

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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Our Letter from Athens

By Prof. Warren E. Howell

II.—The Reform Movement in Turkey.

THE Greek press and administration are watching with keen interest the rapid developments in the new experience of their near-est neighbor and former master—Turkey.

It has been only one generation since Greece herself passed through the throes of a revolution that set her free from the domination of the Turk. While a spectator to the struggles and triumphs of her sister state, her appetite is whetted anew for the sweet morsel of genuine liberty and justice. One of the Athenian weeklies, *The Truth*, says:

"We Greeks hail with sincere joy and unsuppressed enthusiasm the regeneration of Turkey. And we pray from the heart a double prayer; first, that the new constitutional government may be firmly established by its sincere and faithful application to the nation's needs—more sincerely and faithfully than we are applying it here in Greece. And secondly, we pray that, as there have arisen for Turkey the New Turks, so for Greece there may arise New Greeks, who will give new life to free Greece, withered as it is by shameless bartering and base administration before it blossomed and sent forth its fragrance. For here we do not have the constitutional blessings of equality and liberty and justice. We have a shameful unconstitutional traffic in lawlessness, inequality, tyranny, and corruption. That our administrative body may be cleansed and may cease contaminating the soul of the people and the nation, it must be subjected to cauterization, to critical surgery. Where are the new Greeks who will undertake this major operation?"

This is not a very pleasing picture that Greece draws of herself. But while she is felicitating her neighbor on her brighter prospects, and turning the searchlight upon her own failings, would that she might discover the real cause of her shortcomings. While she is eulogizing the freedom of the press enjoyed for the first time in Turkey, would that she might discern that the very stricture she has imposed and maintains upon her own press is strangling the very life out of her own moral being; namely, the prohibition of the printing and circu-

lation of the Bible in a language that the masses can read—the modern Greek.

Righteousness alone exalteth the individual and the nation. When the great teacher and standard of righteousness, the word of God, is concealed in a language unintelligible to the majority of the people, when the



Representative leaders in the movement for a New Turkey.

saving truth of that word is covered up with the traditions and ceremonies of the established church, and when no one is allowed to work openly for the liberation of the sincere from this spiritual thralldom by teaching the simplicity of the Gospel as it came fresh from its Author, how long shall a people, a nation, remain bound by injustice, unrighteousness, and the tyranny of sin? When will deliverance come from a bondage to a greater enemy than the Turk? Shall we not hope that as Turkey removes the censorship of the press, she may not make the fatal mistake of Greece in retaining it upon the Book of books, and of confining religious freedom



A street scene in Monastir, Turkey, where the reform movement broke out.

to the established church, if such indeed can be called freedom? May we not hope also that if the full liberty implied in a constitution is actually granted in Turkey, Greece will catch the inspiration, and open wide her doors to the free and full entrance of the word that giveth light? "For if Christ shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

The New-Turkey Movement.

It will aid in understanding the meaning of this reform movement to the subjects of the Ottoman Empire and to the world, if we summarize briefly the leading features of the general status of affairs prior to the granting of the constitution.

1. The sultan an absolute despot.

2. The maintenance of a vast secret police service for political purposes, at a cost of two million pounds per year.

3. Every citizen of education, wealth, or influence, subject to a harrowing espionage. One illustration cited by a Greek correspondent in Constantinople will suffice:

"Constantinople was witness last Friday to the following unexpected sight: Two members of the Cabinet returning home from their offices in the same carriage! When would Cabinet members formerly have dared to meet and converse in private? They would immediately excite the suspicions of the clique at the Yildiz. They would be denounced to the sultan as forming a collusion against the government. Spies would be put upon their track. On coming out of their offices, they would be obliged to return directly to their homes. A spy near the door would note the hour and minute of their exit. As they passed along a fixed route home, a second spy a little farther on would note the exact time of their passing his station. Then a third, a fourth, a fifth, all along the way would do likewise until the last one would note the time the carriage arrived at the house. In the evening these notes would be sent up to the Yildiz, where the exact time required for a carriage to pass from the member's office to his house is known. The notes would be carefully examined and compared. If there were a few minutes' discrepancy in time, the member is set down as a suspect. He saw somebody along the way, he talked with some one, he visited somebody, and the fate of the unfortunate one would be fixed."

4. A strict censorship on speech and the press. Up to a month ago no one dared even to utter the words "freedom," "fatherland," "nation," without fear of arrest and exile or death. Not a Turkish dictionary has contained the words "liberty" or "equal-



Bronze statue of Gen. Kolokotronis, commander of the Greek army in the War of Independence (1821-1829.) The right hand is pointing toward Macedonia as rightfully belonging to Greece, but yet to be acquired.

ity." Only the other day a publisher announced a new edition of his dictionary to contain for the first time in thirty-two years these two and many other words forbidden by the censors.

5. The condemnation and banishment or execution of political suspects without process of law. The number of political exiles in Europe and Egypt is said to be 5,000; in the United States 200,000.

6. The farming out of taxes, thus making the practical rate of taxation for the taxpayer subject to the greed and ingenuity of the collector.

7. The harpies of the court and the vultures of the provinces preying upon public funds and private fortunes, the latter by intimidation.

8. The harems of the sultan and the rich, filled with women kept in close retirement,



A method of warfare in Macedonia.

with women in general under great restraint.

9. Irreconcilable racial and religious prejudices, generating dissensions, bloodshed, and anarchy.

10. Lack of strong central government, the ineffective administration and resulting weakness of which constitute a standing temptation to the powers to interfere in Turkish affairs to their own aggrandizement.

In the face of these conditions, there has been for years a partly suppressed but growing longing for freedom from this terrible oppression. New-Turkism, as the Greek press styles this reform movement, is not altogether of recent origin. More than forty years ago it asserted itself, and all but succeeded in making radical changes in the corrupt administration.

Abdul Aziz, second predecessor to the present sultan, himself a weak character, was persuaded by his prime minister and others of the necessity of seeking to better the desperate situation into which his misrule had brought the empire, by means of constitutional reforms, and was induced to visit the courts of Europe in 1867 to acquaint himself with better methods of administration. But his return was hastened by the



Constantinople post-card representing a medal suggested by the sultan to commemorate the proclaiming of the constitution. In the center is the sultan, on the right the green flag of Mohammed, on the left the red flag of the Empire. Does the sultan feel at home amid Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity?

death of his prime minister, and Abdul Aziz, instead of profiting by his journey, sank back, under the influence of his harem and a former unprincipled prime minister, into greater extravagance and more arbitrary rule than before. His excesses led his ministry finally to determine upon and execute the drastic measure of deposing the sultan to save the empire from disintegration.

His successor, Mourat V, committed himself to the constitutional movement, but by intrigues of the deepest dye, on the part of the opposition, he was, after only a few months, declared mentally incompetent to rule, and the present sultan, Abdul Hamid Han, was placed on the throne, Aug. 31, 1876.

Shortly after his accession, he chose as grand vizier, Medat Pasha, the author of the constitution that has just been proclaimed for the second time. In his first address to his cabinet, the sultan attributed the deplorable state of governmental affairs, first,



Present Grand Vizier, Kiamel Pasha.

to a disregard of the laws of the Koran; and second, to officials' following their own inclinations and wills instead of fixed principles. To aid in recovering the state from bankruptcy, he lowered the annual allowance for the princes and for the expenses of the court, and reduced his own salary \$150,000. He abolished slave-holding, and urged vigorous action in putting down insurrection in the provinces.

He next ordered his ministry to set things in order for the adoption of Medat's constitution for the empire. It was proclaimed Dec. 23, 1876. In his address on that occasion, the sultan said:

"Divine Providence has reserved for my rule the responsibility of carrying out this happy transformation [in form of government], which gives the highest assurance of the happiness of my people. I thank God that I have been made His instrument to this end."

Concerning the fate of the constitution at that time, the sultan said recently, on the occasion of his taking oath to maintain the renewed constitution,

"I granted a constitution in the beginning of my reign, and withdrew it later because the country was not prepared for it. I now proclaim it in good faith and desire it applied at all odds. I am now in the presence of the Sheik-ul-Islam [the highest Mohammedan ecclesiastic next the sultan] and take oath that the preservation of the constitution will be my sole care."

He then took oath twice, and directed the



The Powers that Were. Among the first-fruits of the free press in Constantinople. (1) Chief of Police. (2) The Court "Crab." (3) Member of the Imperial Council. (4) The notorious Izzet Pasha who escaped so narrowly on an English boat. (5) Chief of Detective service, cut to pieces by a mob. (6) Aid-de-Camp and Private Detective of the sultan.

Sheik-ul-Islam also to take oath in the presence of the people.

Thus local and international politics in the apparently insoluble Eastern Question take on a new phase. Its outcome will be watched with the keenest interest, especially by the student of prophecy, who, knowing the ultimate solution, has only to watch the unfolding of events to that end, and mark the ways of God in the kingdoms of men. It is a bold move from an unlimited monarchy to representative rule; for an autocrat who has done according to his will for thirty-two years, to submit to the limitation of his power by the will of the people. But the progress of the Gospel among the benighted people of that vast empire has been slow and difficult, impeded and hedged about as it is by every sort of arbitrary and absurd restriction. Have we not a right to expect that before the final crisis is precipitated, involving as it will the peace of the entire world, a respite from the oppressions of men may be granted for the teaching of the Gospel to every creature in that great domain?

That the respite will be a brief one, there is little doubt. But that the constitution has been introduced under more favorable conditions than before, is evident from the considerations —

1. That the impetus of the movement proceeded from the people.
2. That it is strongly supported by the army.
3. That its leaders have been largely educated abroad.
4. That it has been received with unbounded enthusiasm by the prevailing racial elements, the Turks, the Greeks, and the Armenians.
5. That the changes are being effected with so much speed and vigor that the opposition can scarcely make a stand.

As for the last fifty years, the attitude of the great powers will have much to do with the success of the movement. Yet there is no power but of God, and we may confidently expect the outcome to be in accord with the divine purpose for these momentous times.



The Peace of the Commandment-Keeper

"O that thou hadst harkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isa. 48:18.

Look at the river, arising as a little brook among the mosses of the green hills, leaping the cataracts, flowing along the fair valley by the home of man, through the forests where only the wild things dwell. With hum of pleasant music, it turns the village mill, dropping over the old wheel, sporting in the eddies, bending low the supple willows. Anon the streamlet becomes a river and bears upon its flood full many a craft. And as a mighty stream it flows on to the broad ocean. Ages roll on, and the river abides; not as an evanescent morning cloud or a transient rain flood, but throughout time a permanent, lasting current, ever speeding on to its destined place.

Such is the peace of those who harken to the commandments of our God. They have always reason for comfort. Their consolation is not like a swollen torrent which is dried up under the burning sun of adversity, but peace is their rightful possession at all times. Do you inquire for the Thames?—You will find it in its own bed, in the thick,

black night as well as in the clear, sunny day. So is the commandment-keeper, ever in his place, and at peace.

"When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll,
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well, with my soul."

H. F. GRAF.

The Sixth Commandment

By J. O. Corliss

AS in everything else of God's disposition, His rule for regulating the conduct of His subjects is perfect in form. This is clearly seen in the grouping of the commandments. First, they point out the duty of all toward the infinite Ruler, and at the same time reveal Him as the creator of the universe, thus giving the reason why men and angels should honor Him. Having fully made known Himself, and so laid the foundation for claiming absolute sovereignty over all, Jehovah next proceeds to show how each subject should regard his fellow subjects, giving directions in the order in which these dependents are related to each other.

In this division of moral regulations, parents have the first mention. They are the medium through whom life is distributed to men, and so are entitled to primary honor. The budding thoughts of every human being should be expended in paying deference to those of whose very substance he is a part. Having thus started in life, the same course should be maintained to the end, not only to bestow dignity upon, and bring joy to, one's own parents, but to establish an example by which one's children may profit in turn, in rendering homage to their parents.

Next in order is the duty one owes to his fellow men, whoever and wherever they may be, and under whatever circumstances they may be encountered. "Thou shalt not kill," is the command to every human being. It is highly fitting that such a command should issue immediately following the one requiring all to honor the life of their parents. The life of a fellow man is sacred as the gift of God, and should be so regarded by every one. It matters not how strong a provocation may come to one, nor how great a temptation may beset him, this injunction should regulate his conduct in any and every extreme case.

The reason for this is easy to find. To take from another that which no power but a heavenly one can restore, is to commit the gravest crime possible against a fellow man. Life is valued more than earthly treasure because it can not be gotten by human exertion. A single rash human act may deprive one of life, but all the good deeds of a lifetime can not return it to the loser. With how much care, then, should this precept be studied, lest through some provocation one should step beyond the

bounds of due regard for the sacred rights of his neighbor's possession of life.

It is not enough, however, to refrain from the overt act of raising the hand to strike one down with the assassin's weapon. This precept is a part of that "great" commandment which requires one to love his neighbor as himself. One's love for himself invariably leads him to employ every available safeguard for self-protection. In order, then, to do the same for others, he must not only refrain from doing him direct personal violence, but also to throw about him the same means for protection that he would use for himself.

Love is far more than mere expression of sentiment. Love ever displays itself in its effort to uplift the fallen. "In this was manifest the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8. Love is of that nature that it ever seeks, not only to help those who are degraded and dead in sin, but to elevate them to an equality with the highest, even the angels of heaven. Heb. 2:6-9.

"If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John 4:11. But how much should we love others? There are no known degrees in love. "Love is of God." Whosoever, therefore, possesses love and dwells in it, lives in God, and God lives in him. Verse 16. God Himself being love,—that being the essence of His character,—the indwelling of God with a human being is the ingrafting of love into his soul, so that his nature becomes the reproduction of God's nature. And this change is not a fugitive, evanescent incident, as the Lord loves with an "everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3), even to dying upon the cross of shame for His enemies; so when that love makes its abode in any human form, that person must become steadfast in his love toward even his most bitter enemy. This is in harmony with our common Master who said, "This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." John 15:12. This is true love, "indeed and in truth."

To love others less than this, is to violate the great principle upon which the Ten Commandments are founded, because love,—the only really genuine love,—which is the foundation of God's character, is the "fulfilment of the law." Rom. 13:8. The reason for this conclusion is obvious, as ex-

pressed in another text by the same apostle thus: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore [for this reason] love is the fulfilling of the law." Verse 10.

It is impossible for one who possesses love to work a wrong to another, because love is God's impulse in man to lead him in the way of righteousness. Without this heavenly stimulus, one is left to be controlled by a power from beneath, in opposition to God's will and work. Hatred, the very opposite of love, is Satan's ruling power with men, as it is with himself. Hatred harbored in the heart gives one the worst possible view of others, and causes him to rejoice in the downfall of all not in accord with himself. Nay more, it will lead him to contribute toward that wished-for end, even tho it should be the eternal undoing of one whom he ought to aim to uplift.

One may affirm that he loves God, but even tho he does so with all possible vehemence, yet if he shows hatred for another, he proclaims himself a companion of Satan, of whom the Saviour said: "He is a liar." John 8:44; 1 John 4:20. The apostle has truly said that no one can really love God whom he has never seen, and yet hate a visible fellow man toward whom the love of God is being manifested in His continuous effort to save him.

More than this, he who muses hatred in his heart toward another is a murderer. 1 John 3:15. Not that he has in very deed raised his hand to strike down the hated one, but he holds in his heart that terrible seed from which, under provocation, may quickly develop overt action. It is a sad misconception of spiritual relations when one can profess to love the Lord and yet have only bitter words of hatred to bestow on another whom he supposes has not treated him with due deference. Like the arch-conspirator against heaven's peace, such persons conceive an enmity against another, and then talk about it to others until, through the abundance of his merchandise, he becomes filled with violence, even to desiring the destruction of another, or at least of his influence for good. It will be a terrible realization for such when, in the great day of final accounts, they find themselves forever condemned by that section of God's commandments which says: "Thou shalt not kill." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."



The Love That Seeks to Learn.

UNTRAINED love can make disastrous mistakes, as can ignorance in any other sphere. Yet we are prone to believe that true love is a sort of guarantee against error; that whatever we do in love for others is sure to work out for their good. It is a dangerous notion, from which some have had rude or tragic awakening. Many a mother who has been lovingly indulgent to her boy has lived to realize that those indulgences, born of her devoted and unselfish love, have helped to pave his way to ruin. Love must know, as well as feel. If we really love, we should be willing to study how to direct that love helpfully, instead of letting it take its own

way harmfully. What is best for those whom we love, rather than what we would like to do for them, is the question that trained love asks, as over against thoughtless, ignorant love. "And this I pray," wrote Paul to those whom he loved, "that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment."—*S. S. Times*.



Tobacco Makes Men Selfish.

TALKING about the average man's selfishness, a Washington Street gentleman's furnisher is of the opinion that "there's nothing in the world that makes a man so selfish as smoking. I smoked from the time I was fourteen till six years ago, thirty years all told. I thought about nothing but my pleasure in smoking. When once my day's business was off my hands, when I went anywhere, socially, my chief aim was to get hold of a cigar and be off in a corner by myself. In traveling and on street-cars I know from experience that the average smoker thinks of nothing more than his own comfort."—*Indianapolis News*.

Two Ways of Giving.
 I GAVE a beggar from my little store
 Of well-earned gold. He spent the shining ore
 And came back again, and yet again, still cold
 And hungry as before.
 I gave a thought, and through that thought of
 mine,
 He found himself a man, supreme, divine,
 Bold, clothed, and crowned with blessings manifold,
 And now he begs no more.
 — Anon.

A Good Report.

STUDENTS attending school are always pleased to obtain good reports. Good reports point to promotion sooner or later. Every Christian is in the school of Christ. Jesus has made it possible for every student to obtain good reports from time to time; and if his school-days here end with a good report, a student is sure of promotion to the glorious school of Christ in the paradise of God for one thousand years. And then will come another promotion, when the school-grounds are enlarged to embrace the beautiful earth made new. That will be God's greatest university, the highest school in the universe.

From that university the inhabitants of un-fallen worlds, and even the holy angels, will be eternally learning lessons in the greatest of all sciences, the science of salvation. No other school will be, or can be, so well equipped to teach that most glorious science of sciences. And the New Earth university will itself be a lesson book, and indeed the only text-book on that important and sublime subject. Surely we must be there.

But let us return to the present world and learn how we may obtain good reports here, and then see to it that we give all diligence to the all-important matter. This alone will be our truest and highest wisdom. The inspired letter to the Hebrews says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report."

Heb. 11:1, 2. Then in the same chapter special mention is made of a long list of ancient worthies who obtained a good report in the school of Christ through faith. Christ was the Author and Finisher of their faith. It was faith to begin with, faith to continue with, and faith to end with. The anchor faith, which includes hope, never lets go. As no one can please God without faith, it is obvious that no one can live a life that will please God, and thus obtain a good report, without constant, abiding faith. Unswerving faith in God, in His word, revealed in loving obedience, will insure a good report.

We must fight the good fight of faith to the finish. Paul says when he finished his course, that he had "kept the faith." And he was sure of promotion when the Lord comes. And the day of the Lord's appearing is the appointed time for the promotion of all who have obtained and retained the faith of Jesus till the end, and thus obtained a good report. Glorious day ere long to come, when all the faithful will hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." To be faithful is to be full of faith.

In fighting the good fight of faith, there are many diligent and dangerous foes to meet, so we will need to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. The same faith is delivered to us. In this conflict, the great Captain of our faith provides us with an invincible armor. In its make-up, there is the breastplate of faith and love, and over all the shield of faith, which, if rightly adjusted and used, will quench all the fiery darts of the enemy.

Are you in the school of Christ? If so, are you obtaining good reports daily by faith? If you have not yet entered the school, be entreated to apply at once for admission. Jesus will turn none away if they will come in the way He has appointed. Repent, and be converted, and thus be born again, and then, as a little child, you will be received, and at once enter upon the only course that leads to true and eternal exaltation. Whatever may be your achievements or success in this world, your life will be a most wretched and miserable failure if you do not secure a final good report by faith in the school of Christ. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

O, the faith of the just will very soon end in the perfect day. Then all the over-comers will be made perfect at once. They will be saved to the uttermost. Their personal and eternal salvation being then secured, they will go on in the study of the attributes of the divine Being, ever learning more of His justice, mercy, truth, and love. In like manner His wisdom and power and wonderful works, will ever be unfolding to their enraptured view.

Students in the school of Christ, with gratitude and praise, let us ever remember that our adorable Teacher has made every provision necessary for our constant triumph here and our eternal triumph hereafter.

H. A. ST. JOHN



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"A New Religious Era."

DECEMBER 2 the Inter-church Conference of America meets in Philadelphia. Three years ago representatives of these churches met in New York, and there outlined a program of church federation. That program was to be submitted to the respective churches from which these delegates came. Since that time these churches have held their great conferences, synods, councils, and large representative meetings. Nearly all of these denominations have approved of the plan of federation; and on December 2 they will meet in Philadelphia, not as they met in New York to endeavor to come to an agreement, but agreed as regards the plan of federation.

The Independent calls it "A New Religious Era," and declares that from that day of meeting there will be "one Protestant church of Christ in the United States; separated into denominations it is true, but vitally one, meeting in a Council without legislative or judicial authority, but carrying a tremendous weight of influence and power. Thus united, these churches can and should control the sentiment of the country, for they represent the bulk of its population."

The Independent further states that the Council "ought to guide and lead the activities of the churches." But it looks beyond even church work. It tells us further that "the purpose is to line the churches up for a united advance in the interest of earnest evangelism and civic righteousness." But *The Independent* looks beyond this; it tells us that there are now "two great religious forces in this country; the one the Protestant churches, and the other the Catholic Church." "The former is the larger and more aggressive," but "the two are less mutually hostile than they were. Protestants forget to protest." "The two agree more than they differ." "They will come closer together;" and *The Independent* looks for the time when "they will recognize and affiliate in good work, as now Presbyterians and Methodists do." "Even federation may yet come, for we are all Christians." And when that time takes place, the federation will be made over those human traditions which make void the word of God, and the great essentials of the Christian faith will be suppressed. Then will be fulfilled the prophecies of the word of God which speak of the elevation of great Babylon by the kings of the earth, and the persecution of those who are unconventional and old-fashioned enough to still believe in the simple truths of God's word. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will have a report of the Inter-church Federation in Philadelphia.

Make It Personal.

WE look complacently on the destruction of the wicked. We pity, and yet make so little effort to warn others of impending danger. How easy it is to apply all these things to others! Do we ever consider how slender is the thread that keeps us from the same fate? Do we realize that the slightest wandering from the path of duty and right will lead our feet to the pit? Why, only one cherished sin is enough to bar us from heaven. One need not be a hardened, wilful sinner to merit eternal death; indeed, one may be the very best of "moral" characters, and failing in one thing lose all.

Again, we read of the joys of the ransomed; we picture the scenes of heavenly bliss and comfort and joy, and exclaim, "What must it be to be there!" Do we plan to be there? Is it the purpose—the one purpose—of our lives? Or do we picture it all as for the "saved," and fail to definitely include ourselves? It is a serious question in either case, and should be thoughtfully considered and applied personally by every one. Eternity is the goal—eternity of life or eternity of death. Dare I let one sin—a little sin—keep me from the kingdom? H.



Bismarck, the great German, was well called "The Iron Chancellor." He had not only an iron disposition but an iron constitution, or he never could have lived under the enormous strain which he put upon his digestive organs. He himself estimated that he had drunk ten thousand bottles of champagne and smoked one hundred thousand cigars, besides drinking vast quantities of brandy, beer, and various kinds of wine. It was this which brought his career of usefulness to a sudden close. His constitution finally yielded to the tremendous strain. He might have lived, clear-headed and strong, for a number of years longer. Strange it is that sensible men will yield to any of these indulgences which science shows neither strengthen one physically nor quicken the intellect.



A Mistaken Statement.

THE sermon reported in the Sunnyvale (Cal.) *Standard* of November 12 says:

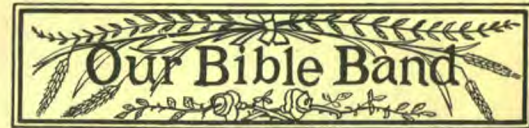
"The old Jewish Sabbath was established to meet the conditions of a peculiar climate and stage of civilization, but even this day was changed to meet a special condition. When the Israelites compelled Aaron to make the golden calf, it was apparent to Moses that they were still imbued with the idolatrous belief in the sun-worship of the Egyptians. In order to stamp out this heresy, Moses was inspired or directed by the Lord to change the Sabbath from the Sunday of the Egyptians to Saturday, and the latter became the sacred day of the week until the time of Christ; and the idolatry inherited from the Egyptians was thereby stamped out."

Surely this is a paragraph of errors, and yet it is like many others in defense of the Sunday. In the very first place, the Sabbath which the Lord gave the Jews was the identical Sabbath of the creation. That will be seen by any one who wishes to compare Gen. 2:2, 3 with Ex. 20:8-11. It is the same day given for the same reasons.

The Egyptians did worship the sun, and when they reverted to the sun-worship of the calf Apis, they doubtless went back to the keeping of the Sunday, but that in no wise affected the Sabbath of the Lord. There is absolutely no record whatever that Moses ever even sought to change the Sabbath from the Sunday of the Egyptians to Saturday; neither is it true that idolatry inherited from the Egyptians was stamped out by the time of Christ. The old sun-worship continues clear

down to the present time, and Sunday is one of its relics brought over into the Christian church by half-converted pagans, and by many honest Christians supposed to be the Sabbath of the Lord.

The best way in all such cases is to accept not of what some man says, but what the word of God says.



Schedule for Week Ending Dec. 26, 1908.

Sunday	Dec. 20	1 Peter 1 to 4.
Monday	" 21	1 Peter 5; 2 Peter 1 to 3
Tuesday	" 22	1 John 1 to 5
Wednesday	" 23	2 John; 3 John; and Jude
Thursday	" 24	Revelation 1 to 3
Friday	" 25	" 4 and 5
Sabbath	" 26	" 6 to 8

Suggestive Notes.

1. The first epistle of Peter is general; written to the sojourners of the dispersion, or in other words, to the children of God scattered throughout the various parts named in the first verse. It was probably written from Babylon,—some think Rome,—about 63 or 64 A.D. The whole object of the epistle is practical, setting forth with clearness and vigor the duties devolving upon Christians, and especially comforting to those who are persecuted. The Lord also through the apostle points us down to the last days when the end of all things is at hand, fortifying His people by admonitions concerning the dangers of the end.

2. The second epistle of Peter closely resembles Jude; probably written just before the death of the apostle, about 66 to 68. It is a special message for the last days, and encouragement to those who are living amidst the darkness of apostasy. It presents before us the great light of prophecy to guide us, and the assurances of God's power to keep us.

3. The epistle of 1 John is written without date, by John, the beloved disciple, closely resembling the fourth Gospel. The date is supposed to be about 90, but it may have been written later. The place of the writing is generally thought to be Ephesus. It points out what true fellowship with God means; what true light and love mean; namely, vital relationship with God and obedience to His commandments. It also strikes against an error that was already then creeping in—a denial of the incarnation. It is splendid present truth now.

4. The second and third epistles of John will speak for themselves. Whether the first is written to a person or to a church matters little. The teaching is the same. The third was written to Gaius, or Caius. Who he was, we do not know. The epistle of Jude was probably written by the Judas who was one of the brethren of the Lord. See Matt. 13:55, and Mark 6:3. The date of its writing is between 64 and 68. It bears a striking resemblance to that of 2 Peter.

5. We are now brought to the last book of the Bible, and a book that above all others contains within itself all that has gone before. There are very few, if any, truths or prophecies which are not referred to or told over again in the book of the Revelation. In the Greek it is "The Apocalypse," meaning "disclosure," or "revelation." Note also that it is not the revelation of John, as in the title of the book, but the revelation of Jesus Christ as in the text. It is sent to the seven churches, a term that is used of the church throughout the Christian dispensation, the term "seven" indicating "completeness."

Our readings for the week carry us to the close of the prophecy of the seven seals. There is not space in these notes for any adequate explanation of the book itself. It may be divided into two parts, at the twelfth chapter. The first consists of three great prophecies spanning the Christian dispensation: The seven churches, the seven seals, the seven trumpets. Connected with the seven trumpets we have also the prophecy of the two witnesses, and of the opening of the little book of chapter 10. The last part of the book we have three prophecies covering the same ground. Rev. 12, 13, 17.

WITH OUR INQUIRERS

[All questions to this department will be answered which to the editors will seem to minister to the good of the readers and to the mission of the paper. The same question can not be answered repeatedly in the same volume. The name and address must accompany question, not for publication, but as an evidence of good faith, and that answer may be made by letter if deemed advisable. It is well always to enclose a stamp for reply.]

2673.—Joining Outside Organizations.

Would you please give reasons, if there are any, why a Seventh-day Adventist should not join a farmers' organization such as the "Grangers"? C. E. S.

It is not a matter of denominationalism; it is a matter of Christianity. It may be proper for a Christian to join some organizations; but there are two principles involved in the question, which should be taken into consideration.

(1) Every organization requires its members to subscribe to certain rules, regulations, constitutions, or by-laws. Often these are on a wholly selfish basis or involve principles to which the Christian can not subscribe. No Christian could indorse such principles or make himself a partner with others in prompting them or upholding them. He could not, for instance, join others in antagonizing his fellow men for whose souls he was laboring and praying. He could not indorse many of the various movements, such as involve church-and-state union, as almost every organization under the sun has been solicited to do, and many have yielded. He could not indulge in the dancing and drinking, the tricks of trade, and the unwholesome pleasure which some organizations indulge. In other words, he could not lower the Christian standard for any benefit whatsoever which he might receive in so doing.

(2) Nearly all human organizations are for the purpose of protection or benefit. Not fully trusting or trusting at all the great Father in heaven, men hope to save themselves by combinations, federations, organizations, and many know no other way and no other trust. The Christian, every Seventh-day Adventist Christian, ought to have a personal faith in God, a faith which would lead him to trust God in all his business, in all affairs of life. Any society or organization which would lessen this perfect trust, or say to the world that God could not be depended upon, a Christian should have nothing to do with. These are important principles. Our querist must apply them in his own life, and answer to God for them in the last day. Read Isa. 8:9-15; 30:1-3; 31:2.

★

2674.—The Beast and Image.

What are your views of Revelation 13? Is the pope the man, and is his number 666? What is the second beast mentioned in this chapter? What is the mark of the beast? Do the trusts and combines and unions, secular and religious, answer to the image and mark of this secular beast?

C. M. D.

It is impossible to give any kind of an adequate idea of Revelation 13 in this department. See "Bible Students' Library," No. 130, for fuller expression. In brief, we understand that these beasts represent systems. The great Babylonian system is represented by the beast with seven heads, each head a different phase of the system. The one particular head which was to continue forty and two months, or literally 1,260 years, being the papal head. That system puts man in the place of God, places man between the Creator and his Saviour, in almost every phase of religious life. At the head of this system is the pope, of course, but we do not understand that the "name" pertains to any particular pope or to the pope as an individual, but rather to the system itself as represented by the pope.

The claim that the papacy makes, and upon which everything else is based, is that the pope is "the vicergerent of the Son of God;" in Latin, "Vicarius Filii Dei," the numerical value of which is 666.

The second beast mentioned is the development of the union of church and state in America. The

mark of the beast is the man-made sabbath enforced by law. See SIGNS OF THE TIMES of July 22, which gives a much fuller expression of it than can be given here.

Specifically as to trusts and combines, etc., we do not understand that they are individually engaged in the making of these images, tho doubtless all will be combined in one great trust or combination, confederating together to uphold human laws and purposes in contradistinction to the law of God. See the last part of the 8th chapter of Isaiah, and also the 18th chapter of Revelation. All the various combinations of earth will yet be brought into that relationship to the beast power so that it will be said that all the world shall worship it.

We wish especially to refer our inquirer and others to larger expositions of this subject as published from time to time in our periodicals, and also in our lists of books.

★

2675.—The Second Coming of Christ Not at the Destruction of Jerusalem.

Was the second coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem? I. L. B.

It was not. Language would be without meaning if all the events foretold as signs of Christ's coming could be made to apply to the destruction of Jerusalem and the events preceding it. Take the darkening of the sun and moon and the falling of the stars. See Matt. 24:29, and verses following. John uses these very signs as precursors of the great day of God's wrath in Revelation 6. Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70. John wrote Revelation in A.D. 96. This clearly shows that they were not signs of the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred twenty-six years before John wrote.

★

2676.—Called to Preach.

How will one as a layman know that he is called of God to preach the Gospel? Must that call come through the church militant, or by the Spirit of Prophecy, or direct, or how? M. H. K.

It is impossible for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES or any other one individual to say just how God calls an individual. He has not followed any special way of doing this; He has not had some formula for calling men into the ministry; He has called some in one way, and some in other ways. We have no particular evidence that He called Isaiah as He did Jeremiah, or Jeremiah as He did Ezekiel. Certainly He did not call Paul as He did Peter, nor Nathanael as He did John. Every soul has his own individuality, his own temperament, his own disposition, which the Lord knows thoroly; and when souls are consecrated to God, and God sees they can be used of Him in His work, He knows best how to call them. Sometimes He does that by the voice of His church; sometimes there are discerning men in the church who see the gift that the Lord has, by His Spirit, placed upon the humble worker. Sometimes the conviction comes to the worker himself in such an overwhelming way that it is impossible for him to throw it off. It is for the individual to put it to test with God. One of the sure tests of that work is, Can he win souls to God? can he give proof that his call is from God, or is it simply ambition on his part?

These are questions which the individual must settle with God. They stand between himself and the One who calls him, and it is not for others to judge another man's servant, nor must that servant judge others, if they do not see his calling at first. God gives us different gifts and different discernments. It is always well for young men, inexperienced men, to take counsel of those who are older. That does not mean that we should give up our God-given convictions for anything others

may say, but we may learn that what we supposed was a call to speak for God was simply an ambitious desire on our part to do something greater. Almost invariably when the Lord calls men to preach His Gospel, they have shrunk from it; they have felt that the burden was too great, and the call too responsible. These and still other considerations which may occur to the well-instructed, must be weighed carefully before one should give himself to a work which calls for the fullest co-operation of the Spirit, and which without the Spirit of God will prove utterly worthless.

★

2677.—Why the Sabbath?

Please explain why the Sabbath is still observed by your church, when it has the very same commands given as to duration of time as for all the ceremonial laws and statutes which ceased as soon as Christ had fulfilled every jot and tittle which was prophesied of Himself and was typical of Him. Matt. 5:17, 18. Yet every word of the old law was kept until after His death and a new covenant proclaimed. See verse 19, also Matt. 3:2, 3; Mark 1:44. Jesus said it was easier for earth to pass away than for anything prophesied of Him to fail to come to pass. When He died He said, "It is finished." John 19:24, 28, 30. Every jot of Old Testament law had to be kept to be saved, neither Decalogue nor ceremonial law excepted. Gal. 3:10; Isa. 1:8; Deut. 27:26. M. A. M.

Our inquirer seems to misapprehend the nature of the laws of which he speaks. Moral law is in its very nature unchangeable, and its compendium or summary God was pleased to put in the Decalogue. All these principles are eternal, and antedated sin. The Sabbath was not typical of something future, but a memorial or sign of God's power to create and save, and it existed before sin blasted the fair earth. Gen. 2:2, 3. All the typical laws ended at the cross, expired by limitation. They were "forever" only in the sense of being for that age. But God's moral law is "forever and ever," for the ages of ages. Matt. 5:17-19 includes both moral law and prophecy, and the "till" includes both, as John Wesley clearly points out. The force of the expression is that till all predicted by the prophets is accomplished, one jot or one tittle of the moral law should in no wise fail, and that is never, for the prophets prophesied of the eternity to come, in which God's Sabbath should still be observed. Isa. 66:22, 23.

It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than for one moral principle or precept of God to fail; for it is His character.

"It is finished," did not mean that God's moral law was done away; that were preposterous; but that Christ's sacrifice had reached its culmination in death, and the infinite price was paid. Our inquirer does not see that if his efforts to do away the Sabbath were successful, it would carry with it all the law. Then what did Paul and James mean? Rom. 3:31; James 2:8-12. See tract "What Is Done Away?" price, two cents, at this office.

★

2678.—The Commandments of Christ and of the Father. John 15:10.

What are Jesus' commandments, and what are His Father's commandments? C. K.

All the commandments of God may be summed up in the Decalogue. That is the compendium of all righteousness. Every duty is comprehended in it. It was the constant teaching of Jesus to call men's attention to this. He did not come to teach His own will, He ever and again declares (for instance, in John 4:34; 12:48), but to teach the will of the Father. His injunctions are over and over again to His disciples to carry out the will of the Father. He declares to them that they should believe on Him whom He had sent, that they should love one another, even as He loved them. The whole sum and substance of His teaching may be comprehended under the one constantly expressed thought, that they should do the Father's will, that they should accept the Father's messengers.

★

2679.—Mark 13:13.—The "great tribulation" refers to the suffering and trial of the people of God during the Dark Ages.



Martha or Mary?

I CAN not choose; I should have liked so much To sit at Jesus' feet,—to feel the touch Of His kind, gentle hand upon my head, While drinking in the gracious words He said, And yet—to serve Him!—O, divine employ, To minister and give the Master joy! To bathe in coolest springs His weary feet, And wait upon Him while He sat at meat! Worship or serve—which? Ah, that is best To which He calls me, be it toil or rest; To labor for Him in life's busy stir, Or seek His feet,—a silent worshiper. So let Him choose for us. We are not strong To make the choice; perhaps we should go wrong, Mistaking zeal for service,—sinful sloth For loving worship—and so fail of both. — *Author unknown.*

A Horrible Idea.

AN Easterner, riding on a mail-stage in northern Colorado, was entertained by a dialogue which was sustained upon one side by the driver and upon the other by an elderly passenger, evidently a native of the region.

"I understand you're temperance," began the driver.

"Yes, I'm pretty strong against liquor," returned the other. "I've been set against it now thirty-five years."

"Scared it will ruin your health?"

"Yes, but that isn't the main thing."

"Perhaps it don't agree with you?" ventured the driver.

"Well, it really don't agree with anybody. But that ain't it, either. The thing that sets me against it is a horrible idea."

"A horrible idea? What is it?"

"Well, thirty-five years ago I was sitting in a hotel in Denver with a friend of mine, and I says, 'Let's order a bottle of something,' and he says, 'No, sir. I'm saving my money to buy government land at one dollar and a quarter an acre. I'm going to buy to-morrow and you'd better let me take the money you would have spent for the liquor and buy a couple of acres along with mine.' I says, 'all right.' So we didn't drink, and he bought me two acres.

"Well, sir, to-day those two acres are right in the middle of a flourishing town; and if I'd taken that drink, I'd have swallowed a city block, a grocery store, an apothecary's, four lawyers' offices, and its hard to say what else. That's the idea. Don't you think it's horrible?"

Light Safer than Blinds.

LIGHT is a better protection than any amount of barricades. Formerly, when men left their business places at night, they turned off the light and put up great shutters. To-day they have learned that their greatest safeguard against enemies is to pull back the blinds, and keep a bright light constantly burning. For years, many thought it necessary to defend the teaching of Jesus, when all that His teaching needed was the

clear light of day so that men and women could see what it really was. It is pathetic to see the little hedges that some well-disposed persons have tried to build for the preservation of truth, when what is needed is only that lives be truly lived in the open. A lighthouse needs no one to convince people of its genuine character.— *S. S. Times.*

The Curse of Liquor.

It is impossible to imagine any subject connected with the progress, the civilization, the physical well-being, the religious conditions of the masses, without encountering this monstrous evil. It lies at the center of all political and social mischief. It paralyzes beneficent energies in every direction. It neutralizes educational agencies. It silences the voice of religion. It baffles penal reform. It obstructs political reform. It rears aloft a mass of evilly inspired power which, at every salient point, threatens social and national advance, which gives to ignorance and vice greater potency than intelligence and virtue can command; which deprives the poor of the advantages of modern progress; which debauches and degrades millions, brutalizing and soddening them below the plane of healthy savagery, and fills the centers of population with creatures whose condition almost excuses the immorality which renders them dangerous to their generation.— *Eugene H. Chafin.*

The Parents' Mistake.

PARENTS are apt to think that evil is easily possible to the children of other parents, but not to theirs. Others may have become defiled in thought, fall into vice, but they can not think such things of their own children.

Because they do not speak with them upon the subject of the origin of life—God's method of reproducing and perpetuating life in the world—they suppose that the child never thinks on these things and that no one else speaks to the child upon these subjects.

This is a great mistake. Your child can not come into ordinary contact with other children without being endangered upon this subject. The truth alone will prove an antiseptic to keep the mind of your child from defilement.

Be not deceived; evil thoughts and suggestions await your child everywhere. To be convinced of this fact, you have only to visit the schools, observe the walls and fences, and oftentimes even the pavements themselves, in the vicinity of the schools. The truth will render your child immune to de-

ception and to much degrading vice, and it is the only thing that will. Socrates said, "Ignorance is vice;" and the statement is as true to-day as it was centuries ago. Innocence plus intelligence fosters virtue, and virtue supported by a strong moral sense will most successfully safeguard in the hour of temptation.— *Sylvanus Stall, D.D.*

An Essential Element.

ONE of the essential elements in child-training is an example of uncompromising truthfulness. The price a parent pays for any departure from this rule is loss of influence over the child. The gain in dollars means a loss in life, and such accounts can never be balanced. I remember hearing some one relate a story of a patient who desired her five-year-old boy to begin school, and so he was told to give his age to the teacher as six. When riding on the train his father gave his age as three. One day a gentleman asked him his age. He said: "I am five years old at home, three on the train, and six in school." An act like this is little short of crime.

A second requisite in character-building is real sincerity. The practise and the profession must be made to square with each other. In other words, the business transactions and week-day actions in the home must correspond with the religious life on the Sabbath. Children never fail in detecting insincerity and sham. The power of your precepts will never exceed the genuineness of your practise. It is useless for a man to talk temperance to his boy and live tippling before the world. The essential thing is life, not lecturing.— *Selected.*

"SILENCE will end almost any quarrel."

WE are quick to spy the evil conduct of others.— *Socrates.*

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The tiniest flower, the smallest portion of time, a ray of sunshine, a fleecy cloud, a drop of water, all have their influence in God's great plan. Each and all of these tiny things meet their mission. Only humans deny their responsibility and pervert their God-given talents. Why will they?

Never were things more tense and uncertain than now in the great social, religious, political world. This is recognized by thinking persons everywhere. As regards the future, all is speculation with many, yet it need not be with any. In the Bible we have the "more sure word of prophecy" which "shines as a light in a dark place." Do you not wish the light? Study His word, study His prophecies. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning."

The publishers of the "**Watchman**" wish us to say that from the first of next year that paper will be changed from a weekly to a monthly of forty-eight pages or more, besides covers, this change being advised by the General Conference Committee. The usual departments will be continued. The January number, ready about December 15, will deal with the subject, "The United States in Prophecy," with special reference to the Church Federation Movement. The subscription price is 75 cents a year, clubs of five or more to one address, 45 cents. Single copies, ten cents. For terms, etc., address the **Watchman**, Nashville, Tenn.

Wonderful, Isn't It?—The **Sunnyvale Standard** (Cal.) reports a sermon by a Methodist pastor, of which the subheading is, "Methodist Pastor Declares Saturday Not Lord's Day." How did he prove this? Listen: "The world being round, . . . any but a very ignorant person could understand that taking the whole world into consideration, there can be no rigidly fixed day for the Sabbath." Worse sophistry than that might be used if this pastor would consistently hold to it: but he can not; for a little later he declares: "Christ restored the Sunday-sabbath, and ninety-nine per cent of the Christians of the world accept it and worship on this day." But how can they do it, Mr. Pastor, when a "fixed day" can not be observed on this round world? Is the world round on the last day of the week, and does it flatten out on Sunday? If ninety-nine per cent of Christians can keep Sunday, could they not keep the day which comes just before,—the Sabbath day according to the commandment, the day which our Lord observed? Verily, "the legs of the lame are not equal."

A news item from Lincoln, Neb., of October 22, states that the Supreme Court of that state sustained the legality of the Nebraska Sunday law forbidding almost all business transactions. We would like to know on what ground.

We have received a copy of the "Greater New York Special." It bears no other name, and is published without date, for the purpose of bringing the Gospel for this time before the people of New York in a cheap form. It is illustrated at every opening and has a splendid array of articles on various phases of the truth. The price is ten cents. Published by the Greater New York Tract Society, 32 Union Square, East, New York City.

"The Western Watchman" (Roman Catholic), St. Louis, of November 12, is authority for the statement: "It is a strange coincidence that both candidates for the presidency at the late election knelt at the feet of a pope and received his blessing." Will it be the last time the successful candidate will bow there? The same paper has this item in the same column: "It is refreshing to note with what equanimity the Catholic press of the country record the election of Taft. They will not need particular comforting during the coming four years."

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Tzu-Hsi, the late Dowager Empress of China.

According to despatches of November 15, it is stated that the Empress of China died on that day at two o'clock in the afternoon. The Emperor died the day before at five o'clock. The name of the Empress was Tzu-Hsi; the most powerful woman ruler in the world, and the one who ruled over the greatest number of people, male or female. She was of Manchu origin, 74 years of age. Altho only dowager queen, she was after all the real ruler of China. The emperor was a weak character compared with the queen. Altho it is supposed that she instigated the Boxer uprising, she granted many reforms. Among the many minor edicts of great benefit was one prohibiting the binding of feet. It is said that the one who will act as regent is the emperor's brother, Prince Chun, a very well-educated and progressive man. The one who succeeds as emperor, Pu Yi, is but three years old.

Our Bible Band.

REMEMBER what was said last week. Our readings will continue. We shall read the Bible through again in 1909. We shall take more interest in it than we did before. Those of us who failed will try again. Surely we can afford to spend fifteen minutes to a half hour a day in becoming familiar with the word of the living God. We can not afford to do otherwise. It is by His word that we are cleansed, that we are kept, that we are warned, that we are saved. It is by lack of knowledge that we are destroyed. Let us become familiar with God's great arsenal-storehouse treasury.

Those who wish schedules alone will send name and address and enclose five cents in stamps. Those who wish card and number in the Bible Band with first privileges in questions will enclose with their address ten cents. Address the editor. Schedules to the number of ten to one address, two cents each.

The Mail Liner "**Asia**" found the Pacific Ocean anything but true to its name on November 1. It passed through a terrific typhoon in longitude 166 west. Its life-boats were torn away, doors and screens broken, sails ripped from masts, and the upper works of the steamer were literally ruined. For hours she was virtually submerged in storm-lashed breakers, the passengers every moment expecting death.

"Poor, suffering India!" one feels to exclaim as he reads the statistics of the plague for the last ten years in that far-away land. It is said that the plague has claimed more than two million victims in the last decade. A few months ago, the daily death-rate in Bombay was three hundred persons. Poor India! burdened not only with the fearful bubonic plague and cholera, but still worse, by her fearful systems of religion. Were it not for the superstitions inherent in the religions, her physical condition would be greatly improved. The sanitary authorities meet these superstitions in every forward move, at every stage of progress which they make for the relief of the people.

The Alumni Association of the University of California, of whom Mr. George Edwards of the class of '83 is president, wishes us to state that the Alumni have had nothing to do with the effort to remove the state capital from Sacramento to Berkeley, nor have they any connection with any other political measure not officially authorized. They are working for the university's success and to make that institution as much of a benefit to the state as possible. They wish more done for the agricultural interests of the state, and desire that the president of the Alumni Association shall be on the Board of Regents.

Two little story booklets have been received by us from the author, Mrs. Myrta E. Steward, Sanitarium, Cal., entitled respectively, "Harry Spencer, Dyspeptic," and "The Destroyer (A Temperance Tale)." The latter is an interesting little sketch showing the relation of diet to drink; and the former of diet to health. It tells how a husband's mother was taught by his wife. Both are not only entertaining, but highly instructive. The price of the former is eight cents and of the latter ten cents, both post-free. Address the author.

The announcement of the commencement exercises of the Missionary Nurses' Training-School, of Portland Sanitarium, Portland, Ore., on Nov. 3, 1908, came duly to hand. It presents an excellent program of exercises; its graduating class numbers nine. The class motto is "Ministered unto, to minister," and its aim, "Onward and Upward." May God give each of them success in winning souls as well as helping bodies.