

SINCE we considered only certain features in the text studied last week, we shall include it in the portion for this week, so that the intimate connection may be preserved. We have therefore the following as

The Scripture Lesson.

"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Tho it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Gal. 3:15-22.

The things in this text that were considered last week were the following: The promise was made to Abraham; the promise concerns an inheritance; that inheritance is the whole world—the earth made new; an inheritance without a curse is the promise of the Spirit; the Lord redeems men from the curse in order that they may dwell forever in an earth redeemed from the curse; the covenant and the promise are the same thing; that covenant has been confirmed; it was confirmed in Christ, to Abraham, by the oath of God, and that oath is our hope and comfort till the present day. With this outline of what has already been passed over, we can proceed with our study

An Unchangeable Covenant.—God is not a man, but it is sometimes allowable to use human things in illustrating the divine. God is not a man, that He should lie or change. Man is changeable, yet even a man's covenant, if it once be confirmed, can not be disannulled or added to. No change whatever can be made in it. How much more, then, must this be the case with God's covenant? "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him." Eccl. 3:14. "When God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself. . . . For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation." Heb. 6:13-18. The covenant, we have already seen, is the promise to Abraham, and that was confirmed by God's oath, and made as unchangeable as His character.

Abraham and Christ.—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of

one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ." It can not be too strongly impressed upon the minds of men that Christ is the Seed of Abraham, and that the covenant was confirmed in Him. There would be no difficulty whatever about the question of Israel if this one fact were remembered. *Christ is the Seed of Abraham, and there is no other;* for "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ." Abraham and Christ are inseparably linked together. "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made," how many soever they were. Nothing was made to Abraham that could be obtained in any other way than through Christ; and Christ never comes into the possession of anything that does not belong to Abraham. This is plainly stated in the text.

We will not stop to parley over the matter of "literal seed" and the "spiritual seed." Christ is spiritual, that we know, for no one can call Him Lord, except by the Spirit; but He is also very literal: "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me, and see." We are glad to know that the literal can also be spiritual; were it not so, then we would be yet in our sins. But to *Abraham and his Seed* were the promises made. The Seed must be as literal as Abraham, even tho He be spiritual; and Christ "took on Him the seed of Abraham." It is enough for us at present to hold to the fact that Abraham and Christ are equally concerned in this promised inheritance, which is spiritual because the Spirit is the first-fruits of it. If we are of faith, then we are the children of Abraham and sharers in the blessing.

The Law Can Not Make Void the Covenant.

—Do not forget as we proceed that the covenant and the promise are the same thing, and that it conveys land, even the whole earth made new, to Abraham and his seed; and remember also that, since only righteousness is to dwell in the new heavens and the new earth promised to Abraham and his seed, the promise includes the making righteous of all who believe. This is done in Christ, in whom the promise is confirmed. The argument of verses 17 and 18 is therefore this: Since perfect righteousness was assured by the covenant made with Abraham, which was also confirmed in Christ, it is impossible that the law, which was spoken 430 years later, could introduce any new feature. The inheritance was given to Abraham by promise, but if after 430 years it should transpire that now the inheritance must be gained in some other way, then the promise would be of no effect, and the covenant would be made void. But that would involve the overthrow of God's government, and the ending of His existence; for He pledged His own existence to give Abraham and his seed the inheritance and the righteousness necessary for it. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. 4:13.

What Is the Use of the Law?—This is the question that the apostle Paul asks in verse 19, both for the purpose of anticipating the objections of the antinomians, and also that he may the more emphatically show the place of the law in the Gospel. The question is a very natural one. Since the inheritance is wholly

by promise, and a covenant confirmed can not be changed, nothing can be taken from it, and nothing added to it, why did the law come in 430 years afterward? "Wherefore then serveth the law?" "Why then the law?" What business has it here? What part does it act?

The Question Answered.—"It was added because of transgressions." Let it be understood that "the entering of the law" at Sinai was not the beginning of its existence. The law of God existed in the days of Abraham, and was kept by him. Gen. 26:5. God proved the children of Israel as to whether they would keep His law or not more than a month before the law was spoken upon Sinai. Ex. 16:1-4, 27, 28.

"It Was Added."—The word here rendered "added" is the same as that rendered "spoken" in Heb. 12:19: "They that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." It is the same word that occurs in the Septuagint rendering of Deut. 5:22, where we read that God spoke the Ten Commandments with a great voice; "and He added no more." So we may read the answer to the question, "Wherefore then the law?" thus: "It was spoken because of transgressions."

Because of Transgressions.—"Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound." Rom. 5:20. In other words, "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Rom. 7:13. It was given under circumstances of the most awful majesty, as a warning to the children of Israel that by their unbelief they were in danger of losing the promised inheritance. They did not, like Abraham, believe the Lord; and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." But the inheritance was promised "through the righteousness of faith," so that the unbelieving Jews could not receive it. The law was therefore spoken to them to convince them that they had not the righteousness that was necessary for the possession of the inheritance; for, altho righteousness does not come by the law, it must be witnessed by the law. Rom. 3:21. In short, the law was given to show them that they had not faith, and so were not children of Abraham, and were therefore in a fair way to lose the inheritance. God would have put His law into their hearts, even as He put it into Abraham's heart, if they had believed; but when they disbelieved, yet still professed to be heirs of the promise, it was necessary to show them in the most marked manner that their unbelief was sin. The law was spoken because of transgression, or, what is the same thing, because of the unbelief of the people.

In the Hand of a Mediator.—For the present we may pass by the question of time involved in the phrase, "till the Seed should come, to whom the promise was made," since our present study is the relation of the law to the promise. The law was given to the people from Sinai "in the hand of a Mediator." Who was this Mediator?—There can be only one answer: "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 2:5. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." God is one, the people are the other, and Christ Jesus is the Mediator. Just as surely as God is one party to the transaction, Christ must be the Mediator, for there is no other Mediator between God and men. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

Christ's Work as Mediator.—Man has wandered from God and rebelled against Him. "All we like sheep have gone astray." Our

iniquities have separated between us and Him. Isa. 59:1, 2. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. Christ came that He might destroy the enmity and reconcile us to God; for He is our peace. Eph. 2:14-16. Through Him we have access to God. Rom. 5:1, 2; Eph. 2:18. In Him the carnal mind, the rebellious mind, is taken away, and the mind of the Spirit given in its stead, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:3, 4. Christ's work is to save that which was lost, to restore that which was broken, to reunite that which was separated. His name is "God with us;" and so with Him dwelling in us we are made "partakers of the divine nature." 2 Peter 1:4.

The Law Not against the Promise.—"Is the law then against the promises of God?"—Not by any means. Far from it. If it were, it would not be in the hands of a Mediator, Christ; for all the promises of God are in Him. 2 Cor. 1:20. So we find the law and the promise combined in Christ. We may know that the law was not and is not against the promises of God, from the fact that God gave both the promise and the law. We know also that the giving of the law introduced no new element into the covenant, since, having been confirmed, nothing could be added to or taken from the covenant. But the law is not useless, else God would not have given it. It is not a matter of indifference whether we keep it or not, for God commands it. But, all the same, it is not against the promise, and brings no new element in. Why?—Simply because the law is in the promise. The promise of the Spirit includes this: "I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Heb. 8:10. And this is what God indicated had been done for Abraham, when "He gave him the covenant of circumcision." Read Rom. 4:11; 2:25-29; Phil. 3:3.

The Law Magnifies the Promise.—The law, as already seen, is not against the promise, because it is in the promise. The promise that Abraham and his seed should inherit the world, was "through the righteousness of faith." But the law is righteousness, as God says: "Harken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law." Isa. 51:7. So, then, the righteousness which the law demands is the only righteousness that can inherit the promised land, but it is obtained, not by the works of the law, but by faith. The righteousness of the law is not attained by human efforts to do the law, but by faith. See Rom. 9:30-32. Therefore the greater the righteousness which the law demands, the greater is seen to be the promise of God; for He has promised to give it to all who believe. Yea, He has sworn it. When, therefore, the law was spoken from Sinai, "out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice," accompanied by the sounding of the trump of God, and with the whole earth quaking at the presence of the Lord and all His holy angels, thus indicating the inconceivable greatness and majesty of the law of God, it was, to every one who remembered the oath of God, but a revelation of the wondrous greatness of God's promise; for all the righteousness which the law demands, He has sworn to give to every one who trusts Him.

Conviction of Sin and of Righteousness.—Jesus said of the Comforter, "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 14:8. Of Himself He said, "I came not to call the

righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark 2:17. "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick." A man must feel his need before he will accept help; he must know his disease before he can apply the remedy. Even so the promise of righteousness will be utterly unheeded by one who does not realize that he is a sinner. The first part of the comforting work of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is to convince men of sin. So "the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20. He who knows that he is a sinner is in the way to acknowledge it; and "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Thus the law is in the hands of the Spirit an active agent in inducing men to accept the fulness of the promise. No one hates the man who has saved his life by pointing out to him an unknown peril; on the contrary, such an one is regarded as a friend, and is always remembered with gratitude. Even so will the law be regarded by the one who has been prompted by its warning voice to flee from the wrath to come. He will ever say, with the psalmist, "I hate vain thoughts, but Thy law do I love." E. J. WAGGONER.

"WHAT IS MAN?"

TO the Bible question, "What is man?" the Bible returns the Bible answer in many texts, all testifying one thing, namely, that man is mortal, that is, subject to corruption and death. Indeed, natural, inherent immortality is, in the Scriptures, set forth as one of the divine attributes, distinguishing not only the true God from all false gods, but distinguishing also God from man. Says the psalmist: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. 146:3, 4.

In Job 4:17 Eliphaz appeals to the well-known fact of man's mortality to overwhelm the afflicted patriarch, putting into the mouth of a spirit the words, "Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his Maker?" But tho thus reminded of his dying nature, Job's faith was unshaken, for his trust was not in himself but in God. He knew that he must die, but he knew also that there was One who was superior to death, and through Him he believed that he would one day receive as a gift immortal life. In the language of the most sublime faith the world had ever seen, the patriarch, with the evidence of his mortality most painfully manifest in his own body, exclaimed: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and tho after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job 19:25, 26.

Another important Bible evidence of the nature of man is found in the marginal reading of 2 Chron. 14:11. Good King Asa, when confronted by "Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots, . . . cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord Thou art our God; let not mortal man prevail against Thee."

In this text the contrast to which reference was made in the outset of this article is most

sharply drawn. On the one side is the immortal Jehovah; on the other, one million mortal men. But the issue was not doubtful; mortality, even tho multiplied by "a thousand thousand" and re-enforced by "three hundred chariots," could never be aught but mortality—simply corruption and death, tho piled mountain high—while, on the other hand, immortality, tho belonging by nature only to the Supreme Being, could never be less than eternal incorruption, unending life.

Nor is it alone in the Old Testament that this solemn and all-important truth of man's mortality is taught. The New Testament abounds in texts illustrating and emphasizing man's dependence upon God, not only for present existence but for all future life. As shown in a former article, the apostle Paul makes all hope of a future life dependent upon the resurrection of the dead through Christ (1 Cor. 15:12-18); and again in verse 53 he testifies most pointedly to the mortal, corruptible nature of man, when, in referring to the resurrection, he plainly says, "For this *corruptible* must put on incorruption, and this *mortal* must put on immortality." How different is all this from the popular idea that man is by nature an immortal being, incapable of death, and destined to live, either in happiness or misery, a life that measures with the life of God. C. P. B.

THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVICE.

ONLY by service can we come into harmony with God's plan. There is only one comprehensive plan, the plan of God, which appears in the creation and preservation of the universe, and nothing is of value except as it serves some useful purpose in that plan. In the material universe we see harmony, because everything falls into its place in the comprehensive plan of God, and serves the ends for which it was created. But in human society there is much discord and trouble, and it all arises from one cause, a refusal to serve God, a refusal to come into harmony with His moral plan for the government of His children. All things work together for good to them that serve God, for service is love in action. Such persons find that they are working with, rather than against, God's perfect plan. But, on the other hand, those who refuse to serve put themselves out of harmony with God and His way of doing things, and by so doing they find more and more, or, if they do not discover the fact, it is nevertheless the case, that all things work against them. Things do not come their way because they are going the wrong way.—*The Advance*.

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

And the Bible Answer.

"ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. If all have sinned, I am certainly one of the number. But "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15); and since I am a sinner, Jesus came to save me.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

Therefore God so loved me that He gave His Son to die that I "should not perish, but have everlasting life."

But what must I do to be saved?—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:31.

But I am so wicked that I am not fit to be a Christian. "O wretched man that I am!

who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; tho your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; tho they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18.

"Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him."

I do feel my need of Jesus, but how can I go to Him? where shall I find Him?

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Ps. 145:18.

"Before they call, I will answer; and while they yet are speaking, I will hear." Isa. 65:24.

God is faithful; He will do just as He promises. Then will I ask Jesus to bring all the sins of my life to my remembrance, so that I may confess them and be forgiven.

"Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

"Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

"Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

"Just as I am, Thy love I own
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, and Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!"

The repentant sinner says: "O Lord, I confess that I have grievously sinned against Thee, What more can I do? Forgive me." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Then can he say: "I believe Thou hast forgiven me, and that I am Thine. I will rejoice in Thy salvation." A. SMITH.

ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ABOLISHED?

THIS may seem like a strange question. Yet there are some who answer it in the affirmative. The writer has often been referred to 2 Cor. 3:7 as proof that the law is abolished. But before examining this text let us notice what this position involves. 1. If the Ten-Commandment law is done away, we are under no obligation to observe any commandment of the law until such commandment is re-enacted. If "Thou shalt not kill" has always been obligatory upon man, it has never been done away, or abolished. But if the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross, and thus done away, there must have been a time when even this precept, the sixth of the Decalogue, could have been violated with impunity. But such a proposition is too absurd to be argued.

In Rom. 3:31 we read, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid." To "make void" (*καταργέω*) is to do away, abolish. See Eph. 2:15, where the same word is applied to the law of ceremonies or ordinances. Thus Rom. 3:31 is a plain statement that the law is not done away. That this refers to the Ten Commandments is shown by Rom. 2:21, 22; but it does not include circumcision or the law of ceremonies. Verse 25; see also Rom. 7:7, where reference is made to the Ten Commandments. This law is called "holy," "just," "spiritual," "good." Verses 12, 14. Paul delighted in this law, and God sent His Son that its righteous precepts might be fulfilled in us. Rom. 8:3, 4.

But does 2 Cor. 3:7 teach that the Ten Commandments are done away? In verse 3 we are told that the law written on stone is now by the Spirit of God written on the heart. Now the letter of a law written on stone, or in a book, or taught by a priest, has no power in it to impart life to the one who reads or hears. At the best it can only tell what ought to be done; and if we have failed, it speaks to us in words of condemnation. Thus it condemns, or kills, the transgressor.

"But the Spirit giveth life." Verse 6.

In John 8 we have the record of one brought to Christ condemned by the law. A company of Jews were prepared to execute the penalty, death. Our Saviour removed the condemnation (not the law) by extending pardon, and exhorting the sinner to "go, and sin no more." But whence comes this power to overcome evil habits, to "go, and sin no more"? "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." John 1:12. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "For He shall save His people from their sins." "Sin is the transgression of the law." "He was manifested to take away our sins." "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not." Thus through Christ the Spirit ministers pardon and peace; and with this pardon there comes power to obey. It is thus that the Spirit gives life.

But what is meant in verse 7 by the ministration of death written on stone? "Ministration" is from the Greek *διακονία*, service. The office of a diakonas (from *dia* and *konas*, a servant), one who is dusty from running; a minister of a church. Liddell and Scott. See also Groves Greek and English Concordance. That the Ten Commandments only were written on stone see Deut. 10:4. How, then, could the ministration of death (service of the minister) be written on stone? The law was what caused that service; and the service of the minister was the administering of the law, which, when separated from the Gospel of Jesus Christ, carries with it only condemnation and death. A similar expression is found in 2 Kings 4:40, "There is death in the pot." Here the effect is used for the cause.

But the ministration of the Spirit, the new covenant, is life and peace. Under it the law is removed from stone, and written in the heart. See Heb. 8:10. With it there comes spiritual life, which ministers power to the believer to obey its spiritual precepts. Thus we are freed from bondage, from condemnation, and brought into the glorious liberty of the laws of God. This is freedom from sin (the transgression of the law) both past and present.

C. H. BLISS.

If you want knowledge, you must toil for it; if food, you must toil for it, and if pleasure, you must toil for it. Toil is the law. Pleasure comes through toil and not by self-indulgence and indolence. When one gets to love work, his life is a happy one.—*John Ruskin*.

IMMORTALITY will come to him who is fit for it, and he who would be a great soul in future must be a great soul now.—*Emerson*.

"How much God is like a mother! He not only watches the footsteps of His children, but He listens to hear their cry."

"INSIST on yourself; never imitate. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him."

EXPERIENCE does take dreadfully high school wages, but he teaches like no other.—*Carlyle*.



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MILTON C. WILCOX, - - - - - EDITOR.
A. O. TAFT, - - - - - ASSISTANT EDITOR.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTORS:

H. P. HOLSER, *Basel, Switzerland;*
E. J. WAGGONER, *London, England;*
W. C. WHITE, *Sydney, N. S. W., Australia;*
ALLEN MOON, *New York, N. Y.;*
F. M. WILCOX, *Boulder, Colorado;*
C. P. BULLMAN, *Atlanta, Georgia;*
M. E. KELLOGG, *Battle Creek, Mich.;*
W. N. GLENN, *Oakland, California.*All Manuscript should be addressed to the Editor.
For further information to contributors, see page 15.

HEAVEN GAVE THE BEST.

THERE is no treasure that is prized by a true and natural father so highly as a faithful and only son. There is nothing that he would not give to save such a son from disease and death. If he is dangerously ill, the very best medical skill obtainable is employed. And so devoted is the fond father to his son that he would not only give up every dollar of his wealth, but even his life is not held too precious to sacrifice for his beloved offspring. Ask the fond mother, as she presses her first-born son to her bosom, what she prizes as the dearest thing on earth. Her beaming eyes, as she raises them from beholding her treasure, will tell you the deep sentiments of her heart.

Fathers and mothers, suppose that you were called upon to make the most priceless gift that is within your power to bestow in order that you might show your fervent love to another. Would houses or lands or silver or gold or any other treasure of wealth be equal to a well-beloved son? There are many treasures that we may prize very highly, but none of them are so priceless in their unspeakable value as our children.

Then when our heavenly Father gave us His Son, He gave us the very dearest, the most incalculably priceless, the most touchingly tender gift that divine love could bestow. Is it any marvel that one apostle should say to us, "God is love"? And what consolation in the words of another apostle, saying, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"! And that precious text (John 3:16) must ever become dearer and dearer to us, and filled with a deeper and ever still deeper meaning. Let us read it again together, for, while it is "the old, old story," yet it is also the new, new story that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

God commends His love toward us by the rich Gift with which He has paid the price of our salvation. And had He not loved us beyond the powers of human language to describe or human intellect to fathom, how could He have given us "His only-begotten Son"? It was love, the deepest, the fullest, and the tenderest love, that led our heavenly Father to lavish upon humanity the richest treasure of His heart.

He manifested that love toward us in order that He might win us from the ways of sin and death back to His haven of rest and righteousness. When such loving-kindness is fully manifested toward us, how can we find it in our hearts to resist it?

And since Heaven has bestowed upon us the choicest gift in its possession, with what devotion should we render our very best service to our heavenly Father in return! He has given us the best that He has; can we be ungrateful enough to give Him anything short of our best? With the Lord's rich gift before our minds, can we find it in our hearts to hold anything in reserve?

We are altogether worthless. Our nature is that of sin. When we look upon our lives and characters we find them full of defects, and we wonder what the Lord can see in us that He wants. But He loves us, regardless of all our sins, and wants us for Himself. And since He made no reserve, but gave His best gift for our ransom, this should cause a well of gratitude to spring up within our hearts that would lead us to place all upon the altar.

O, if we would only take the time to reflect upon our Father's love, what changes would be wrought in our lives! We could not be so ungrateful as to make any reserve in our devotion to Him. And when the Lord asks us to yield to Him fully it is not that He may receive some selfish benefit out of it, but that we may be brought back to the peaceable ways of righteousness and joy. And in changing our night into day, our mourning into gladness, our sin into righteousness, He finds His own infinite delight. It is worth our while to place what there is of us wholly in our Father's hands. It is base ingratitude not to do it. T.

SAVED IN THE CHILD-BEARING.

IT is true, as stated by the apostle Peter, that there are some things in Paul's writings "hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." 2 Peter 3:16. It is not that these things may not be understood, but the meaning does not lie on the surface. By faithful study he who is stable (that is, he who is grounded in the truth of God, which is clearly revealed—learned in the Scriptures) may understand them. Those who go astray by such passages are those who wrest or tear them from their connection and from other plainly-revealed principles of truth, and form from them an opinion contrary to the truth.

This is true of the expression found in 1 Tim. 2:15, "Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing." Let us examine it.

Paul's subject is that we should labor and pray for the salvation of all mankind. The two classes into which the race is divided—man and woman—are referred to. Verses 8-12. To illustrate, the apostle referred to the two classes in the beginning, the father and mother of the race, and the cause of the fall. "Adam [the man] was first formed, then Eve [the woman, "the mother of all living." Gen. 3:20]. And Adam [the man, for Adam means man] was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith and charity [love] and holiness with sobriety."

The woman was deceived by Satan. The man yielded because the woman had yielded. Satan deceived the woman through his subtlety; the woman beguiled the man. The race had fallen. But a ray of hope pierced the darkness. Through her, who had been first in transgression, should salvation come. We

read in the history given: "I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it [he] shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3:15. Salvation, then, was to come through the seed of the woman. Pains and sorrows would accompany births, and the number would be greatly multiplied. Gen. 3:16. Yet through these pains and sorrows would come Him who would redeem the earth race. And this is just what is stated in 1 Tim. 2:15: "Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing." The Revised Version reads according to the literal Greek, "the child-bearing." This points us back to the beginning of the race and its fall, as do also the previous verses. She who through her sin brought sin upon her seed, or those to whom she would give birth, would be saved by her Seed, who should come through the child-bearing. The promised Seed of the woman would be the One through whom existence, fruitage, and life would come to all. The Seed of the seed, the "holy Child" of the child-bearing, is the "Way, the Truth, and the Life."

But are not all saved through the Seed? Then why is it said that "she [woman] shall be saved in the child-bearing"?—They are words of comfort to woman, through whom sin first came. Altho she was in the transgression, she may be comforted that, through her, through the means of child-bearing, is to come the One who not only saves her but the race.

But the fact that through woman was to come the Redeemer, is not all that is requisite to her salvation. Faith and charity (love) and continuance therein, are necessary on her part, as well as upon the part of all who are saved. All, male or female, must have that faith which purifies the heart (Acts 15:9), that love which obeys all of God's commandments and counts them not grievous (1 John 5:3), the faith that worketh by love (Gal. 5:6). All who have such faith are in Christ, it matters not their sex, or race, or nation. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:27, 28. And any theory which makes a woman's salvation depend on her individual child-bearing is contrary to the Word of God, and is of the devil. But all who have faith and love and continue therein, the child-bearing, through which has been manifested God's matchless grace and boundless love—the gift of His Son and our Saviour—will save and save forever. And this text, like all others which speak of salvation, brings us to the only way of salvation,—our Lord Jesus Christ.

A Specimen of the World's Wisdom.—Of ancient times the Scripture says that "the world by wisdom knew not God." 1 Cor. 1:21. The same is as true to-day as it ever was, "wisdom" in this phrase meaning the world's wisdom. The world's wisdom does not bring men any nearer to God now than it ever did, for the reason that it is "foolishness with God." Chap. 3:19. "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish." Isa. 29:14. Christ is "the wisdom of God," therefore all the wisdom that God recognizes is concentrated in Christ. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Col. 3:16. Of the world the same apostle says, "Professing themselves to

be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:22), and "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator." In the light of this law of cause and effect, read the following concerning the death and burial of a monkey by a lodge of the order of Elks in this "Christian nation," in this "enlightened" nineteenth century. It is from a special despatch to the *New York World*:—

When Judge was found dead the other morning, the members of the Camden Lodge of Elks mourned. To-night he was buried. Wrapped in a shroud of shimmering white satin, his little face bearing a look of calm resignation, Judge lay in state all day in the parlor of the Elks' home in Market Street. The body was in a handsome coffin, covered with white brocade silk, with a plate-glass top and silver-plated handles. At the four corners burned candles. At the head lay a wreath of handsome roses and carnations; at the foot Judge's favorite toys. After the services the body was taken to the garden surrounding the worsted mills of Howland Croft, Sons & Co., Broadway and Jefferson Street, and buried beside Mr. Croft's dead pets.

SPIRITUALISM.

What It Claims to Be; The Bible Definition of It; Is It a Subject of Prophecy?

What It Claims to Be.

SPRITUALISM claims to reveal the unknown by means of communication with the spirits of the dead. Says Mr. Hudson Tuttle: "During the comparatively brief period that systematic communication with the spirit world has been made possible, millions have been convinced that they have received messages from their departed friends." Every chamber of the "unknown" into which the Spiritualist seeks to enter, is invariably by the doorway of communion with the "spirits of the dead." This fact is uncontroverted, and to state it is all that is necessary.

The Bible Definition.

Mankind quite generally has been led to believe that an immortal spirit leaves the body at death to enter the invisible world, and in that realm knows not only what is to be known, but is also fully aware of what is transpiring on earth. But it has not been proven that man is in possession of such a spirit. Nevertheless, since it has been so generally taught and believed that there is consciousness in death, is it any marvel that such a class of persons as the Spiritualists should arise, and seek to communicate with the dead?

But the Bible plainly says that "the dead know not anything." Eccl. 9:5. Also please read carefully the following texts: Ps. 146:2-4; Ps. 6:4, 5; Job 14:10-12; John 5:28, 29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 15:51-54. From the reading of the foregoing texts, it is very evident that man quietly sleeps in the grave, wholly oblivious to what is transpiring anywhere, till the time comes for the voice of the Son of God to arouse him from his slumber of death. And the idea that it is possible to converse with the dead is most assuredly a mistake.

Then has the medium's claim of spirit communication no foundation? and is it all simply some tricks of human devising?—By no means! But the Bible makes it plain that these spirits that answer the call of the medium are not the spirits of the dead, and the same Book also throws some rays of light on what they really are.

The comforting truth is presented in the Word of God that heavenly angels are sent to

minister to the heirs of salvation. Read the following texts upon the subject: Heb. 1:7, 14; 2 Kings 6:16, 17; 19:35; Ps. 34:7; Dan. 6:22; Ps. 91:11; Matt. 18:10; Acts 12:7-11. Many other texts will doubtless come to the mind of the reader, but no more need be added to show that God has a multitude of good angels working with Him for the salvation of mankind.

We also learn that there were angels who sinned (2 Peter 2:4), and that kept not their first estate (Jude 6). The chief of these fallen angels is Satan, and Christ represents him as having a kingdom (Matt. 12:26); he is called the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2). Satan is a pure Hebrew word transferred to the English language, and is defined as "an adversary," "an enemy," "an accuser." Hence the kingdom over which he presides is devoted to evil.

The Master speaks of the devil as a murderer and liar from the beginning. John 8:44. The work of this whole kingdom of evil spirits over which Satan presides is devoted to deception. Rev. 16:14. In 2 Thess. 2:8-12 we are told that Satan is to work with all power and *lying wonders* in his final great deceptions.

We conclude, then, that the facts are clearly established:—

(a) That there are good angels who visit us to assist us in leading lives of purity and holiness.

(b) That there are angels who sinned and are now devoted to evil.

(c) And as the one visits us for purposes of good, so the other is constantly seeking to deceive the children of men, and lead them into evil.

(d) The spirit that comes to the medium represents itself as being a dead friend, but it has been shown by the Bible that the dead are unconscious, and consequently unable to respond to the call of the medium. The conclusion is therefore unavoidable that the spirit controlling the medium is a fallen angel working to deceive.

A Subject of Prophecy.

The development and spreading of Spiritualism during the last half century is phenomenal. What does it indicate? For an answer read Matt. 24:24; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thess. 2:8-12. By reading the context from which these scriptures are taken, it is clearly to be seen that the second coming of Christ and the "latter times" is the theme under consideration. And the texts just cited show conclusively that the deceptions of Satan in wonder-working power are one of the signs to show us when the Saviour's coming is near.

It was formerly considered that only the ignorant and superstitious could be led away into Spiritualism. But nowadays the Spiritualists publish among their adherents long lists of the crowned heads and nobility of the Old World, as well as the names of men and women in every quarter of the earth noted for their learning and prominent positions. Read Rev. 16:13, 14, and see how clearly it is being fulfilled in the facts just stated. As has been shown, the devils or fallen angels are devoted to the work of deception, and their skill in this direction becomes so great that it is found to be one of the marked signs of the coming of Christ and the end of time. But in their deceptions they do not appear as evil angels, but would fain make us believe that they are "angels of light." See 2 Cor. 11:14.

Rev. 16:13, 14, already referred to, says

that these spirits of devils go to the *kings of the earth* and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. The expression, "the kings of the earth," shows very plainly that the men at the very head of society and affairs will be among the enticed.

We now have before our minds, in a few Scripture texts, the predictions. What do we see about us? Our papers contain daily announcements of Spiritualistic meetings that are being largely attended by the leading men of the world, as well as those in humbler positions. And not only are we met with these meetings, but our leading papers and magazines are continually discussing the so-called "spirit phenomena." The articles may not always purport to be discussing Spiritualism, but will treat of hypnotism, psychology, mesmerism, telepathy, Christian Science, etc., etc. These words, however, should be as fully identified with Spiritualism as the word "Spiritualism" itself.

It must be clearly evident to the seeker for truth that the scriptures cited in the foregoing pages show that the second coming of Christ is to be immediately preceded by the mighty working of the fallen angels. All their arts of cunning deception will be used to lead men to eternal ruin. But God in His Word has put us on our guard so that we need not be deceived.

Reader, let us carefully study the Word of God so that we may know what these things mean, and thus be prepared to escape the deception. Jesus is coming again soon, and if we give ourselves to Him *now*, and let Him teach us by His Word, He will prepare us to meet every deception, and to stand with Him at last. Amid the difficulties and wonder-working deceptions of this time, Jesus, the loving Redeemer, is a tower of refuge and strength. Let us accept Him *now*, that we may be ready at His coming to enter into His eternal joys.

T.



912. Apostles' Creed.

WHERE did the apostles' creed originate? E. B. R.

It did *not* originate with the apostles. In its present form it can be traced back, the Schaff-Herzog Cyclopedia tells us, to the beginning of the sixth or the close of the fifth century. It was made up in those days when men thought it necessary to define and interpret the Word of God.

913. The Laying on of Hands.

WHAT is meant by the laying on of hands? Does it mean the same as confirmation does in the Episcopal Church? or does it mean the same as it did in the apostles' days, the imparting of the Holy Ghost?

The only true confirmation, or establishment in Christ, is by the Spirit of God. See Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 1:6-8. The only laying on of hands that ought to be practised by Christians is that which existed in the primitive church.

914. The Sabbath and Tobacco.

CAN a man keep the Sabbath and use tobacco? W. W. P.

Yes, and no. He can rest on the seventh day, not knowing or realizing the wrong of tobacco-using; he may in a measure know Christ and His rest; but to keep the Sabbath of the Lord in the fullest sense is to know the *rest* of God, the rest of perfect peace. But to know God's rest we must know God's works, "which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. We could not conceive that God has prepared tobacco-using as one of the works in which we should walk, could we? Nor has He prepared any other hurtful habit for that purpose.



THE OUTLOOK



ANOTHER WAR.

THE strained relations existing in the Philippines between the American forces and those of the Filipinos have culminated in war. So acute had the situation become that it needed but a sentry's challenge to precipitate hostilities. The challenge was given on the night of February 4 by an American sentry. It was ignored by three Filipinos. The sentry's rifle spoke, and was defiantly answered by a Filipino field-piece. The Filipinos charged, and the reports placed their losses at 2,000 killed, 3,500 wounded, and 5,000 taken prisoners. What this really means may be faintly realized by reading the following extract from a report written by an eyewitness:—

"Your correspondent went over the fighting ground yesterday afternoon to make an examination of the position that had been held by the enemy, and from which they had been driven with great slaughter. There is no denying the fact that the Filipinos will stand fire. The ground in every direction bore evidence of this. On all sides were lying dead natives, their bodies, in some instances, being full of bullet holes. A majority of the dead were lying with their heads toward the line of the American advance, showing that they had fallen fighting desperately.

"To the north and south of the city, where the shells of the Charleston, Callao, and Monadnock reached the flanks of the Filipinos, the slaughter was sickening. I saw a number of bodies which had been literally torn into shreds by the fire from the war ships. In some places the shells had torn great holes in the earth, and around these were scattered dead bodies. On all sides the scene was one of terrible desolation, and what on Saturday had been a smiling landscape was now marked with the ravages of war.

"I went to Santa Mesa, San Juan del Monte, Santa Ana, San Pedro Macati, and Lomia, and other places, from which our troops had driven the enemy, and the scene in and around each was identical. The great number of dead showed that the little natives were not lacking in courage, but no courage could have withstood the terrible rain of death that fell upon the Filipinos as the Americans approached their positions."

No sadder picture than this has been painted during the war. The pitiabie spectacle, and all it means, is beyond the power of words to portray. And the saddest part of it is that professed liberty-loving and liberty-giving Americans have turned their guns upon liberty-loving and liberty-seeking children of oppression in a foreign land. Whatever may be the government's design in regard to the liberties which shall be bestowed upon that people, there are at least 2,000 of them who will never experience liberty except that which they have found in death.

While it is not the Christian's province to be a censor over the acts of Cæsar, he can not help regretting that Cæsar did not condescend to break his imperialistic silence toward an inferior people long enough to assure them of their ultimate freedom when order had been restored. Such assurance would, without doubt, have quieted the nervousness of that struggling people and averted the great loss of life on both sides which the opposite policy has now occasioned.

C. M. S.

CATHOLIC RELICS.

ON December 18 a portion of one of the thigh bones of Saint Anthony of Padua was exposed for veneration in a church in New York City. A Protestant paper in the East spoke of the affair as "gross superstition," and an "abominable imposture," etc.

The editor of the *Catholic Mirror* thinks he finds much Scripture in favor of this "veneration of relics," and expresses deep pity and contempt for the "grossly ignorant preachers" of the Protestant faith. He says that for the benefit of these ignorant Protestants "we will henceforth advocate with unremitting earnestness the study of God's written Word."

We trust sincerely that the editor of the *Mirror* will stick to this good resolution. And we hope that he will urge Catholics as well as Protestants to faithfully and carefully study "God's written Word." And we trust that as they read the Book of God, it will not be through the biased eyesight of creed-

bound prejudice, but that all will come to the living Word and drink in its deep and satisfying spiritual truth.

God is our heavenly Father, and He has given us His written Word. The respect that we owe to our Lord should lead us to come to Him direct through His Word, and not feel that we are dependent upon some one to tell us what our Father "means" by His Word. His Word "means" what it says, and once we learn the truth of this great fact, we can find comfort and strength and happiness and complete contentment in reading and meditating upon these sure and living words of God.

T.

THE KING AMONG NATIONS IN HIS HALL.

[By Thomas Wentworth Higginson, in *Saturday Evening Post*.]

IF we must accept imperialism under the name of expansion; if we must lay the policy of Washington forever aside; if we must set up our flag all over the globe to follow the morning drum-beat of England, let it be so, tho not without some final words of plain speaking. But, above all things, do not let us throw dust on the memory of our fathers, or ignore the stupendous work they did. Nothing in the present phase of discussion seems to me so curious as the assumption, more and more constantly made, that this nation has pursued a policy of selfish isolation, or needs to apologize for having done no more. Let us consider this a moment.

There are two forms of usefulness: that exerted by a man or nation through staying at home and bringing others within his sphere of influence, or that of going abroad and hunting up opportunities. The fine old writer, John Selden, in his "Table Talk," in speaking of the early English kings, does not tell us what foreign wars they waged, but he says, "The king himself used to eat in the hall, and his lords with him, and thus he understood men." King Richard, neglecting his kingdom to wage useless war for the Holy Sepulcher, was not so fine a figure, or worth so much to the world, as this king, who learned to understand men by remaining in his own hall, and welcoming them there.

This nation of ours has hitherto been such a king among nations. I saw at the Queen's Jubilee last year, in London, the hitherto unknown premiers of English colonies,—places sometimes little and unimportant,—summoned from all parts of the world to pose as representatives of the glory of England; and I said to a member of the Privy Council: "Why not recognize the fact that there are in the United States three times as many natives of the British Isles as are to be found in all the British colonies put together?" He said in reply, "That is our skeleton in the closet; we do not speak of that." (For the exact figures, see Dilke's "Problems of Greater Britain," page 17, and Besant's "Rise of the Empire," page 110.) Which is greater, to receive the subjects of another government and bid them prosper, or to send our own children to fight and die in creating new colonies?

That which is spoken of so lightly by the imperialists of to-day, as if it were a merely trivial duty, has been the magnificent work of continental expansion. This was impossible for England, having no continent to expand in. It was universally recognized that England, like Holland, must shrink into insignificance, or else colonize; but for a nation stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific there is no such alternative. There could be no insignificance for it.

The nation which has seen its own self-governing States multiply from thirteen to fifty; which has sacrificed nearly half a million lives to abolish slavery within its borders; which has spread its inventions and its natural products over all the earth, does not need to apologize for itself. Whatever faults have been charged upon the American, no one has ever called him a drone upon the earth's surface. The test of his success is not in the colonies which he has sent out to the islands of the sea, nor the military expeditions by which he governed them,

but in the way in which he has brought the natives of far-off islands,—for instance, the British,—to take refuge with him. When Sir Charles Dilke writes, "The English emigrant still resorts mainly to the United States," he vindicates our claim to the world's gratitude more than if he could give a list of a hundred of our colonies.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.

THERE recently appeared in the journals of the day a despatch from Vienna under the caption, "Horrors of the Free Hospitals in Vienna; Patients Inoculated in the Interests of Science, Because They Are Cheaper Than Animals." It has been discovered that in the free hospitals of that city patients are systematically experimented upon by the physicians in charge. Children and women are the principal subjects, the youth and dying patients do not escape inoculation by deadly germs at the hands of those with whom they have intrusted their lives. In one case a doctor injected the bacilli of an infectious disease from a decomposing corpse into three women and three new-born children. In another case a youth who was on the road to recovery was inoculated and died within twenty-four hours. One doctor, who had received an unlimited number of healthy children from a foundling hospital, used them entirely for experimental purposes, inoculating them with deadly virus in order to study the progress of the diseases in the children whom he was thus slowly murdering. The excuse given for such a practise is that the children and patients are cheaper than animals for such "scientific purposes."

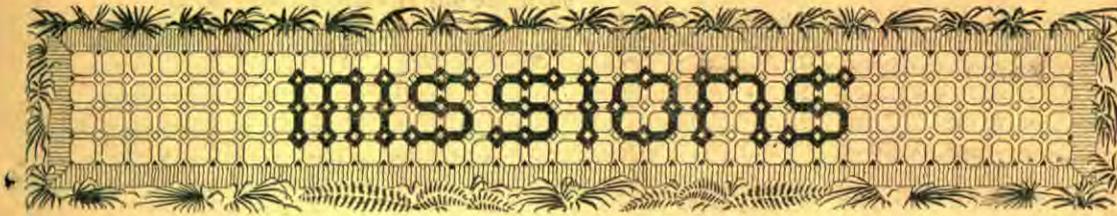
No words of condemnation could be too strong for this wholesale slaughter of the innocents. Nothing but the complete loss of all fear of God and of all natural love of humanity could permit such diabolical practise, even under the flimsy cloak of "scientific purposes." This may be science, but it is science gone mad. It may be "wisdom," but it is the wisdom of the wicked one—"earthly, sensual, devilish;" not that which is born of God—"peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

Lovers of money are scheming for the accumulation of millions in a day, and lovers of fame are no less insatiate. A scientist or a physician springs before the world like a jack-in-the-box with some marvelous discovery, and his name is heralded around the globe. His fame sets on fire the ambition of scores of unprincipled men, and such practises as above recorded are the deplorable results. The scientist who considers human life secondary to the exploitation of some discovery, real or imaginary, and proceeds to sacrifice life that he may write a book to chronicle his observations, has forfeited all right to be at large. Such criminals are the more dangerous because of the helplessness of those who are their special prey. Other incidents of this kind have been recorded, which would go to show that the practise is not restricted to Vienna.

If evidence had heretofore been lacking to show the moral degeneracy of the times, it is furnished in such occurrences as this.

C. M. S.

Polygamy, and More.—We do not believe in polygamy. We do not see how the United States House of Representatives can do otherwise than to refuse Mr. Roberts, representative-elect from Utah, a seat in that body. He is a legitimate result of the union of Church and State which exists in Utah and will exist as long as the Mormon Church holds the power. But we wish to suggest that there is a greater evil threatening America than polygamous Utah, and that is a general union of Church and State, for which pre-eminently the Roman Catholic Church has ever stood sponsor, and which many professedly Protestant bodies are blindly following. The Catholic Church is now advancing to her goal in this nation through the favor of press and politicians with wonderful strides. These "Protestants" who are working for a religious amendment to the Constitution and a national Sunday law are furthering the aims of Rome. And this constitutes a peril to the Republic, the Government, the nation, a hundred-fold more dangerous than the perils of polygamy. Let those who love liberty consider this.



A CALL FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS.

[Isa. 58:6-9.]

O, WHERE are the souls who are born of God,
Who will walk life's path where the Saviour trod,
Who will teach the Gospel at any cost,
In the broadening way of the blind and lost?

They need not travel to India's shores;
They can find them close to their very doors.
Go tell those who suffer with pain and cold,
There is health and shelter in Jesus' fold.

Hide thou not thyself from thy flesh and blood,
But find those who suffer from fire and flood.
Go search out the cause thou knowest not
Of the widow and orphan long forgot.

Go find those who feed the drinker's blight,
And lead them to Jesus, the world's true Light;
Bid mothers and children to hope again,
And to trust in the Lamb for sinners slain.

Tell mourners of Him
who from heaven
came
To relieve the sad, the
sick, and the lame;
How He suffered "the
curse" for those in
sin,
To redeem from death,
and their love to
win.

Yes, tell vilest sinners,
who Christ despise,
That they are precious
in Jesus' eyes,
And the glittering gates
of pearl swing wide
To all who through
Truth will be sancti-
fied.

G. T. WILSON.
Stanmore, N. S. W.

PITCAIRN AMONG THE ISLANDS.

YES, our good missionary ship Pitcairn has entered upon its sixth cruise to the islands of Polynesia. It is probably now in the region where flying fish and tropic birds go dashing by and the north star hangs low in the horizon. It may be that our brethren have, ere this, sighted the southern cross and passed the doldrums.

As the ship is headed south no land will be sighted until 25° south latitude, where lies the island of Pitcairn, some thirty days' sail from San Francisco.

As our earth revolves upon its axis toward the east, the unstable elements of wind and water naturally rush across the equatorial region of the Pacific toward the shores of Asia. In order to take advantage of these currents, the course of our missionary ship is directed westward through the tropics.

The people of Pitcairn Island are always on the alert to note the approach of passing vessels, and as the season of the year has now arrived when they would naturally begin to look for the Pitcairn, they are no doubt doubly watchful. The eyes of the islanders and seafaring men become somewhat telescopic, so they are generally able to see much farther than landsmen.

While waiting upon Pitcairn Island for the return of our vessel, we one day heard a distant yell, which was soon caught up by others until it echoed and re-echoed over the length and breadth of the little island. Some one had sighted a sail. Immediately there was a general hurrying to and fro, men gathering oranges, bananas, pineapples, and melons, while others hastily made ready to launch the whale-boats to go and meet the coming vessel. One with a glass from the hilltop reports that it is the Pitcairn, and there is great rejoicing.

We can quite imagine ourselves once more seeing the islanders gathering in the old thatched chapel to hear the good news from America. The onward progress of the message that we love, the need of a deeper Christian experience, and the reception of the Holy



FAREWELL SERVICE ON THE PITCAIRN JUST BEFORE SHE LEFT THE WHARF.

Ghost, are all topics of live interest to these people.

As the Pitcairn sails away from the place after which our good vessel was named toward the Society Islands, the course will be to the northwest, where lie a large number of small coral islands known as the Tuamotu Archipelago. A ragged reef of coral, enriched by drift and sand, with a fringe of coconut trees, is all that goes to make up many of these low islands. While there are some fourscore places in this group where the little trading schooners call for copra and pearl shells, it would not be wise for the Pitcairn to stop at any of them, so she bears on her course to Tahiti, the port of entry and headquarters of the French possessions of Polynesia.

We have one brother in the low archipelago just passed, Alex Drollet, who is conversant with French, English, and Tahitian, and is in a position to do much good.

Our vessel is regarded with a friendly feeling generally by the natives, and its movements are carefully noted. The semaphore upon the heights back of Papeete, Tahiti, will not long

have signaled a brigantine outside the harbor before it will be noised abroad among the natives far and near that the "*pahi Pitania*" (ship Pitcairn) has come again.

Should the Pitcairn not return, the conclusion would gain ground among the natives that this religion was dying out. Its coming has a wonderful influence to strengthen the confidence of those who are weak in the faith, as well as to encourage those long in the way. The Pitcairn is the only missionary ship which visits the French possessions of Polynesia. The London Missionary Society has abandoned that portion of the South Pacific.

Our work among the Society Islands has been largely confined to Tahiti and Raiatea. None of our workers have yet located upon the fine islands of Moorea, Tahaa, Huahine, or Boroboro.

Tahiti and Raiatea both have commodious harbors, while Pitcairn, Rurutu, Rimitara, and Rarotonga are deficient in this respect. Whole navies might drop anchor within Raiatea's barren reef.

Six hundred miles west of the French possessions the rugged heights of Rarotonga present a pleasing picture to the visitor. Our brethren who are there laboring year after year will no doubt do their share of rejoicing upon sighting the welcome sail of the Pitcairn.

Rarotonga is the principal island of the Cook group, Aitutaki, Mangaia, and Atiu being smaller, but still important islands. Upon none of these have we workers except on Rarotonga.

After visiting Samoa, where war and unrest fill the hearts of the native people, our brethren will hasten on to Tongatabu, which is the principal island of the Tongan group. Here the king of Tonga has his palace and the proudest of Polynesian tribes conduct a very elaborate system of government.

The Tongans are a fine-looking people, who make singing their specialty, and farm a little at odd intervals.

Beyond Tonga lies Fiji, with its population of over 100,000. Suva, Fiji, is the greatest business center of the South Sea Islands. Steamers come and go frequently. The large population is scattered over a great many islands, so that Fiji comprises about as much in population, business, and territory as all the other groups mentioned combined. It is a great missionary field. Large numbers of natives from the Solomon group and other cannibal isles to the west have been brought to Fiji on the labor vessels. These men are now scattered among the Fijians. It seems to us that an excellent opportunity is thereby given the missionary of reaching the wild natives of the western groups by beginning with those now in Fiji, where the climate is more healthful and environments less trying than in the Solomon or New Hebrides groups. There are also large numbers of East Indians in Fiji.

We will not go farther with the ship at this writing.

E. C. CHAPMAN.

Egypt.—The obstacles in the line of work in Egypt are many, but let me mention these three: The learning of the Arabic language is difficult because of its many guttural sounds. The prevailing religion is Moslem, and it is hard to fight against, because it is a mixture of truth and error. Another difficulty is the position given to woman. She is liable to be divorced at any time, and divorce hangs over her head like the sword of Damocles.—*Rev. W. M. Nichol.*

IN Siam the Gospel has been carried northwest to Cheng-tung, in the British Shan States, and northeast into Luang Prabang, and the Sip Sung Pun Nah, in French territory. It was hoped that the French would not object to the Protestant missions, but when at last the old missionary, who for years had been working northward in the hope of reaching the unreached peoples, endeavored to begin his station he was obliged to leave almost with broken heart. Under British rule, and in Siamese territory proper, there has been peace through the year, and no man has hindered the Gospel.—*Robert E. Speer.*

Opportunities in China.—The West River has recently been opened in all its length to trade and trading vessels. The Yang-tse has been opened in like manner. These rivers flow through densely-populated countries, and large numbers of missionaries are needed to reach the multitudes of people. A steamer has passed through the rapids of the Yang-tse, and the fifty million of Szechuan are now accessible by steam communication. The number of missionaries there needs greatly to be increased. The province of Hunan has now two resident missionaries. This province has been intensely hostile to foreigners. Until very recently no foreign missionary could labor in that province at all.—*H. Blodgett, D.D.*

The Outlook in Japan.—New treaties with Japan are to go into effect this year, which will probably largely influence educational missionary work in the empire. The educational council of Japan is said to advise that foreigners be forbidden to conduct schools in Japan; whether this includes theological schools does not yet appear. The reason is said to be "the influence of foreigners in denationalizing the youth of Japan." The national spirit, already manifested in other departments, seems likely to affect the educational system. Two opposite tendencies have for years been at work in this island empire, one in favor of a fellowship of nations, and the other intensely and narrowly Japanese, and mis-called patriotic. The latter seems for the time to prevail.—*Missionary Review.*

IN South Africa there is a country larger than all of the United States east of the Missouri River, in which a new Anglo-Saxon empire is developing. Already there are 700,000 white people, about equally divided between the English and their descendants and the Holland Dutch and their descendants. In this section there are now more than 6,000 miles of railroad. Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, in the far south and southeast, are splendid cities, while 650 miles north of Cape Town lies Kimberley, with its 20,000 people, the greatest diamond center in the world, from which \$15,000,000 worth of diamonds are shipped every year. Farther north lies Johannesburg, the great gold center. South Africa leads all other nations in the world in its gold output.—*Bishop Hartzell.*

NO WONDER that Spain is poor. She supports from her treasury 117,000 monks, nuns, and other persons under religious vows—nearly five times as many as the former standing army of the United States.—*Congregationalist.*

White Influence.—Writing to *The Missionary Review*, Mrs. J. T. Whitney says: "While in the Marshall Islands with my husband, I was trying to persuade a native young man to go as a teacher to another island. He said, 'We Marshall islanders are not like white people,—we love our relatives and our homes.' No wonder he said it, when he had seen so many white men who were mere driftwood. To counteract the influence of these low white men is one of the greatest obstacles in these islands." It is so everywhere; those who have had the best opportunity, and therefore ought to set the best example, will not go into the kingdom of God themselves nor set such an example as to encourage others to go in.

THE LAMENT OF A MISSIONARY BOX.

The Heathen Children's Friend.

FORGOTTEN and forlorn I live

Upon a dusty shelf;

I'm so dispirited and sad

I scarcely know myself.

A missionary box am I,

And better days have seen,

For coppers, silver, yes, and gold,

But now I'm very lean.

When from that meeting long ago

You brought me here with glee,

"Our box shall soon be full," you cried;

"How happy we shall be!"

Bright hopes were they, but quickly dashed.

Once only full I've been.

Your ardor swiftly, sadly waned,

And I have lacked since then.

The missionaries say, indeed,

That pence to pound soon grow;

But *older* people ought to give;

We need the money so.

And thus in emptiness I wait,

And dustier grow each day;

While, heedless of my silent plea,

You round me work and play.

Altho each day you have three meals,

You never seem to think

That I, poor, wistful mission box,

Should want to eat or drink;

Yet I am always hungry now;

My mouth stands open wide.

Dear children, drop the pennies in;

They'll be so safe inside.

MRS. MARY ST. CLAIR.

Indianapolis, Ind.

KOREA, midway between Japan and China, is like an imbecile child. Russia took off her hand early in the year, so placating Japan, with whom then she covenanted to leave Korea alone for a while. Left alone, the weak, silly, corrupt king, surrounded by weak, silly, and corrupt men, is conducting a government which is the laughing stock and the despair of all who would help it. As the ablest man of Korea said not long ago: "One resolute man with a pistol could capture the Korean Government. But what would he do with it? There are no capable men with whom he could conduct the State." The progressive men compose what is known as the "Independence Club," an organization which makes daring propositions near of kin to sedition, and whose desires are right, tho capacity and confidence are wanting. Meanwhile, throughout the whole land, the missionaries continue to lay deep and strong foundations on which they expect that in time a new Korea will rest.—*Sunday School Times.*

Obstacles in Africa.—There are two classes of obstacles: First, from the natives themselves—the apathy, they are so content with what they have and are. Second, obstacles from without, from immoral white men, rum, and slavery. The rum is the vilest kind of stuff, made of potatoes and doctored with sulphuric acid. Then there is slavery, not only among the natives, but also among the white men; Portuguese, Dutch, and Englishmen buy slaves. This is not only domestic, but there is also slavery on the high seas. Slaves are shipped upon the high seas. There were one hundred slaves on the steamer on which we came home. They, of course, are not called slaves, but "contract laborers." They have contracts made out by a notary public, but they are fraudulently obtained.—*Rev. T. W. Woodside.*

"ACROSS the whole of Northern Asia great Siberia spreads. With his back against the Arctic Circle, impregnable from behind, the Russian bear reaches out southward. His railroad grows steadily, and his destiny as steadily expands. It can not be that God is permitting the mighty growth of Russia in Asia only for evil. Surely God's purpose is to bring out of the expansion of the Slav a new enlargement of His church. But missions have not found their place yet under the double eagles of the czar." So says a correspondent of the *Sunday School Times*. But God can work effectually in the worst countries without great missionary establishments, when He has men who have a mind to work. This was demonstrated by the apostles, and is being illustrated to-day by some of our brethren even in Russia.

Mexico.—In a report concerning our sister republic, Rev. C. D. Campbell says: "Mexico has twelve and one-half million inhabitants. There are one hundred thousand Christians. The country is open from end to end. The two principal railroads are in the hands of Americans. The mines are going into their hands, but they are not Christians. The government is friendly to missions. Two states are without Christian workers. Medical missions will pay as well in Mexico as elsewhere, will speedily become self-supporting, and there is but one medical mission in Mexico." If this mention refers to the medical mission at Guadalajara, then the only mission of that character in Mexico is a Seventh-day Adventist institution. If it refers to some other medical mission, then the writer is mistaken in stating that there is but one.

Cash Cost of Converts.—Often the mathematical Christians of our day attempt to depreciate missions by making out the cost of conversions to be unduly dear. In the November issue of the *Baptist Missionary Magazine* appeared a series of statistical tables, showing the results of the past eight years in the foreign work of the United States Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. The last of these columns contains an estimate of the cash cost of each convert.

The statistics may be interesting, but there are a hundred reasons why all such estimates are both dishonoring to God and misleading to men. We have not one word in Scripture to justify any such materialism in our estimate of God's work. Who shall ever tell us the worth of Saul's conversion to the church and the world? Think of a financial reckoning of the value of Luther to the ages.—*Missionary Review.*



LESSON IX.—SABBATH, MARCH 4, 1899.

THE FIRST MIRACLE.

Cana of Galilee, A.D. 27.

(John 2:1-11.)

1 "AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; 2 and the mother of Jesus was there; and Jesus also was bidden, and His disciples, to the marriage. And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no 4 wine. And Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto 6 the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. Now there were six water-pots of stone set there after the Jews' manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins apiece. 7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And 8 they filled them up to the brim. And He saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the ruler of the feast. And they 9 bare it. And when the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and knew not whence it was (but the servants which had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast 10 calleth the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man setteth on first the good wine; and when men have drunk freely, then that which is worse; thou hast kept the good wine until 11 now. This beginning of His signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him."

NOTE.—The texts inclosed in marks of parentheses, while not essential to the lesson study, will be found to throw much light upon the lesson, and are suggested for those who wish to study further.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

1. On the third day following the last events studied, what took place in Cana of Galilee? John 2:1.
2. Who is mentioned as being present at the wedding? Verse 2. Note 1.
3. What threatened to mar the pleasure of the occasion? Verse 3. Note 2. (Judges 9:13; Ps. 104:15.)
4. Who was appealed to for a remedy? and by whom?
5. In reply, how did Jesus address His mother? Verse 4. Note 3. (John 19:26; 20:15.)
6. What reason did Christ give for thus checking His mother's interference? Note 4.
7. Notwithstanding these words of Christ to His mother, what did she order the servants to do? Verse 5.
8. What sort of vessels, and how many, were standing near? Verse 6. Note 5. (Mark 7:3.)
9. What order did Christ give the servants? Verse 7.
10. Having filled the jars, what did He then tell them to do? Verse 8.
11. Did the conductor of ceremonies know where the new supply of wine came from? Verse 9. Note 6.
12. Upon tasting the wine, what did the master of ceremonies do?
13. How did he congratulate the bridegroom concerning the acquisition of wine? Verse 10.
14. What is the work of Christ called by the evangelist? Verse 11. (John 1:14; Isa. 40:5; John 11:40.)
15. What effect did it work upon His disciples? Note 7.
16. Where did Jesus next go? and who went with Him? Verse 12. (Matt. 12:46; 13:55; John 7:3, 5.)

Side Lights.—"Desire of Ages," pp. 144-153; "Spirit of Prophecy," vol. 2, pp. 98-115.

NOTES.

1. **Cana.**—"The reedy place," so called from the thick jungles originally found in its immediate neighborhood; was situated on a hill which rises from the plain of El Battauf. It is supposed to have been nine miles north of Nazareth, the home of Jesus, which was the first objective point of the journey. Arriving there, and finding no one to receive them, Jesus and His disciples accepted an invitation to be present at the wedding, which from attending circumstances seems to have been that of some relative of Christ, judging from the prominent part his mother was acting in connection with it.

2. **Wine failed.**—Fresh juice of the grape was considered indispensable at a Jewish wedding, while the fermented variety was forbidden; Prov. 20:1. It is not known how long the festivities had been going on before the wine gave out, but such a failure was a disgrace to those making a feast, and so the extremity on that occasion was one to be deplored.

3. **Woman.**—He no longer calls her "mother," but uses a familiar Hebrew expression, the common form of address to all women. He wishes her to understand that she no longer controls Him, but that He is under the sole guidance of His Father above. Her interference in His work, on the ground of her fleshly relationship, was repudiated. There was danger of her forgetting His changed

relation to her. While the address now seems harsh, it was not then so considered, as will be seen by His last tender words to her, when He was expiring on the cross. John 19:26.

4. **Mine hour.**—The hour is not Mine in which to be glorified; the time has not yet come for Me to be exalted. God fixes My hour and work; I must now glorify Him alone.

5. **Manner of purifying.**—The sanitary precautions of the Old Testament had been so distorted by the Jews of that day that before every meal each person must wash his hands. No one came from the market and neglected the prescribed ablution. Every guest must have his feet washed upon arrival, and leave his sandals outside of the door. For these purposes, and countless other washings, great stone jars were by the doorway. At this place there were six of these, each holding about ten gallons. This is the lowest estimate of their capacity made by any author. To fill all these with wine showed overflowing generosity, which is characteristic of the Lord in answering our requests for spiritual blessings.

6. **Knew not whence it was.**—This was a great miracle. As said by Milton, "The conscious water saw its God and blushed." The difference between this miracle and the regular operation of nature was only in the matter of time taken to obtain the result. In the operation, one is as much a miracle as the other, since it requires the power of God to accomplish the result in either case. The miracle did not break the order of nature's laws, but only hastened it.

7. **Believed.**—Without doubt, as the guests remarked on the quality of the wine set before them, inquiries were raised as to where it was procured. The servants, of course, related the whole proceeding. Jesus was then sought for. Anticipating this, in His great modesty He retired, and this act on His part gave opportunity for His disciples to proclaim Him as the Son of God, the Messiah. Quickly the news of the event spread until it reached even Judea, and so Christ sought retirement for a few days.



LESSON X.—SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 1899.

CHRIST FREEING FROM SIN.

Lesson Scripture, John 8:12, 31-36, R.V.

12 "AGAIN therefore Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; He that followeth Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." 31 "Jesus therefore said to those Jews which had believed Him, If ye abide in My word, then are ye truly My disciples; 32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. 33 They answered unto Him, We be Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any man; how sayest Thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that committeth sin is the bond- 35 servant of sin. And the bond-servant abideth not in the house 36 forever; the son abideth forever. If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Golden Text.—"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Verse 36.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

- (1) When Jesus was in the temple during the feast of tabernacles, what remarkable declaration did He make? V. 12. Note 1.
- (2) What did He say to those Jews that believed on Him? V. 31. Note 2.
- (3) What knowledge would they gain by abiding in His Word? And what would be the consequences to them? V. 32. Note 3.
- (4) What answer did the Jews give? V. 33. Note 4.
- (5) What reply did Jesus make? V. 34. Note 5.
- (6) What did Jesus say of a servant? and of the Son? V. 35. Note 6.
- (7) How can one be made free indeed? V. 36.

NOTES.

1. **"The light of the world."**—Jesus used a prominent feature of the feast of tabernacles, then being celebrated, as a symbol of this great truth. He was at this time in the treasury (see verse 20); that is in the court of the women, where were the thirteen treasure chests, with trumpet-shaped openings to receive the gifts of the people. Close behind him, says Canon Farrar, were two great candelabra, seventy-five feet high, on which, every night during the feast, lamps were lighted which shed a soft light for a long distance around. Under these lamps the people, even to the stately Pharisees and priests, joined in festivities. At the same time, to the accompaniment of instrumental music, the Levites, drawn up in array on the fifteen steps which led up to the

court, chanted the beautiful psalms which early received the title of Song of Degrees. These lights were in commemoration of the pillar of cloud in the wilderness which gave light to the camp of Israel.

2. **"If ye abide in My word."**—Here is the key to Christian life and final salvation. The blessing of such abiding is indicated in chap. 15:7: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." It is through the Word that we must be sanctified. The prayer of Christ for His disciples was, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." Thus we see that the importance of implicit obedience is limited only by the value of salvation.

3. **"The truth shall make you free."**—The Jewish idea of freedom was deliverance from the Roman tyranny. But Jesus knew that their greater need was deliverance from the bondage of sin. However, if Israel had not departed from the truth ("All Thy commandments are truth," Ps. 119:151), they would have avoided every captivity that they ever suffered. And it is just as true to-day as it ever was that the truth, and only the truth, can make men free. Jesus Christ is the truth (John 14:6), and "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Verse 36 of lesson.

4. **"Were never in bondage."**—Showing a strange condition of blindness to the truth, or an unwillingness to acknowledge the fact that their nation had been in bondage for hundreds of years, and they themselves were in bondage to the Romans at that moment. Showing also to what lengths people will go to defend themselves against the charge of being sinners, instead of confessing and forsaking sin, and turning to Him who alone can make them free.

5. **"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."** No man can claim absolute independence; either he is a servant of righteousness or he is a servant of sin. The verb "committeth" is in the continuous present. It is not to commit a single sinful act, but to live a continually sinful life. The sinner is fettered and restrained from freely doing right. His evil nature and his bad habits have the mastery over him. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Rom. 6:12.

6. **God had called Israel to the honorable position of His chosen people.** "He came to His own, but His own received Him not." They did not remain faithful; they became the servants of sin, and therefore could not abide. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant." Heb. 3:5. "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that He did for Israel." Judges 2:7. Then "they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth." Verse 13. From that time on their course, with occasional times of revival, was in the main downward in the scale of trustworthy service. But the Son, together with all who are born of the Spirit and are faithful to the end of the race, will abide forever.

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tions, and the process of digestion was again under way.

The stomach felt exceedingly heavy. After revolving its contents carefully, it sent a message of gas to the mouth. The gas signified that the fermentation had already begun. The stomach, it said, was well aware that the mouth, like itself, labored under limitations; but could it not, for once, refuse to open its lips to further atrocities that day? This course would, the mouth would assuredly agree, favor the best interests of the Man as well; for with its present burdens the stomach would be absolutely unable to send any more nourishment to the body unless it could have a little peace.

The mouth replied that itself, the teeth, and the tongue were all in thorough sympathy with the stomach, and would do everything possible to carry out its wishes. At the same time it could think of no way to keep itself closed against the Man's will unless it could manage to bring on lockjaw. It feared, however, that this would be impossible, since the Man had a terror of lockjaw, and took every precaution against it; besides, there was danger—

But here the mouth's remarks were cut short by a cigar placed between its teeth.

The stomach would have begun to ache had it not learned by experience that if it did the Man would send down a pill or a powder that would merely stop the pain and make matters still worse. Many a time the stomach, feeling the hopelessness of the situation, had resolved to protest no more, even to the mouth, but to bear its sufferings in silence, and to do its duty by the Man without murmuring so long as any one of its functions continued able to work. But the stomach realized better than any other part of the body the vital importance of digestion. It knew that every other organ, that every blood-vessel, muscle, and nerve, in short, that every cell of the whole physical system, was dependent upon it for food; that the entire Man, even to his inmost thoughts and emotions, was made of the elements prepared in its laboratory. Altho from earliest infancy it had been constantly abused, tormented, and overworked to gratify the capricious whims of the Man, his family, and his friends, yet it was sincerely and deeply attached to him, not only by the tissues surrounding it, but also by that subtle and indefinable natural affinity that underlies all blood relationships. The stomach loved the Man, and altho in the nature of things it could never have studied physiology, yet it knew by instinct that his course of life was all wrong, that there was no possible harmony between the food he ate and what he expected of it after assimilation. It saw plainly that the Man was slowly but certainly starving and poisoning himself to death. His bones, his muscles, his brain, his hair, his nerves, his blood, were all crying hungrily for food, and irritably refusing the poison that was sent them for bread.

And so on this occasion, as many times before, the stomach turned again to its vast army of little helpers. In them it never found disappointment. On the morning in question every particle of gastric juice that had been able to recover its vital power and to get a foothold on the coarse, chilled masses of food, was earnestly at work dissolving connective tissue and making peptones. The acids of the stomach were breaking down the albuminous walls of the fat cells so as to set free their oily contents, and dissolving also the mineral salts. Not being able to act upon fats or starch, the gastric juice could not do much with the fried potatoes, the oatmeal, or the toast. This was unfortunate, since none of the food had re-

mained in the mouth long enough to be acted upon by the salivary glands; therefore a large share of it could now be removed from the stomach only by peristalsis.

"It is really pathetic," remarked the pyloric gland, which was watching the struggle from the door of its duct, "to see how hard those juices work. They are giving their lives for the sake of the Man, and yet he never lifts a finger to make their sacrifice easier."

"What I am worried about," said the peptic gland, "is that we are not going to have any time to rest before the luncheon comes down. Not that I mind so much on my own account working when I am tired, but I have already secreted all the gastric juice I had prepared for, and I can not possibly get any more ready so soon. I am sorry for the poor stomach, too. It is always so mortified when it has to force into the intestines food that is not properly reduced."

"Well," exclaimed the other, "I should like just once to lay my nerves on that Man. I am only a weak little ignorant gastric gland, but I know I try as hard as I can to do what nature tells me, and I am sure the Man does not, or else he has never paid enough attention to what she says, to know. Sometimes I think he has never heard that it makes any difference what he eats; then, again, I think that he doesn't care; that he just eats things that make that horrid little palate feel good, and doesn't care a thing about all the rest of us. I don't know, but I get all confused when I think about it."

But the patient little glands and all the other activities of the stomach had no more time for social amenities that day. It would be tedious to tell of the ice-cold ginger ale, that sent a shiver through every cell of the digestive organs; of the luncheon that followed the ginger ale; of the peppery soup that made the salivary glands feel lazy, and tore the lining of the œsophagus; of the cold roast pork and the Saratoga chips that sank like lead to the bottom of the soup; of the olives, the jelly, the salad, the pepper-sauce, the ice-cream, the chocolate cake that made the stomach's afternoon one long Spanish torture; to tell again of the evening dinner, the roast chicken and French potatoes, the cucumbers and vinegar, the tomatoes with mayonnaise dressing, the coffee, with green apple pie, and imported cheese. Perhaps it is cruel to mention the Welsh rarebit and the pint of beer that came down about midnight.

Suffice it to say that the Man was sick in the night. When a soft, kind stomach pump descended through the gullet to take away its revolting and intractable burden, the heart-broken stomach, that had worked so faithfully and conscientiously for forty years, heard the Man say between groans: "I have a beastly stomach. Were it not for that I should be a happy man."

EVERY
SICK
AND
DESPAIRING
MAN OR
WOMAN
CAN
GET
RELIEF
BY
USING



"HELP SALLY TO COUNT FORTY."

UNCLE ICHABOD C. lived in one of the New England States, and was an active, earnest, praying man, who had quite a notable way of speaking his mind upon all needed occasions.

He was at a church meeting one day, where the members of the church were all expected to be present and to make some statement of their personal experiences and their religious state.

"Sister Sally," a maiden lady of uncertain age, was a member of the church, who used to earn her living by spinning stocking yarn for the neighbors, for which she was paid so much per knot, a knot being—as some of our old lady readers know, and as some of our young lady readers are not likely to know—a thread of yarn long enough to go forty times around the reel, and which was then knotted, or tied around with a thread to keep it separate from the rest.

Mysteriously, Sally's knots of yarn were said to be very liable to lack the requisite number of threads, when counted, and this kind of mistake, it was said, occurred too frequently, and was too commonly in the spinster's favor to escape the remarks of those who were deficient in charity.

The church meeting referred to progressed, till at length Sister Sally's turn came, and she proceeded to relate the story of her sorrows and trials, which, unhappily, were very numerous. She confessed she did not make the progress she desired, and had many temptations and trials, and went through an ordinary and commonplace acknowledgment of sins, and desire for the sympathies and prayers of Christian brethren, when the monotony was broken by the ringing voice of Uncle Ichabod, saying:—

"Lord, help Sister Sally to count forty!"

The effect of this prayer must be imagined; it may reasonably be concluded, however, that if it was answered, some of Sister Sally's troubles and trials would diminish just in proportion as her threads of yarn increased in number, till they reached the legal standard of an honest woman's work.

Uncle Ichabod is dead, but when listening to the dreary platitudes of persons who bewail their sins, and still hide and persist in little cheating tricks and petty meannesses, we are reminded of his pointed prayer, and feel as if they need some one to pray the Lord to help them "to count forty," or fifty, or a hundred, as the case may be, or to do an honest day's work, or measure an honest bushel of corn, or an honest yard of cloth, or pack an honest barrel of apples, or tub of butter; and we really think that a little help from the Lord about counting, reckoning, measuring, weighing, trading, and working would do more toward driving away "temptations and trials and dark hours" from many minds than a good deal of the whining and mourning which are not attended by fruits meet for repentance.

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NEWS AND NOTES

New Trusts.—Two soap manufacturing trusts are now in process of formation, one in Chicago, and the other in Boston, the Chicago concern with a capital stock of \$100,000,000, and the Boston trust with a capital of \$29,000,000. . . . Railway car manufacturing companies are negotiating for the formation of a trust, in which many million dollars will be represented. The moving factor in this new deal is the Michigan-Peninsular Car Company, which has a capitalization of its own amounting to more than \$8,000,000. . . . The charter of the Merchants' Wire and Wire Goods Company, a trust, was filed at Trenton, N. J., on February 4. This trust will control the output of large mills in both the East and West. . . . A combine covering all grades of oatmeal and breakfast foods is now in process of formation. The capital of this new corporation amounts to about \$33,000,000. . . . Negotiations were completed on February 1 for the consolidation of all the leading pottery companies in the United States, with a capitalization of \$40,000,000. . . . The Union Tobacco Company of America, with headquarters at New York City, has filed with the Secretary of State an increase of its capitalization from \$19,350,000 to \$24,000,000. This increase in stock was secured by the consolidation of the Union Tobacco Company and the North American Commercial Company. . . . Seven of the largest salmon-packing concerns on the Columbia River have formed a trust under the name of the Columbia River Packers' Association. The capital stock of this new organization is \$2,000,000. . . . There is a trust in process of formation to be known as the United States Cast-iron and Foundry Company. Its capitalization is \$24,000,000, and the firms which are uniting to form this corporation are said to control ninety-five per cent. of the total output of cast-iron pipe in this country. . . . A milk trust has been organized in Chicago, of which Joseph Leiter is the head. The capital stock is principally in the hands of Leiter, he having bought outright the routes of many of the milk dealers. The capital stock of the concern will be \$10,000,000. The trust promises not to raise the price of milk for the present, but holds out no promises for the future. . . . The National Steel Company is about to be incorporated in New Jersey, combining many wealthy firms, and capitalized at \$50,000,000. It is expected that within a short time other firms will join the combine, raising the capitalization to about \$700,000,000.

International.—China has conceded to England the opening of the city of Nan-ning as a treaty port, which the British consider necessary to the exploitation of West River. The Chinese foreign office also agrees to pay \$30,000 to the relatives of the murdered British missionary, Mr. Fleming. . . . France is endeavoring to raise a loan of \$50,000,000 in England, with which to build war ships and make more effective the equipment of her army. . . . The French ambassador at Constantinople has entered a vigorous protest with the sultan against the concession to Germany of a port and dock at Haidar Pasha, nearly opposite Constantinople, on the south side of the Sea of Marmora, which is to be used as a terminus of the Anatolian Railroad. . . . An uprising of peasants occurred at Crajova, Roumania, on February 4, which was so serious as to call out two regiments of troops for its suppression. It is reported that the peasants repulsed the troops. The trouble was occasioned by a landed baron refusing any longer to lease his land. . . . Another rebellion has broken out in Uruguay and the rebels have captured the town of Carmelo. . . . Capital has been subscribed for building a cable direct from Germany to the United States. It is understood that this enterprise is fostered by the German Government for Germany's protection in case of war with England. . . . The natives of the Kongo Free State are driving in the Belgian outposts, and destroying Belgian stations. The Belgian troops are being concentrated near the railway, and it is feared that Leopold's domination in Central Africa will shortly collapse. Belgian commercial houses have already lost millions, and the prestige of the whites in that portion of the Dark Continent is waning rapidly. . . . The Australian colonial premiers, who have been in conference at Melbourne over questions referred to them by the colonies in regard to federation, have reached a unanimous agreement, and the federation of these colonies seems to be assured. The federal capital, like Washington, will be in federal territory. The Parliament is to consist of a Senate and House

of Representatives, and an absolute majority of the members of both houses is to decide all questions.

Domestic.—The Sundry Civil Appropriation Bill has been completed by the House Committee, and carries appropriations amounting to \$62,027,931, \$20,000,000 of which is for the purpose of carrying out the "obligations of the treaty between the United States and Spain." This amount will be payable immediately upon the exchange of ratifications of the treaty by the two governments. . . . The American Board of meat survey at Havana has condemned nearly 11,000 tins of canned meat which have been furnished as food for the soldiers. . . . Bishop Henry C. Potter has secured the necessary funds for starting what he calls a "twentieth-century saloon" in New York City. This is to have all the furnishings of the ordinary first-class saloon, with the exception of liquor. . . . On February 6 the House passed the census bill providing for the taking of a census of the United States in the year 1900; also a bill to extend to the territory of Hawaii the anti-contract labor laws of the United States. . . . The House Committee on Commerce has recommended for favorable action the Hepburn Canal Bill. This is a substitute for the Morgan Bill, which passed the Senate. It is thought that final action upon the Canal Bill during this session of Congress is practically assured. . . . According to records compiled by the *Express Gazette*, the number of train robberies in the United States during the year 1898 was 28. In these hold-ups five trainmen and five of the robbers were killed. . . . On February 6 the Senate ratified the peace treaty between this country and Spain, by a margin of only one vote more than the necessary two-thirds.

The battle-ship Iowa, which made the trip around the Horn in company with the battle-ship Oregon, arrived in San Francisco Bay, February 7. The Oregon is on her way to Manila. . . . Commissary General Charles Patrick Eagan has been found guilty of conduct unbecoming a gentleman and officer in the United States Army, and was sentenced by the court-martial appointed to try his case to dismissal from the army. The sentence was commuted by the President to suspension from the service for the period of six years. . . . The Naval Committee of the House of Representatives has recommended the building of twelve new war vessels, three of which are to be battle-ships of 13,500 tons' displacement, costing \$3,600,000 each; three armored cruisers of 12,000 tons, costing \$4,000,000 each; six cruisers of 2,500 tons, costing \$1,141,800 each. The committee contemplates recommending the building of three cruisers of 6,000 tons' displacement, at a cost of \$2,500,000 each.

Casualties and Calamities.—Five persons were killed and one injured while crossing a railroad track at Riverton Station, Pennsylvania, on February 3. . . . More than a score of persons lost their lives in a terrible fire in the village of Nagyprobroez, Hungary, on February 6. Nearly the entire village was destroyed. . . . The steamer Empress of Japan left Vancouver, B. C., on February 1, with over a million bottles of beer for the Americans in Manila. . . . A fierce conflagration nearly destroyed one of the largest business blocks of Columbus, Ohio, on February 2. The loss is placed at \$750,000. . . . A fire destroying property valued at over \$500,000 occurred at Philadelphia, February 6. . . . Four Indians were killed and a number wounded by U. S. deputy marshals at Juneau recently. The Indians were drunk, and rushed into the town to avenge the killing of one of their number. . . . It is estimated that 30,000 sheep in Southern Colorado are dying of cold and starvation. Many cattle also are dying of starvation both in Colorado and Wyoming. Nearly all railway lines in Colorado are blocked by snow, resulting in much inconvenience and suffering.

The Philippines.—The Filipinos attacked the outposts of the Americans around Manila on the night of February 4, and a general engagement followed immediately between the Filipinos and the American land and naval forces. Fighting continued for forty-eight hours, with the result that the Filipinos were repulsed, losing, it is reported, about 2,000 killed, 3,500 wounded, and between 4,000 and 5,000 prisoners. The Americans lost 49 killed and 148 wounded, according to the report of General Otis. The Americans are advancing, and driving the Filipino forces farther from the city and their original positions. The water works which have been in the hands of the insurgents since the capitulation of Manila by the Spanish, were captured by the Nebraska troops. General Aguinaldo has declared war against the Americans, and urges all his followers to unite for their freedom. His private secretary has been captured within the American lines, and will be held as a spy. The city of Manila is reported to be full of armed desperadoes, and the troops are compelled to keep close watch against incendiarism.

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Articles Desired.—Those which set forth in the Spirit of Christ the great saving truths of God, short and to the point. It is better to treat one important truth clearly, in a short article, than many points vaguely in a long one. We desire no caustic, critical productions, which might minister to personal pride or pleasure, but can not save souls.

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Manuscript Returned.—We will return all unused manuscript desired if stamp and directions are inclosed. We are forced sometimes to return good manuscript mainly for three reasons: (a) Sometimes the articles are too long; (b) sometimes we have a number on the same subject; (c) sometimes our plans are such that an article can not be used till it is out of date. We therefore hope that no offense will be taken by those who have freely contributed their best thought if their productions are returned. When we receive so much matter, we can not use all.

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TO ALL interested in carrying the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the inhabitants of other lands, and who desire to assist in supporting missionaries already there and others who may engage in the work, the opportunity is given to make an offering to the Foreign Mission Board of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. Such donations should be sent to W. H. Edwards, the Treasurer of the Board, 1730 North Fifteenth Street, Philadelphia, Penn.

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Unawares

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By A. O. Calt

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Vick's Garden and Floral Guide is now ready for distribution. Those who are interested in such matters and who are looking for one of the best and most reliable firms with which to deal should write at once to James Vick's Sons, Rochester, N. Y.

"We recognize the blessings of peace, and shall do everything in our power to maintain peace between the nations, but"—and then follows a demand for more battle-ships, more cannon, more regiments. That seems to be the formula the world over just now.—*Minneapolis Times.*

How full and complete are the Lord's promises of pardon and cleansing! "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve." Jer. 50:20.

The article from Doctor Paulson in this week's paper is one from among a number that we have just received from his pen. Following articles will discuss such timely topics as "Divine Healing," "The Need of a Gospel of Health," "God's Willingness to Relieve the Suffering," etc., etc.

CORRECTION: In our issue of January 25 it was stated that every subscriber for the SIGNS for 1899 would receive a copy of the Quarter-Centennial issue. We should have said a copy of this special issue will be sent to every new subscriber requesting us to send it, as long as we have a supply on hand.

The February Good Health is just to hand, and as usual is brimful of the most intensely interesting and helpful matter relating to the subject of health. Good Health is a magazine devoted to the work of teaching people how to return to the simple laws of nature, and if sick give nature a chance to make them well, and if well give nature a chance to keep them so. We heard a man with quite a good-sized family say that his doctor's bills had amounted to just twenty-two dollars, and that was what he had expended for his subscription to Good Health. By reading and practising what the journal taught he had not had any serious illness in his family. And

the rosy cheeks and buoyant spirits of his children showed that he was making no exaggerated statements. Send to the Good Health Publishing Company, Battle Creek, Mich., for sample copies.

The man who honestly desires nothing but truth is ready to promptly part with error, no matter how dearly he may have cherished it. He is also ready to change his mind when truth invites him to do so. It is the bigot or the self-conceited man that wishes to hold opinions simply because it is his adopted creed or perchance, because "he has always believed that way." But he who has tasted the joys of real truth wishes to follow it, wherever it may lead. Truth is always the very best thing, and he who accustoms himself to the best will not be satisfied with an inferior or spurious article.

CHILDREN FOR WAR.

UPON the eve of the czar's congress in the interests of peace a sweeping plan is being inaugurated for making skilful the hands of children in the bloody business of war. The Earl of Meath is originator of the scheme, and its adoption by England will be the signal for similar action by every other military nation on the globe.

The plan is to make military drill compulsory for all lads from thirteen to eighteen years of age. It is estimated that 200,000 will thus be enrolled in England each year, so that in the future the government will have hundreds of thousands of young men qualified to enter the ranks of the regular troops. Aside from the additional burden of increased taxation which this new institution will bring upon the people of England, and upon the people of those nations which follow her example, there is the deplorable effect which it will have upon the children themselves who are thus compelled to be initiated into the horrors of human slaughter.

Think of it, parents! your child of thirteen slipping from your knee to be taught the evolutions of the army, tutored in the parry and thrust of the murderous bayonet, skilled in the sweep of the saber, with bloody intent, trained to sight the rifle at the vital parts of a human target.

How cheap will human life seem to children educated in such a school! How hard for the Spirit of Christ to find a dwelling in the childish breast thus early taught to seek the "glory" of the tented field and revel in the excitement of the deadly onslaught! How different from the instruction which the Word prescribes for the children! Deut. 11:18-20. How different from the instruction which the children themselves in olden times received at the feet of Jesus, and should be receiving now from the lips of godly parents!

This is but another incident to show the trend of events converging toward earth's great finale.

C. M. S.

THE CRAZE OF FORMING TRUSTS.

IN our news notes columns on page 14 we have been making brief mention for a few weeks past of the new trusts that are being formed. By referring to what is presented this week it will be seen that new trusts are in process of formation that may soon combine a capital of over \$750,000,000—more than three-quarters of a billion dollars.

The facts that these immense figures represent are among the most alarming features of this time; for the men who are covetously grasping such immense hoards of wealth are not merely piling money and property in heaps about them, but they have the faithful warning of the Word of God that their unnatural and supremely selfish accumulations will "eat" their flesh "as it were fire." This inhuman seizure of all the treasures and property that men can "corner" seems more like the raving work of maniacs than the deliberate actions of men endowed with power to reason. These men who are so crazed in their wild race to accumulate money are, of all others, the most to be pitied. Can they not be awakened to what they are doing? Can they not be aroused to the calamities that they are bringing upon both themselves and the multitude of others that will be involved in their miseries and ruin?

Exemption of Church Property from Taxation—a Protest.—A noted writer in the San Francisco Sunday Examiner says: "The churches are again clamoring for exemption from taxation." He makes no exception as to "the churches." But there is one denomination in California which does not join in the clamor. The Seventh-day Adventists do not believe in exemption of church property from taxation. They protest against this proposed amendment now before the Legislature. They believe that the church of Jesus Christ is fully able to stand alone without State aid. They do not believe that the church of Christ ought in any way to bind herself to the State machinery. They believe in the apostolic injunction: "Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." They will, therefore, pay willingly the humanly equitable taxation of property imposed by the State; but they do not believe in honoring a State sabbath; for the Sabbath belongs to God, and He alone has the right to command it. Where are the Baptists, and the spirit of Roger Williams?

Robert P. Porter's commission to Cuba has evidently been a successful one. It was for the purpose of facilitating the disbandment of the Cuban army. Commissioner Porter carried with him authority to negotiate, as the government's representative, with General Gomez, the commander of the Cuban army. The latter, on behalf of the Cuban soldiers, has accepted the offer of \$3,000,000 as part pay for their services, and the actual work of mustering out the Cuban troops will soon begin. The \$3,000,000 will be repaid to the United States from the customs receipts of Cuban ports. There is considerable agitation among American statesmen in favor of withdrawing the troops from the island as speedily as the circumstances will permit, in order that there may be as little delay as possible in placing upon the Cubans themselves the responsibilities of their own governing.

The press despatches, giving the account of the recent fighting at Manila, are full of glowing expressions in regard to the American soldier's deeds of slaughter. On one bulletin displayed in letters formed by small electric lights were the words, "The California boys fought like demons." There is a strange inconsistency between the trumpeted profession that this is a Christian nation and these descriptions of the fighting done at Manila. And if any one will lay aside his prejudices and fancies and look at the actual facts he will readily see that the people, not of this country alone but of the whole world, are in an excitable frame of mind that tends more to the strife of warfare than the quiet pursuits of peace.

On February 6 the United States Senate, with a margin of one vote, ratified the treaty of peace signed at Paris between the representatives of this government and Spain; and the United States comes into possession of whatever sovereignty Spain possessed in the Philippine Islands, as well as the islands of Porto Rico and Guam. Provision for the payment of the \$20,000,000 to Spain has already been made, and it is safe to say that Spain knows of many ways in which she can use the money.

The Midwinter Number of the Los Angeles (California) Times comes to our table with its sixty-four pages filled with the story of California and her industries. County by county are taken up the resources and productions of the southern part of the great Golden State. Those who desire to know anything about that part of the country will find their wants supplied in its illustrated and well-written pages. The price of this special number is ten cents per copy.

"The Western Workman," published at East St. Louis, Ill., in its issue of the 23d ultimo has the following item: "We had a spell of London weather Wednesday, and it grew dark at noon. Dark night dropped down upon us. It was day by our Waterbury, but night by the skies. Pigeons sought their perches. Chickens went to roost, and all bird life was preparing for a nap, when the clocks sounded the hour of noon."