

# 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 2.

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For further information see page 2.

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## EARTHQUAKE AFTERMATH.

THOSE who passed through the fearful shaking of April 18 admit having experienced the same feeling that comes to one during a stormy trip at sea. Many were made seasick, and very many indeed have been unable to throw off the swaying, unsteady feeling that follows the completion of an ocean voyage. The floor on which they stand seems to be tilting; the walls seem to sway, and they instinctively reach out to grasp something.

In very many cases persons have been driven insane, either from the rapid, vibratory and gyratory movements to which they were subjected, or to the fear and anxiety caused by the destruction of property and the loss of relatives, and separation from those they loved. In some cases the insane have been brought to their right mind again. Among the latter class is a physician who had been committed to the Agnew Insane Asylum. The fearful work of the earthquake there restored his reason, and he did valiant service in the relief of the hundreds who were injured in that place.

Thousands of persons have been separated from their relatives, and the newspapers have given pages to free advertisements to bring these together again. Wagons drive through the streets carrying signs reading "I am looking for so and so." Men wear similar signs on their hats as they hunt for relatives. Many children have been lost. There are many instances where mothers, in the hurry of escaping from burning buildings, have entrusted their little ones to some servant, and have not since heard of them.

Of the refugees that came pouring into Oakland, one writer says: "Every few minutes there float through the suburbs into the town these processions of miserable, smoked-blackened, haggard, weeping people which made yesterday the beginning of this hell. Now and then you recognize some man, dressed like a tramp, dirty, dragging a miserable woman, as a prosperous business clerk whom you have known in San Francisco. They come to us hungry, mainly penniless, fairly begging something to eat from the public kitchens which the soldiers have set up in the streets."

Of the mental condition into which the people have been brought by the catastrophe, a survivor says: "We are so drunken and dulled by horror that we take such stories [of heroism and fatalities] calmly now. We are saturated." An Oakland observer says:

"People are crying, praying, muttering to themselves on the streets, and no one pays any attention. We have become a city of the mad."

A sporting man says this of liquor's part in the aftermath: "In the section of the city where the distilleries were located most every one was drunk, and even in the face of life and death were quarreling and fighting with one another. Never was the curse of intoxicating liquors so much in evidence. Babies and small children were left by drunken parents to shift for themselves, and most of them made their way to Telegraph Hill, which seemed to be the only place of safety left for them." Some of these abandoned children became food for the flames when the fire veered and swept the hill, and the huddled refugees made their mad rush before the sweep of the hungry blaze.

s.

## WORLD CALAMITIES ARE GOSPEL OPPORTUNITIES.

THE effectiveness of any army depends largely upon thorough training; hence a prominent feature of military life is the drill. First, the recruit is drilled in individual movements and the handling of arms. Then there is "squad" drill—a few recruits drilled together, in which uniformity of action is inculcated. Then comes company drill, regimental drill, and brigade maneuvers. All this is essential in order to be ready for action at any time. There is a certain amount of ammunition always on hand, and arms and accouterments are kept in order and readiness. All this is because the secular government, in its final resort for support, is dependent upon force—physical force.

The church of Christ is also an army, and to be effective must needs have drill. Every one is exhorted to be a "soldier" of the cross, and this implies exercise in the work of the Gospel. Emergencies arise in the onward march of the Lord's host, and often much ground is lost because His professed soldiers are not prepared for them. They have not been drilled in the use of the armor peculiar to the service. The emergency finds them all absorbed in the world's pursuits, and many of them better prepared, and even more willing to continue such enterprises. For this reason, the emergencies that arise, the crises that spring up suddenly, are regarded as *calamities* rather than as opportunities.

In every great disaster it is always the temporal things that are shaken, always the transient, destructible wealth that is damaged or destroyed. It is always the world that receives the blow. And the world's disasters are always the opportunities for God's army to win

victories. But just so far as they are following in the wake of the world's interests, so far as they are involved in the doings of the world, just so far the world's disasters will be their disasters. But in proportion as they are really *enlisted* in God's army, and are trained for His service in the use of His weapons, to that extent the world's discomfiture is the signal for a forced march to victory. Judah's captivity even was a grand opportunity for missionary work among the heathen, and it was possible for her to return a grander, stronger, and more glorious people than ever before. What was lacking?—Only a thorough training in the use of the armor of God.

Too often those who profess to be soldiers of Christ have thought to fight His battles with the world's weapons, using the world's armor and adopting the world's policies. Thus they are led by the world instead of the world's being led or influenced by the true ways pointed out in God's infallible Word. While we may learn a lesson from the world's policy of drilling its armies and being ready for whatever may arise, we must remember that our soldiers should be prepared for a different kind of warfare, must be drilled to the use of different weapons, and trained for a far different service. When Peter essayed to defend the cause of Christ with a sword, the Master said, "Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The apostle Paul also gives us the true principle of Christian warfare: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty *through God* to the pulling down of strongholds."

Again Paul tells us very distinctly what is the only and sure defense to which the Christian may resort: "Take unto you the *whole armor* of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and *watching* thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

All this implies the need of earnest training in the use of the impenetrable armor prepared for us by our all-wise Commander. And not only are we to be trained to the use of the weapons that are not carnal, but we are to be ever on the alert for opportunity, and quick to discern what God would have us do when the world is discomfited by any of the vicissitudes



to which it is liable at any moment. No event is possible to mankind, while probation lasts, that may not be turned to the advantage of the Gospel of Christ, if His professed people be awake to the opportunity and ready to step into it.

G.

### A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD.

"Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Heb. 6:20.

WE are informed in the same connection that this Melchizedek was at the same time both king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. Heb. 7:1. Hence he was a kingly or royal priest, and our Forerunner, the Lord Jesus, is like Melchizedek in that He is a royal high priest. Seated upon His Father's throne, the throne of the King of the universe, possessing all power in heaven and earth, He is also the one and only Mediator between God and man.

It will now be shown that the sons of God, even in this world, are a subordinate *royal priesthood*. "But ye are a chosen generation, a *royal priesthood*, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter 2:9. A priest must have somewhat to offer. First of all, he must offer himself as a living sacrifice unto God. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1. The son of God, one who realizes that he belongs to God both by creation and redemption, can see and sense the reasonableness of offering himself unto God as a living sacrifice.

In the second place, the Christian priest is to offer unto God the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." Heb. 13:15. So we see that the earthly son of God need never be at a loss for something to offer unto God. If only animals, money, or labor were required, there might be times when he would have nothing to offer. But no Christian can ever get into any possible condition when he will not have reasons for praise and thanksgiving unto God. His blessings are absolutely without number, and they are fresh every hour, hence we may offer the sacrifice of praise to God *continually*.

In the third place, the Christian priest may please God well by the offering of *well-doing*. "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb. 13:16. The opportunities for this kind of priestly work in this world of sin and suffering are absolutely without limit. We can hardly conceive of a situation where such opportunities would be entirely lacking. So we can see how the sons of God are priests even in this world; and as they are the children of the King of the universe, they are appropriately denominated a *royal priesthood*. And even in the world to come the sons of God may be priests in the sense of ministering in holy things; for there will be only holy things there, and they will have the opportunity of doing good altho it will not be to the sinful and suffering, and they will certainly offer unto God continually the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving with perfect heart and holy lips. Thus we see how the likeness between that Son of God and His beloved sons

in this world holds good; and it will never be less, but will grow more and more unto and into the perfect day. H. A. ST. JOHN.

### REFUGE.

WHEN fiercely blow life's tempests,  
When skies seem sodden, gray,  
There is a haven refuge,  
A place to hide away  
From shipwreck and from terror,  
Safe anchored and at rest;  
So roll, ye angry billows,  
We'll seek that haven blest.

The roaring of the thunder,  
The howling of the gale,  
Can not the home-cove enter  
Can not our bark assail,  
If to the Hope of Heaven,  
Our hearts are moored, at rest  
If we will trust no other,  
We've found that haven blest.

So let us steer, rejoicing,  
Tho chill the winds and strong,  
With Courage, Faith, and Jesus,  
The journey is not long.  
Soon, soon we'll see the home-land,  
That place of peace and rest,  
So roll, ye angry billows,  
We'll seek that haven blest.

And when at last we've anchored  
In that grand harbor, Heaven,  
How sweet will be the greeting  
By holy angels given.  
Then we shall see our Saviour,  
And find His blessed rest,  
So roll, ye angry billows,  
We'll seek that haven blest.

MAUDE M. PECK.

### RAILWAY HOUSEKEEPING.

A SINGLE railroad system will have upward of five hundred stations along its different routes, which must be supplied with certain household articles and utensils for good housekeeping. Every modern railroad appreciates the value of clean, sanitary stations, and these temporary stopping places for the traveling public are kept in better condition each succeeding year.

The "general housekeeper" of a great trunk line is most frequently a man, and his business is to manage the stations, supplying them with all needful articles. Under his bureau control there come numerous items of apparently small concern, but which in the aggregate amount to considerable sums. For instance, on one system last year the "general housekeeper" purchased and distributed 26,000 brooms to keep the stations and offices of the company clean. Twenty thousand boxes of soap, 25,000 scrubbing brushes, and a similar number of mops figured in the expenditures.

The employees and officials of a big road must have pens, ink, paper, and even pins. Last year the total weight of pins bought by a single road was 3,000 pounds. Forty thousand pens were also used, and fifty barrels of ink. There were enough lead pencils used to reach from New York to Chicago and halfway back again, if placed end to end.

The tendency of the public to eat and drink while traveling is so steadily on the increase that more conveniences are being made to satisfy it in this direction. The traveling café and dining-car are as common to-day as the smoker or baggage-car. To supply these thousands of cars with all the necessary provisions and articles of diet to suit the most fastidious, the "general housekeeper" in charge of this de-

partment buys in wholesale quantities. A single railroad system will use upward of 50,000 barrels of flour a year for the dining-car service; 40,000 quarters of beef, and innumerable tons of fruit, coffee, and vegetables. One trunk line sells annually over its route a million bottles of soft drinks, half a million pounds of candy, and upward of five hundred tons of fruit.

The care of the linen of a single trunk line is a gigantic task. No hotel or series of hotels offers any comparison. The napkins and table linen for the dining-car service of one road mount up into the tens of thousands, and the towels and bed linen for the sleepers represent nearly as many more separate articles.—*Christian Advocate*.

### EXPEDIENCY AGAINST PRINCIPLE.

In the April number of the *Cynosure*, President Blanchard quotes this remark made by some one at a meeting in Chicago: "If you had spent your lifetime learning a trade, and found yourself forbidden to work at it unless you would join a union, you would probably join a union."

It is just such argument as this that induces three-fourths of the members of labor unions to become thus united. But what a confession! Who are they, and by what spirit are they actuated, who assume to *forbid* men to work at any trade unless they join a union? By what right does any man or combination of men assume such a prerogative? When a man confesses that he joins a union because he has been forbidden to work at a trade unless he joins a union, he confesses that he is governed by expediency rather than by principle.

And right here hangs a predominant weakness of mankind,—the masses are led by momentary expediency, that which appears to be present gain. When they do look forward, it is to see what is likely to become the dominant power, according to representations of designing men, and then ally themselves to that power. They do not reflect that it is the yielding of this large class of dependent individual minds to manifest tyranny that makes possible the success of those who would control them. This weakness of mankind in general is the stronghold of those who are shrewd enough to take advantage of it. It is the stronghold of the politician, the corporation promoter, the labor "leader," the secret society organizer, the church-and-state religion advocate, and a host of kindred tyrannies. When the masses of mankind become strong enough to stand for principle as individuals, instead of depending upon human leaders, the "bosses" of men will have to engage in legitimate business. But such a prospect under sinful conditions is apparently growing more remote. Only the Gospel of Christ can set men really free. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

G.

### ALL ANIMATE NATURE SUFFERED.

In the great earthquake which a large part of California has experienced all animate nature suffered. For hours after the principal shock domestic animals manifested the utmost terror. Cattle lowed continuously; dogs barked long and lustily; cats crawled away and hid, and remained in hiding a large part of the day; and when they finally came forth, would crawl along crouching with bodies nearly touching the ground. Even the following night their fear had not left them. During the first half of the night we listened to a continuous chorus of howls and barkings, in which every dog in the city joined. About midnight the dogs ceased and the roosters took up the fear-inspired chant. It seemed as if every chicken in the city and surrounding country had joined this nocturnal orchestra, whose members scarcely stopped to take breath.

In driving along the road, the writer noticed a large flock of barn-swallows around a small mud-puddle in the middle of the road. As they alighted they kept their wings extended straight up in the



air and fluttering, while they drove their bills almost fiercely into the mud. A bystander explained that all their nests had been shaken down and they were rebuilding. To them calamity had come in the loss of their nests, their eggs, and mayhap their little ones. This little indication of common suffering made the feathered family seem much closer to the human.

**Union Labor Tested.**—"Where is boasting then? It is excluded." These words of the apostle Paul may be applied to the common boasting of labor "leaders" about the superiority of "union labor." All men of experience have known all along that there was no ground for it, but it is a general stock in trade with the agitators. Since the earthquake it has been a mooted question whether, on account of the great emergency, union men should work with independent laborers. With the usual spirit of boasting, a union official said, "We might vote ourselves permission to work with non-union men under conditions that exist were it not for the fact that we (the unions) would be blamed for the poor work that the others perform."

To this the Palo Alto *Citizen* aptly and tersely replies: "It was union labor that constructed the buildings at Stanford that now are ruins; it was non-union labor that built those that stand. Certainly organized labor is a delusion and a snare. Stanford owes its great loss of to-day to the restricted output countenanced by union rule. The evidence stands out bold and reassuring, so that every one may be convinced. Surely the employment of union labor, the graft practised by architects and contractors, and the scheming connivance of these several agencies, constitutes 'The Crime of the Century.'"

The *Citizen* specifies building after building at Stanford in support of its contention.

The earth trembled violently when the Lord came down on Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:18; 20:18, 19); also when Christ gave up His life on the cross (Matt. 27:50-54), and when He rose from the dead (Matt. 28:2). And it will tremble still more violently when He comes in glory to gather His saints. In connection with the last event, the righteous will cry out, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Isa. 25:9. But the unbelieving host will be so disconcerted that they will say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" See Rev. 6:14-17.

**"Have No Use for Us."**—In combatting the idea that the more intelligent Filipinos prefer American rule to independence, Mr. Wm. J. Bryan (in the *Commoner*) gives the testimony of an army officer, a member of General Corbin's staff. This officer, Captain Moss, recently made a trip through several provinces, and published his observations in the Manila papers. Concluding his remarks, he is reported as follows:

The discharged soldiers who are married to native women and who are "growing up with the country" and are, therefore, in a most excellent position to feel the native pulse, all told me the great majority of the natives have no use for us. Ex-interpreters and other Filipinos with whom I was on intimate, cordial relations while serving in the provinces, told me the same thing. I have, therefore, from the foregoing, come to the conclusion that the Filipinos may be divided into three classes: (a) The "precious few," comprising those who are really friendly towards the Americans and think our government beneficial to the islands. (b) Those who are in some way beneficiaries to the government and entertain for us what may be termed "expedient friendship." (c) The great majority, who have absolutely no use for us, and to please whom we can not get out of the islands any too soon.

A common plea in behalf of Sunday legislation is that it is the duty of law-makers to "make it easy for men to do right." It is true that laws should protect all men in their rights. But all men's rights are the same, and are therefore equal; therefore a law that discriminates to any degree between men or classes

of men, in the matter of rights, is unjust, unequal. Sunday laws are discriminating in that they make it easy for a certain class to do what they deem to be right, and hard on others to do what they deem to be right. Those who advocate Sunday laws show that they want their rights specially sustained, altho at the expense of others who are entitled to equal rights. They act on the same principles as those men who seek monopoly franchises in order to gain advantage over their fellow men. The plea for special help to do right, to the detriment of others who have an equal desire to do right, is lacking in charity, and displays a spirit of selfishness hardly in keeping with good judgment as to what is right.

The great devastations of the past, as also those of modern times, are but warnings of the far greater destruction, foretold in God's Word, that is yet to come. If men will heed these, they may be delivered in the day of His wrath against the evil-doings of a disobedient world. The day that is sure to come, because the Lord has said so, will be "a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, . . . a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord. . . . Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath." Read Zeph. 1:14-18.

The International Penitentiary Congress held at Buda Pesth, in February, thoroughly discussed the responsibility of inebriates for the criminal acts committed under the influence of drink. At the conclusion of the discussion, the congress reached the following conclusions: (1) For all alcoholic delinquents, legislation should be modified, that instead of being sent to prison in the ordinary way, they be kept in an asylum for curable drunkards. (2) Dangerous persons, whose responsibility is limited, and incurable alcoholics, whether condemned or not, should be retained in special establishments until they cease to appear dangerous to persons or property.

It is proposed to put up the saloon license in Chicago, and thereby get enough money to increase the police force by 1,200 men. It has not occurred to the municipal mind, seemingly, that if a few thousand saloon licenses were cut out altogether the city could afford to greatly reduce the present number of policemen, and then have better order than at present. But modern politics tends to an increase of feeders at the public crib, and necessitates an increase of public money for their sustenance.

Much maligned and blamed as they are, the railways did noble work during the great fire. The Southern Pacific seems to have met every emergency and need which a railway could meet under the circumstances. It is helping in every way a railway can to clear away the debris and to help build up the city.

#### ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE.

THE ninth annual meeting of the California Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association, for the purpose of electing four or more members of the Board of Directors, and transacting any other business that may properly come before the meeting, will be held at Sanitarium, Napa Co., Cal., on Wednesday, June 20, 1906, at 12 o'clock M.

E. E. Parlin, Secretary,

L. M. Bowen, President.

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MOUNTAIN VIEW, CAL., MAY 30, 1906.

## TO OUR READERS.

THIS issue of our paper is an explanation and an apology.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES is printed on a rotary press, built for the purpose. It prints both sides, folds, pastes, trims, and delivers at the rate of about 5,000 an hour. It has a capacity of 10,000 an hour. The paper comes in great rolls, and feeds into the press continuously, like an endless white ribbon, till the roll is finished.

When the earthquake came we had regular stock enough to last, under ordinary circumstances, about five months. That paper is gone—all used with our first edition of 400,000.

We have other paper ordered,—three carloads on the way from our mills in Wisconsin. When it will reach here we do not know. Freight shipments in the West are badly congested and demoralized on account of supplies sent to San Francisco.

For our Second Edition orders are coming in at the rate of 20,000 a day. We have one flat-bed press which will take both forms of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES at the same time. We found it utterly impossible, therefore, to fill the waiting orders for our Earthquake Special and get the regular out on time. We are lacking in paper of the right kind. Because of this we are also lacking in presses.

Therefore we concluded that we would do the best we could and issue this four-page number as a regular, and apologize to our subscribers for its mean appearance. We can only say we are sorry. We had our type all set for a full paper, when it seemed necessary to issue this. We can only ask pardon of our regular subscribers and promise to make all this up to them in the numbers to come.

Use this number as you will, give it away if so it pleases, or preserve it as one of the after effects of the earthquake. Before our next issue we expect our paper for the rotary press.

**What Does the Earthquake Mean?**—Is it a sign of the end? Many thought the end of the world had come when it came, and prayed for mercy. Jesus said, "There shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places. But all these things are the beginning of travail." These things are signs of the approaching end. They are demonstrations of the Master's word that the earth "shall wax old like a garment." It is becoming worn and broken and weak and crotchety. The growing frequency of storm and tempest, of tornado and cyclone, of famine and fever, of earthquake and volcanic disturbance, show unmistakably that the time is near when God shall change the sin-laden elements "as a vesture," and "they shall be changed." Then will He robe His children with immortality. Do you not wish a part in that renovating process, reader? God would have this world's calamities point us to the sure refuge.

**Earthquake and Fire.**—Some of the papers in San Francisco have persistently endeavored to minimize the effect of the earthquake upon that city and to lay most of the damage to the fire. One statement is that only one per cent. of the damage was by earthquake; ninety-nine per cent. was by fire and dynamite. But many of the buildings and the people tell a different story. If the strong brick walls had been uninjured by the earthquake, they would have stood notwithstanding the fire ate out their linings of wood. But the simple fact is that most of the buildings were greatly damaged by the earthquake. Many of them had walls broken before the fire fiend came to complete the work of destruction. Many of the buildings were left by the earthquake barely holding together by the wood within them. When the hungry flames licked the interiors clean, the walls collapsed. A few skeletons of brick and steel and stone stand intact after the fire. Of course, the earthquake damage would not have been so apparent if no fire had followed. Many of the broken

and cracked structures would have stood, and there were also many wood buildings in the burned district; but all told the earthquake was fearful and it did terrible work. Said one gentleman, in referring to San Francisco's horror: "I was here in San Francisco at the time of the great fire in 1855. I was there in 1868 when the earth shook for six weeks. I was there in 1892 and 1898, and all the troubles she has had; but if all these were multiplied by one hundred they would not compare with this in its awful horror, devastation, and destruction." And so others will say.

**Loss of life,** too, in San Francisco has been greatly minimized by some of the newspapers. We have no desire to magnify it. It probably reached not a unit less than 1,500 in that city. Some have placed it at 1,000; others at 2,000, and still others at still greater figures. God only knows how many went down under crashing walls and tangles of iron, and heaps of brick and mortar. How many burned in the after fires, which raged for three days, we do not know. Only the last days will tell, when the books of God are opened. At last reports Santa Rosa had taken from her ruins 102 dead bodies.

**Martial Law,** with all its foolish, overweening officialism, manifest especially among some of the soldiers, to whom human life was of no worth, was a decided blessing. Humanly speaking, most of those killed deserved to be. They were ghouls, preying on the dead and mutilating corpses in order to get jewelry. But there were other instances when men were shot down in the discharge of their duty, because they did not immediately obey some weak-minded boy in uniform. In many cases that Wednesday of April was a horrible carnival of death. Hundreds flocked to the saloons and drunk themselves mad or foolish or besotted, unable to do many things they might have done in the saving of property and fighting of fire. One gentleman who was through it all, writes me that if it had not been for the open saloons April 18, the fire would have been much sooner checked. When Martial Law asserted itself, the whisky was poured into the gutter, and never was seen such fire-fighting as sober San Francisco did. After this when schools and churches became hospitals and homes for the people, the saloons did nothing. When their hellish work was stayed, their activity ceased. Would God that San Francisco, and every other city, might learn the lesson and blot the foul fiend—the saloon—forever from their borders.

**Souvenir of the Earthquake.**—Before this paper reaches our readers, we expect that thousands of views of earthquake and fire results will have been sent out. In this booklet are over forty fine illustrations, and eight pages of reading matter. We have seen none at greater price that even approaches it for excellence. The price is only 25 cents.

**The sufferers and citizens** are uniformly of good courage. They will build again, more strongly, better buildings of steel and stone, of cement and wood. We admire their bravery, their pluck, their energy. We do not even respect their defiance of what may come. No earthquake-proof building has yet been created. Some have stood, but in the last great day, when God riseth to shake terribly the earth, no building save that of righteous character will stand, and steel and stone will disintegrate like sand.

**Alarmists.**—A few, and but a few, have characterized this paper as sensational and tending to stir up alarm unnecessarily, simply because it tells Bible truth concerning this old earth. But while it sets before its readers the "sure word of prophecy," it also points to the sure refuge. He who believes and lives the SIGNS theology is not alarmed over these tremblings of earth. He knows that God rules as king; that He who can, by the shifting sand, say to the proud sea, "Thus far, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," can thus speak to the old earth in all her perturbations and agonies, general or local. Jehovah rules as King above the flood and the earthquake.

**Cities and towns** usually show the most conspicuous evidences of earthquake severity; but not always are they the sites of the most powerful manifestations. Some parties that drove from Salinas to Gilroy by team report great cracks in the ground in the San Juan Mountains.

**San Francisco** is not alone in her suffering. From San Luis Obispo to Ukiah great damage was done. Profits of years were wiped out in one-half minute.

## Question Corner

1821.—Cain's Wife.

Where did Cain get his wife? I am not asking out of curiosity. K. W.

Cain evidently married his sister. It may have been his niece, for many years may have passed away before he married. It has been estimated that there were 100,000 people in the earth when Cain married. One of the great objections now made to marriage with those of close kin is that such union in the children is more likely to develop and intensify the disagreeable traits of character and the physical weaknesses in both parents. Of course this could not be so in the beginning to any such extent as now; and if man had never sinned, all would have been related in much closer union than now. Why these closer relations were forbidden later was because of man's increasing weaknesses and sins.

1822.—Can a Minister Forgive Sins.

Will you give me a direct Bible proof that a minister has not the right or the power to forgive sin? K. W.

The very nature of the case shows that no man can forgive sin; for sin is against God. "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. "Nay, I had not known sin but by the law." Rom. 7:7. The law here referred to is God's law. Therefore the sin is against God (James 2:8-12); and therefore only God can forgive the sin. The Jews had the right of it that only God could forgive sins (Mark 2:7), and the fact that Jesus forgave sins was proof of His divinity (Matt. 9:6). All that God's ambassadors have ever done, or ever had the power to do, is to declare God's word on complying with the conditions of which man is forgiven. If men receive that word, they are forgiven. If they reject that word, they are lost. So Jeremiah built up and destroyed kingdoms by proclaiming God's word. Compare Jer. 1:10; 18:7-10; John 20:22, 23; Mark 16:15, 16. If the sinner believes, he is forgiven. If he believes not, he is condemned. And to proclaim this is the duty of every ambassador of God.

1823.—The Sea and No Sea.

Please compare Rev. 5:13 and Rev. 21:1. How is it that John heard creatures offering praise in the sea when there was no sea? M. C. S.

All that is implied in Rev. 21:1 is that the great sea of this sinful earth is passed away. "For the first heaven and the first earth is passed away; and the sea is no more," that is, the first sea. We may well believe that in that new earth we will not find it three-fourths water, but there will be the new earth with its new sea.

1824.—Am I a Christian?

When "sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:20) causes me to do things of which I do not approve (verse 15) am I then a Christian? G. T.

Perhaps so; perhaps not. The young and weak Christian may fail through ignorance, through weakness, through carelessness and prayerlessness. He may feel himself so strong that he will not seek God as he should; and so God lets him fall that he may learn his own weakness and God's love, mercy, and power. The experience set forth in Romans 7 is that of a man upon whom the Spirit of God is working, who is under deep conviction. What he needs to do is to let Christ take possession, to cast his helpless soul on the Saviour. Rom. 7:25; 8:4. Thank God that you are in Romans 7 rather than Romans 1 and 2. He convicts and condemns, that He may convert and comfort. Seek God; give to Him all of self.