

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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ONE PENNY.



The Meadow Mirror.

By David Murray, A.K.A.)

THE OUTLOOK

It is said that every square mile of the ocean is inhabited by 120,000,000 finny creatures.

One of the illusions is, that the present hour is not the critical, decisive hour. Write it on your heart, that every day is the best day in the year.

President Roosevelt is taking the initiative in the organisation of a second Peace Congress. The Pope is also taking an interest in this matter, and desires to be represented in the conference.

At the present market price of wheat it is estimated that the harvest will yield a return to the wheat growers of Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, approximating £7,400,000.

The Japanese and Russian soldiers in Manchuria are suffering intensely from the severity of the winter. So badly are some of the men afflicted by the frost that amputation of the limbs has been found necessary in serious cases.

An old steamboat has been converted into a floating church for the benefit of the bargemen on the Rivers Havel and Spree, in Germany. The Emperor donated the altar and ornaments, and the Crown Prince conducted the opening ceremony.

The gigantic dam on the Nile at Assouan is to be raised an additional 19 feet 6 inches. The engineers claim that when this work is completed another 500,000 acres of Egyptian land will be added to the irrigable area. It is estimated the construction of these additions will cost £550,000, and will occupy about two years.

Sir Thomas Barclay, who declares that war is, the greatest nuisance in the universe, sees a dark, prospect ahead for the nations. He says: "Most countries are just now heading straight for national bankruptcy. Let them go on piling up their Army and Navy Budgets as they are doing now—piling up their blood tax—and bankruptcy is as certain as to-morrow's sunrise."

At a service in the Ballarat Cathedral, Bishop Green said that in Ballarat there were 13,388 persons who claimed to be members of the Church of England, and the sitting accommodation was for 3,035. So that if one in every four came to corresponding services in the different churches the buildings would be filled to the doors. As a matter of fact, the average attendance was 1,610. Could it be wondered that some were asking here, as had been asked in England, "Do we believe?"

A ten-mile trip in a flying machine was successfully accomplished at the World's Fair, St. Louis. The machine was constructed in California, under the personal supervision of its owner, Captain Baldwin. The gas balloon is cigar-shaped, of Japanese silk, and is fifty-four feet long and seventeen feet in diameter. The machine is propelled by a double-cylinder, seven-horse-power gasoline engine, which can work up to 2,000 revolutions a minute.

Professor Poultney Bigelow, of Boston, who has travelled in South Africa, India, New Guinea, Canada, Bermuda, and other lands, for the purpose of inquiring into British methods of colonisation, has been forcibly impressed with the immense development of the English language and institutions. Everywhere he had been, he says, anything British was welcomed. This influence over native peoples which Britain undoubtedly exerts brings with it the responsibility for the right use of this talent, that these people who regard Britain as a protector might be led to trust in that God who has given to Britain her place among the nations of earth.

In Paternoster building, Paternoster Row, London, is a publishing firm whose great presses do nothing else but print the sermons of the late Charles H. Spurgeon. His sermons, three each week, were taken in shorthand as they were delivered, and several hundred have not yet been put into type. "Bystander," in the Pacific Presbyterian, tells of a recent visit to the publishers. One sermon is printed each week, and has been for 2,800 weeks past. The sermon is published every Thursday. Purchasers begin to come before the doors are opened, "all classes of people, the ignorant and the learned." Thousands are sold over the counter in a morning. "Upstairs are 2,000,000 copies. The number of sermons sold since 1855 exceeds the number of Bibles circulated since the beginning of the century. They would make a paper pathway round the world six feet wide." They do go around the world. They do make a paper pathway, a pathway to peace, a way to life, to millions of souls.—"New York Observer."

Twelve months have now elapsed since war was declared between Japan and Russia. Since the first shot was fired tens of thousands of brave men of both nationalities have found a soldier's nameless grave. Thousands of families mourn their loss. Cities have been destroyed, and hundreds of square miles of territory has been desolated by the cruel implements of modern warfare. The most intense suffering has been willingly endured by brave men, who have continually exhibited the most heroic fortitude under most trying circumstances. The end is not yet in sight, for, notwithstanding the bloodshed and suffering and the tremendous drain on their national exchequers, neither party seems inclined to yield one single point. So the year 1905 was ushered in, like so many of its predecessors, as a year of bloodshed. International peace is evidently something which is only a favourite topic for meditation by politicians—something for them to dream about, but it can hardly be said to have yet reached the stage of practical politics.

Food Drunkenness.

Thomas A. Edison is not only a wizard in matters scientific, but he has a keen instinct into dietetics.

He said the other day that he ate anything he wanted, but in small quantity, adding that most people eat too much. "I know men and women who are food drunk all the time," he declared.

"Food drunk" is a happy invention to describe a notorious condition. Mr. Edison is not the only one who knows people who are continually gorged with food, with the result that their intellects are beclouded as truly as if the excess had been liquid instead of solid. Everyone has experienced the mental disturbance produced by occasional overeating. It is easy to see that the man who is continually gorged is continually off his mental balance. He is "food drunk," as the sage of Menlo Park puts it—non compos mentis—rendered unstable in his head by the overwork which he forces upon his stomach.

It is a common enough saying that if you want a favour from a man you should approach him just after he has had a good meal. The philosophy of the advice is apparent enough. The man who has his stomach full of food is more or less stupefied. He is in the primary stage of the condition which is fully exemplified by the gorged snake. His faculties are blunted. Hence, he is likely to accede to requests which he would promptly refuse were he in full possession of his judgment. He is "food drunk."

Mr. Edison is right, and his theory is shared by a good many shrewd physicians nowadays. A man can fuddle himself with the contents of a beef platter as well as by emptying a wine bottle.—"Chicago Chronicle."

Faraday's Lost Cup.

A minister once, in replying to the charge of credulity made by an objector against those who believe that God will raise the dead from their graves, gave the following beautiful illustration:—

A workman of Faraday, the celebrated chemist, one day by accident knocked a beautiful silver cup into a jar of strong acid. In a little while it disappeared, being dissolved in the acid as sugar is in water, and so seemed utterly lost, and the question came up: "Could it ever be found again?" One said it could, but another replied that, being dissolved and held in solution by the acid, there was no possibility of recovering it. But the great chemist, standing by, put some chemical mixture into the jar, and in a little while every particle of the silver was precipitated to the bottom, and he took it out, now a shapeless mass, and sent it to a silversmith, and the cup was soon restored to the same size and shape as before.

If Faraday could so easily precipitate that silver, and restore its scattered and invisible particles into the cup they had before formed, how easily can God restore our sleeping and scattered dust, and change our decayed bodies into the likeness of the glorious body of Christ! —"Canadian Churchman."

Weeds and Seeds.

The great mischief of weeds is that they have seeds. As early as the time of Alexander II. of Scotland, a man who let weeds go to seed on a farm was declared to be the king's enemy. In Denmark farmers are compelled to destroy all weeds on their premises. In France a man may prosecute his neighbour for damages who permits weeds to go to seed, which may endanger neighbouring lands. No man can keep his evil to himself. It will travel in some way, just as the seed does. Some seeds travel by means of wings, like those of the thistle, and some are carried long distances by birds; but in one way or another they get to long ranges beyond their original habitation. No man can limit the sphere of his own influence for evil; once let it flower and seed, and what he has done in England may sprout up in New Zealand; what he has done to-day may be reproduced an hundredfold twenty years hence. Let us remember that every doer of evil is "the King's" enemy. Our evil does not stop with man; it goes on to God. It is bad enough to be an enemy to man, but terrible indeed to be an enemy to God.—Selected.

The law of God is suited alone to the government of God. The law of the Infinite cannot be administered by finite man.

The only government that will never do injustice must be based on the law of God, but such a government must have God Himself to administer it. With only man to administer such a government, it would be the worst of all governments.

When the war chest of Frederick the Great was exhausted, he appealed to the women to lay their jewels on the altar of patriotism, promising to return jewels of iron for jewels of gold, bearing the inscription, "I gave gold for iron for the sake of the fatherland." Out of this response to an appeal to German patriotism, there arose the Order of the Iron Cross. What we need in these last days is a new order of living, that will mean a life of economy, a life of plainer living, plainer dressing, plainer eating, less expensive recreation, a giving up of much that we want, that we may give the gift of eternal life to those who are dead in trespasses and sins.—Selected.

One strong plea made on behalf of Sunday laws is that, without these, the workers would be deprived of their day of rest. But it is a grave question whether this religious legislation does not do more harm than good. Major-General Sir Reginald Hart, commanding the Thames District, says in the "Daily Telegraph" "that there is more drunkenness, debauchery, and immorality generally on the first day of the week than on any other of the seven, that the younger soldiers loaf about on Sunday for want of something to do till the public-houses are open, and then spend their time there till with fuddled brains they are turned out to engage in even less edifying pursuits." It is hopeless to think of circumventing the devil with carnal weapons, such as human laws. Legislation concerning matters of religion is always evil, and the Christian can have nothing to do with it. He does not trust in the arm of flesh.

GENERAL ARTICLES

FROM OUR CONTRIBUTORS

"Jesus Leads the Way."

By Elizabeth M. Goldsmith.

I do not know, I cannot tell,
Where I shall walk to-day;
But this I know, of this I'm glad,
That Jesus leads the way.

If sunshine beams upon my path,
And joys around me fall,
I must not longer wish to stay,
But hasten at His call.

If in the shade He leads me on,
Through gloom as dark as night,
I still can feel His guiding hand,
Though He be hid from sight.

How often I have wandered far,
And caused Him bitter pain;
E'en then His love has found me out,
And led me back again.

We ne'er can understand His love,
What'er our age or skill.
In wisdom of His kindly ways
We are but children still.

Nor doubts, nor fears of loneliness,
With Him I cannot feel.
The secret spring of happiness,
His words to me reveal.

So while along the path of life,
I journey day by day,
My heart shall glow with love and hope
While "Jesus leads the way."

Unique Character of Jesus.

By J. Gibson.

Evolutionists, by studying heredity and environments, endeavour to explain the lives of remarkable men. It is said that the mother of Napoleon read "Plutarch's Lives," and other heroic literature, and that her moods of mind were transferred to her son. It is also said the condition of France and the world at the time provided him an excellent opportunity to realise the ideals existing in his mind.

Doubtless, with few exceptions, they can explain the lives of eminent men. But when they endeavour, on this principle, to explain the life of Christ, they find themselves at a complete loss. According to one of the great primal laws of evolution, nature never leaps, but gradually progresses from stage to stage. Was there anything in Christ's environment or heredity to produce His character? Everyone must admit there was not. He was like some high mountain towering far and high above the surrounding plain.

The Jew hardly felt himself to belong to the human race. He was accustomed to speak of himself as holy, clean, chosen of God; whilst he considered the Gentiles sinners, dogs, polluted, rejected of God. His whole life,

his business, his dress, his food, his worship, his social life, all emphasised his own importance in his own eyes, and the degradation of the other nations. With all his notions of superiority, he was, nevertheless, conquered by those whom he despised. He saw Roman soldiers in his streets and round his beloved temple. He saw the Roman tax-gatherer extorting what he considered belonged only to God for the support of an idolatrous government and an idolatrous worship. The hatred which burned in his breast toward his foreign oppressor perhaps never glowed with equal intensity in any other conquered people. He had his secret, cherished consolation. The time was near when the Messiah would come and free him from this foreign yoke, and make him supreme among the nations.

This was the character of the people amongst whom Jesus was born, and amongst whom He grew up, a people with one strong, burning passion to be supreme among the nations. This passion the mother breathed into the ears of her child, and the rulers and priests strengthened in the mind of the adult at every possible occasion. Amid such environment Christ lived in solitude and poverty, His labours being more fitted to contract His thoughts, and purposes, and hopes, than to enlarge them; yet He escaped every taint and influence as though He had been brought up in an entirely different world. We see Him conceiving a plan and devoting Himself to it; one before which the policies and labours of the Alexanders, Cæsars, Napoleons, Bismarcks, and Gladstones sink into nothing, like the play of children.

Never before had it dawned upon the mind of philosopher or statesman to found a kingdom upon the power of love, or to win followers by dying for them. Never before had the thought occurred to any to change the moral aspect of the world by the erection of a cross. Never before or since has such a character been exhibited to the world as His. From whatever angle His life is viewed, perfection is seen. Even after a lapse of nineteen hundred years we fail to realise its value, or to catch His spirit in all its fulness. We can only fall at His feet and exclaim, "My Lord and my God."

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THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

BY ROBERT HARE.

The Object of His Coming.

It was while comforting the hearts of the sorrowing disciples that Christ made the promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." This is the only way that we can ever get to Him. He must come and receive us. Just a short time before this promise was made Christ had told them, "Where I go ye cannot come." He is to return and receive His people, and then they are to be with Him. This is one object that Christ has in coming again, and till that time we must look upon Him as "our absent Lord."

When pointing to the cross Paul speaks of drinking the cup "till He come." We must still drink the cup, yet even in that memorial of pain we are to remember that He is coming again, so that those who carry the cross below may go with Him to share the glory above.

Christ holds the keys of the grave, and until He comes again the moss-covered tomb must guard its buried dust. But Christ comes as the Life-Giver, and at the time of His appearing the loud proclamation will be made—"Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust." Long hidden from sight the veiled faces wait for the time when "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16. Till that time Christ holds the keys of the grave, and even the silent multitude must wait the time of His appearing. Should He never return then the tomb must keep its treasures forever.

The reward promised to the redeemed has been entrusted to Jesus Christ, but that reward cannot be given till He comes, for thus it is written, "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be."

For a little while the holy and the unholy slumber side by side in the quiet resting place, or walk side by side in the field of active life, even as the wheat and the tares grow together till the harvest time. Often misunderstood, ridiculed, and misrepresented, the righteous have to bear the character of evildoers, while the wicked often pass for holy ones. But beyond that time the righteous shall no longer bear the brand of shame, or the unholy appear as the sanctified. Christ comes to bring the reward that the heavenly judgment has determined, and then every man shall be seen in his true character. But this cannot be known till He comes. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also who love His appearing." 2 Tim. 4:8.

The work of salvation is not yet completed. We may be saved from sin here and now, but there is a salvation from pain and tears and all of mortality that we can never know till He comes again. "Unto them that

look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

Our being with Him, the resurrection of the dead, the bestowal of rewards, and the completion of the great work of salvation, all depend upon Christ's second coming. God will thus accomplish that which can be done in no other way.

The Result of His Coming.

The great Lisbon earthquake of 1755 destroyed 98,000 people, and shook 4,000,000 square miles of the earth's surface. Since that time tidal waves and tornadoes have wrecked and devastated whole islands and continents, and destroyed their inhabitants. Yet these are but the precursors of still greater demonstrations that link their manifestations with the appearing of Jesus Christ. When the law was given on Sinai the mountain trembled and the earth shook, but when Christ comes again the heaven will tremble, the earth will shake, and every island and mountain will be moved out of their places. Rev. 6:14. David speaks of the time when "Our God shall come, and not keep silence." Then it shall be "very tempestuous round about Him." So tempestuous indeed will it be that all the monuments of human pride will be levelled with the dust. Jeremiah tells of the time when the fruitful place will be a wilderness, and all the cities will be broken down. This will be at the "presence" of the Lord. Jer. 4:23-27.

Then it is that the sons of men will need a shelter and a refuge from the storm. But while the righteous are hidden in the "secret of His pavilion," the unholy will seek for shelter amid the falling rocks and crumbling mountains, so that they may be hidden from the "presence," or "face of the Lamb." Rev. 6:15-19. Reader, which would you rather meet, the falling mountains or the face of the Lamb?

The day of mercy will then have closed forever, and God must do "His strange work." The proud knees that have long refused to bow in adoration will then bow in abject terror. The rich of the earth, who have held back their treasures as a thank-offering to selfishness, will then cast away their silver and gold as unholy things, while they hasten to hide in some cleft of the rock from the glory of His power, when the Lord rises to "shake terribly the earth." Isa. 2:21.

The atmospheric heavens will depart in connection with all the other manifestations of dissolving nature, and then the earth will be left empty, desolate, and waste, and its inhabitants will be scattered abroad. Isa. 24:1, 3.

Amid all these convulsions of a dying world those who love and long for His appearing will look up and say, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, . . . we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9.

As the righteous are caught up to meet the Lord in

the air, the remnant of the unholy are slain by the brightness of the glory that accompanies Christ and the myriads of holy angels. Then it is that far over the earth the "slain of the Lord" will lie "neither lamented, nor gathered, nor buried." Jer. 25 : 33.

Reader, when all these supernatural manifestations present themselves; when the undimmed glory of Christ is revealed, and the majesty of crumbling mountains and departing heavens proclaim that the day of His wrath has come, will you tremble with the trembling earth, or will you say, "We have waited for Him"?

(To be Continued.)

The Millennium.—No. 2.

By C. A. Paap.

Close of the Millennium.

Passing now to the close of the 1,000 years, it will be interesting to study six prominent events which the Scriptures link together at this point.

1. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Rev. 20 : 5.

This is the second resurrection, or the resurrection of the wicked. The resurrection of the "unjust." Acts 24 : 5. "Those who have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5 : 29. And this event takes place when the 1,000 years are finished. So the millennium is bounded at each end by a resurrection.

2. "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, . . . and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." Zech. 14 : 4, 5.

When Christ comes the second time, all the "holy angels" accompany Him; but when He comes the third time all the "saints" accompany Him. They return to this earth, having "reigned with Christ [in heaven] 1,000 years." And the fifth verse shows that when this event takes place the wicked will have been raised from the dead, for they "flee like as they fle!" in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. It will be necessary for these people to be raised from the dead before they can flee from the presence of the Lord.

3. "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. 21 : 2, 9, 10.

This is what Christ went away to "prepare" for His people, as promised in John 14 : 1-3. And this city comes down on to the earth at the end of the millennium.

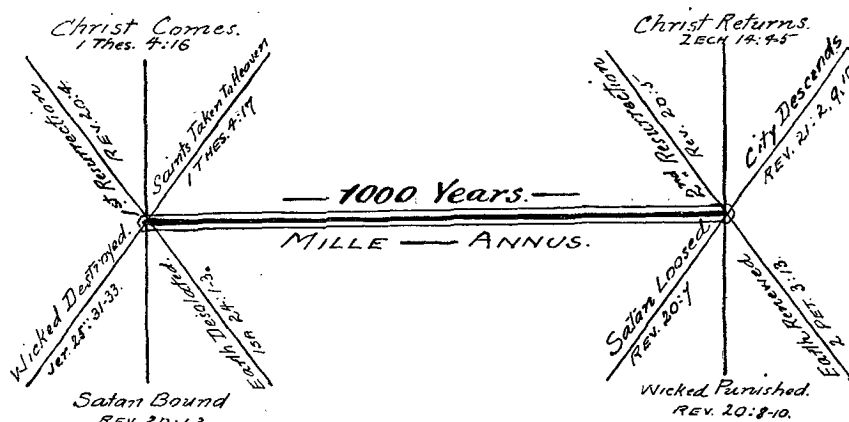
4. "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the [wicked] nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth." Rev. 20 : 7, 8.

If, as already shown, the removal of the righteous, and the destruction of the wicked, caused the binding of Satan, then the resurrection of the wicked and the return of the righteous must result in his being loosed; and the statement is plainly made that this takes place at the close of the millennium.

5. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Rev. 20 : 9.

This is the final destruction of the wicked, and it is by fire. They are destroyed around the city of God. "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord." Ps. 101 : 8.

When this slaughter takes place the wicked are inside the city; and as stated in Ps. 37 : 34, "When the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it." This is the time referred to by Christ when He said, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out." The walls of the New Jerusalem being transparent, the wicked from without and the righteous from within can see through them. If the idea so commonly taught regarding the punishment of the wicked is true, then, for all eternity the people of God will see nothing else but a lake of fire, filled with the wicked of all ages, writhing, cursing, and suffering, and the streets, walls, mansions, etc., of the city being of dazzling brightness and burnished gold, will simply intensify the picture beyond all description and endurance; for they will act as so many reflectors and mirrors. Surely God has something better in store for His chosen than such scenes. Such a doctrine is not in harmony with the character of the "God of love," but comes from the "father of lies." And instead of the righteous being shut in the city with such scenes before them, they are



to "go forth" and enjoy the beauties of the earth in its renewed condition.

6. "Behold, I create a new . . . earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isa. 65 : 17.

When sin, sinners, and Satan are all annihilated (Mal. 4 : 1), then this earth, cleansed with the purifying fires of God, is clothed with Edenic verdure and beauty, and becomes the everlasting abode of the redeemed of the Lord. The New Jerusalem is the capital of the earth made new; "and from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, saith the Lord."

(Concluded.)

If there be anything praiseworthy in what I have written, it comes direct from the Bible. Really and truly the Bible has been my only instructor. If any words of mine can make my fellowmen and women go to their Bibles steadily and lovingly, to get their divine teaching at first hand, I shall feel that whether I ever do anything more or not I shall have justified the object for which the Bible taught me to write.—F.T. Bullen.



A. W. ANDERSON, EDITOR.

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, JANUARY 9, 1905.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ.—No. 2.

In our introductory study on the Book of Revelation, which appeared in our last issue, we gave some reasons for holding the idea that this scripture was not written to seven local churches in Asia Minor. It will, therefore, perhaps, be unnecessary to offer any further evidence in support of the theory that the prophecy of the seven churches relates to seven successive periods of church history rather than to the seven local churches named. It is well known that there were many more churches in Asia than seven. In fact, in the immediate district where the churches, whose names are used, were located, there were also many other important churches. Furthermore, the events recorded in this New Testament prophecy reached far down into the future, even into eternity, and, consequently, the application of much of the truth which God unfolded to His servant John cannot be applied exclusively to those early churches. If these messages are regarded as prophetic, then a line of thought opens up to the mind which dispels many difficulties which assuredly arise when it is attempted to localise them.

Although Bishop Newton did not hold this view himself yet he is quoted as saying:—

"Many contend, and among them such learned men as More and Vitringa, that the seven epistles are prophetic of so many successive periods, or states, of the church, from the beginning to the conclusion of all."

Probably the reason why this theory is discarded by some modern commentators may be found in the character of the messages themselves. It will be seen that the first church mentioned is "Ephesus," a church of whom the Lord could say:—

"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Rev. 2:2, 3.

Compare the character of that church with that of the last one, "Laodicea."

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." Rev. 3:15-18.

Surely there is a declension of spiritual power here brought to view. In the first church we find labour, patience, hatred of evil, endurance under affliction. In the last church a luke-warm organisation, neither cold nor hot, satisfied with its luxurious surroundings, and

entirely ignorant of its deplorable condition spiritually—"wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked." What a contrast! Is that a picture of the actual condition of the church of the last days? Those who hold to the temporal millennium of peace on the earth scout the idea, preferring to hold to their pre-conceived theories rather than the injunctions and predictions of Scripture. As we trace the history of the church through the successive periods, as it has been delineated by the pen of inspiration, we shall, perhaps, see clearly that in comparison with the apostolic church, the modern church is veritably a luke-warm, ease-loving, miserable, poor, blind, and naked object.

The Church of the First Century.

Under the name of Ephesus, the apostolic church is addressed by Him "that holdeth the seven stars [the ministers] in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (the churches).

The definition of the word "Ephesus" is "desirable," which truly describes the character and condition of the church in its infancy. We have no reason to suppose that the local church at the city of Ephesus displayed any more zeal than other churches which were planted by the apostles. We feel quite sure that many of the churches equalled the Ephesian church in faithfulness to the pure principles taught by Christ and His apostles. It may then be conceded that the characteristics of the early church, addressed under the name of Ephesus, applied generally to the whole Christian church of that age.

Alas, how prone even the best and most devoted disciples are to forsake their first love. These churches which laboured so zealously that the gospel had been carried in a few short years throughout the world (Col. 1:23) became "weary in well doing."

As the apostles passed away and their powerful influence was lost to the church, a backward tendency was seen.

"It may seem almost like a truism, that no religion can continue to be what it was during the lifetime of its founder and its first apostles. Yet it is but seldom borne in mind that without constant reformation, i.e., without a constant return to its fountain-head, every religion, even the most perfect,—nay, the most perfect, on account of its very perfection, more even than others,—suffers from its contact with the world, as the purest air suffers from the mere fact of being breathed."—"Chips from a German Workshop."

The early churches left their "first love," but their First Lover did not leave them. He exhorts them to remember from whence they had fallen, and to repent, and do the first works. Failure to heed this admonition would bring disaster, and in mercy the Lord addressed a warning to that church, calling them to renew their first love, to do their first works.

How is it with you, my reader? Are you growing weary in the Christian race? If so, heed the admonition, Repent, and do thy first works. Notwithstanding the defect which the Lord pointed out, there were still some things which He could commend.

"But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." Rev. 2:6.

It is generally supposed that this class of people, known as the "Nicolaitanes," held many erroneous doctrines, and regarded indifferently the sin of adultery, even practising polygamy. Such evils should not, and cannot, receive from a pure church anything but severe condemnation in any age of the world.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

World-Wide Field

Quorn, South Australia.

This town is situated 234 miles north of Adelaide, and twenty-five miles south of Port Augusta. The backbone of the town is the railway junction and the railway workshops. The surrounding country, while the soil is productive in good seasons, is, like most northern districts, subject to drought. For ten years the farmers have reaped but two small crops. As we look around us here we cannot but admire the persistency and courage of the farmer, who, year after year, sows but reaps not. How different the prospect of the gospel worker; the promise is: "Ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

It was on Sunday evening, Oct. 30, that we opened fort on Quorn. The object of our work had been very much misconstrued before we came, and considerable prejudice prevailed. We have been called very ugly names in this place, and the message has been delivered under fierce opposition; but we rejoice that, in the face of all that the enemy has done, souls have responded to the truth, and still others are investigating. We rejoice to know that "nothing can be done against the truth, but for the truth." As well try to reach up to heaven and drag down the stars, as try to stop the course of the word of God. We are of very good courage in the Lord.

T. H. CRADDOCK.

On Sabbath, Dec. 17, a Sabbath-school was organised at South Melbourne.

Pastor Hennig reports the baptism of three persons at Windsor, and the admission also of three others to the church at Ballarat, Victoria.

Brother J. H. Mills, the secretary of the Queensland tract society, had the misfortune to break his leg on the 21st ult. It is hoped he may make a rapid recovery, and be able to soon resume his duties.

A party of four young men recently sailed from England, for Northern Nigeria, under the direction of the Soudan United Mission. The Bautchi Hills will be the centre of the work. This party includes Dr. A. H. Bateman, a graduate of the University of Durham, and a representative from Scotland, from Ireland, and from Germany. They will begin work among the heathen tribes in the Bautchi district, which, though twice the size of Ireland, has never had a missionary. There are about twelve British workers, in three British stations, in Hausaland. But none of these are labouring among the pagan people, many of whom have never accepted Mohammedanism, which had made inroads in that part of the country.—"Review and Herald."

Among the Islands.

By G. F. Jones.

Our steamer, calling at several places in German New Guinea, gave us an opportunity to visit and examine more closely the native in his home. As there was some risk in one or two going alone, with no special mission, and led only by curiosity, a party of several wandered together into villages not far distant. The men's faces were hideously painted in different colours; and for a little paint some submitted to be photographed by one of our party. Upon receiving the paint they quickly daubed themselves with it. I had a small mirror in my pocket, which I placed before them that they might see themselves in their imaginary beauty. The mirror was a much coveted article.

The houses were built on posts raised about four feet from the ground, in which most of the women were hiding while we were inspecting. Each village has a demon house, as they worshipped evil spirits. Some of the men were pleasant, while others were sullen and wicked looking. It was by no means a pleasant feeling to be surrounded by these naked savages, especially as we would occasionally get separated, in the eagerness to see everything. Knowing their treacherous disposition we breathed more freely upon getting back again towards our ship.

Among these tribes there is a story of the flood handed down from generation to generation. They say a large canoe was built, and during the flood a dove was first sent out, then a large bird (which they believe was a cassowary, afterwards a pig. Another story believed by them is that the Good Spirit has gone away, but He promised to come again. They are now expecting Him to return soon. It is evident that these poor souls would be glad of someone to tell them truly of our Lord's second coming, for whom all His faithful followers are waiting, and which is declared by all the prophets will be fulfilled in this our day. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The planters and traders shoot these people down with less conscience than they would a dog. One planter told us he had shot so many that none now dare show themselves within miles of his plantation. Naturally this sort of treatment will arouse a retaliation before long, and the white settler will be in trouble. The poor black hates as much as any other person to be swindled out of his land, finding too late that for a few strings of beads, or some cheap trinket, he has lost forever his land. Moreover, as he is by the point of the gun kept from approaching it any more, his poor, ignorant mind is not likely to feel very amiable over this kind of exhibition of foreign greed.

The poor heathen needs above all things a knowledge of the law of God; but his treatment at the hands of the white people makes it tenfold harder for the missionary to approach him. Obviously the great enemy of the gospel is blocking the way; nevertheless, "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." Let us arise and heed the Saviour's command, "Go ye therefore into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Children's Department

The Story of Grumble Tone.

There was a boy named Grumble Tone, who ran away to sea, 'I'm sick of things on land,' he said; 'as sick as I can be! A life upon the bounding wave will suit a lad like me!' He wandered into foreign lands, he saw each wondrous sight, But nothing that he heard or saw seemed just exactly right. And so he journeyed on and on, still seeking for delight.

He talked with kings and ladies fair, he dined in courts, they say, But always found the people dull, and longed to get away To search for that mysterious land where he should like to stay.

He wandered over all the world, his hair grew white as snow, He reached the final bourne at last, where all of us must go, But never found the land he sought. The reason would you know?

The reason was that, north or south, where'er his steps were bent,

On land or sea, in court or hall, he found but discontent; For he took his disposition with him everywhere he went.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.



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By the Author of "Uncle Ben's Cobblestones."

Chapter II.



with their pockets full of gold.

"His poor old mother did not want her boy to go,—for 'she would sooner have her boy than all the gold in Australia,' she said. But Jack had made up his mind, and could not be persuaded to remain at home.

"'I'll soon be back again, mother,' he said, 'and then I'll be rich, you'll see!'"

"Jack always wanted to be rich. When he was a boy he used to talk about the grand house he would have, and the horses and carriages and coachmen he would keep when he was a man. 'My word, boys, I'll have fine times then,' he used to say to his playmates.



Tom was thinking pretty hard.

"And now he thought the time had really come for him to make his fortune. Jack had a friend who was a little younger than himself. Frank Hope was his name. He had lost father and mother when quite a boy, and, somehow, he and Jack had always been friends since they went to school together.

"'Come along with me, Frank,' he said; 'and let's see the world, and find some money.'"

"Frank was not so eager to get rich as Jack was; but he thought how lonely he would be without his young mate, so he made up his mind to go too.

"So away they went over the rolling ocean, and after many weary days reached Melbourne, and started off for the diggings, along with hundreds of others."

"Wasn't that splendid, uncle," said Tom, his eyes glowing with pleasure. "My, how I wish I could have been with them! And they found lots of gold, Uncle Ben, of course?"

"One of them did, Tom," said I, "but Frank, after years and years of hard work, found himself as poor as ever, and had to make a living chopping wood in the Australian bush."

"Oh, what a pity, uncle! I'm so sorry. And I suppose the poor fellow was never happy again. What did he do, Uncle Ben? Is he alive now?"

"Yes, Tom, he's alive yet, and is well and happy, but I'm sorry to say that Jack died years ago, a poor, unhappy man!"

"But, uncle," said Tom with surprise, "you said he found plenty of gold."

"So he did, my boy, and it proved to be his ruin, body and soul. He also found bad companions, took to drinking and gambling, and died a poor drunkard."

Well, my little friends, I waited for a minute then, as I could see that Tom was thinking pretty hard. Presently he said, with a sigh, "All right, uncle, I think I can see what you mean; please tell me the rest of your story."

"Well, Tom," I said, with a twinkle in my eye, "who do you think is the best minister you ever saw?"

"Why, uncle," said Tom, with surprise at my strange question, "you know what I think about that. Our minister down at the little church in the town is my fa-



"Chopping Wood in the Bush."

yourite. I think Mr. Hope is the best, and kindest, and jolliest minister I ever met in my life."

I looked at the boy for a minute until he had time to get his ideas together.

Finally his eyes opened wide, and he started up to his feet, and looked straight at me.

"Uncle!" he said, "you don't mean to tell me that Mr. Hope is Frank?"

"Yes, my boy," said I, "that is so. Mr. Hope told me the story himself a few days ago. After many years

of hard work he heard one day, from a good old lady, the old, old story about the Saviour's love, and then he found Jesus.

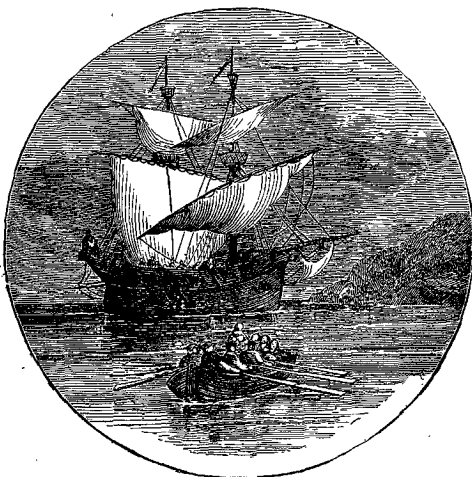
"You know, Tom, when a miner strikes gold, he usually keeps the good news to himself for fear someone

else will find it; but when a man finds Christ, the 'great riches of God,' he always wants to tell everybody else about it.

"Mr. Hope felt just that way, so he soon became a minister, and spent all his time telling people how to find the best fortune on earth.

"Now, Tom," said I, "who do you think found the real gold, Jack or Frank?"

UNCLE BEN.



"So away they went over the Rolling Ocean."

God is love; and it is good, as it is true, to think that every sun ray that touches the earth has the sun at the other end of it; so every bit of love upon God's earth has God at the other end of it.—Mark Guy Pearse.

"Ah!" said the professor, "that one speech was worth years of text-book teaching! And yet it was made without an instant's preparation.

"Far from it," I answered, quickly. "It has taken sixty years of noble living, struggling against sin and self, pressing forward in the paths of righteousness, bearing the cross, following hard after the Perfect Man, to prepare him to make this speech."—"Our Young Folks."

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HOME AND HEALTH

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God broke our years to hours and days;
That hour by hour,
And day by day,
Just going on a little way,
We might be able all along
To keep quite strong.
Should all the weight of life
Be laid across our shoulder, and the future, rife
With woe and struggle, meet us face to face
At just one place,
We could not go;
Our feet would stop. And so
God lays a little on us every day.
And never, I [am sure,] on all our way
Will burdens bear so deep,
Or pathways lie so threatening and so steep;
But we can go, if, by God's power,
We only bear the burden of the hour.

—George Klinge.

Living up to Love.

"And ye don't drink any more, Jim?"
The question came as two workmen walked along together.

"No."

"And ye don't talk as ye used to, either—dropped a lot of swearin' that used to come pretty handy. What's up?"

"It's the wife and the boy," answered Jim, half pleased, half embarrassed, that the change had been noticed. "Ye see, the little one was nothing but a baby when I went away, but he's gettin' to be a smart boy now. Lizzie believes in me. And that boy, he really thinks his dad is the best man in the world. I'd like to have him keep on thinkin' so, that's all."

Trying to live up to someone's thought of him, someone's faith in him, was making his whole life higher and purer, as it has made many a life. It is an ignoble nature that is not at once humbled and uplifted at finding itself idealised by some loving heart. Almost unconsciously, we try to be what we are expected to be. And if this is true, what volumes it speaks in regard to thinking, hoping, expecting the best of those around us! —Selected.

The Influence of a Song.

Few of us realise the importance of song, and how far its influence reaches.

Some few months ago, while working in a street selling the "Signs," this truth was brought forcibly to my mind. The day was hot and sultry and the air still, excepting for the twitter of birds and the hum of insects. I was feeling so tired. Just as I was pass-

ing a house, whose doors and windows were open, the sweet strains of the well-known hymn were heard:—

"Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me!
Still all my song shall be, nearer my God to Thee,
Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee."

Two men were engaged in painting a house near by; they took up the refrain and joined in whistling, while I walked on singing to myself. The weariness had passed away, and I was glad to be raised "nearer to God," even by a song.

Although time has elapsed since then, yet I never hear that hymn without thinking of my experience, and the help it gave me; while the musician will probably never know of the bright spot he or she has left in my memory.—E. Brebner.

Read This if You Want Freedom From the Tobacco Habit.

The Lord can save you from the tobacco habit just as easily as He can save you from sin. Instead of enabling you to get a great deal of pleasure out of life, tobacco is in reality shortening it and blunting the finer sensibilities of the brain, thereby making you less capable of enjoying spiritual things. It is crippling your liver, deranging your digestion, and battering down the defences of your body, thus making you much more liable to contract pneumonia, tuberculosis, or any other infectious disease. Do not try to taper off. It is as useless as it would be to attempt to get rid of lying and stealing by the same process. Stop, and ask God to be your helper. He is willing to lay hold of you more strongly than tobacco has. Eat nothing but abundance of fruit four times a day for several days. Drink a large quantity of water, and take several vigorous sweats. You will be surprised how easy it is to gain the victory, and the discipline that you will receive will help you to gain other victories where you have thus far made a failure.—"The Life Boat."

For Old Men.

A. J. Gordon met an old man one time going to the place of prayer. "Aged friend," said he, "why should an old man be so merry and cheerful?"

"All are not," said he.

"Well, then, why should you be merry?"

"Because I belong to the Lord."

"Are none others happy at your time of life?"

"No, not one, my friendly questioner," said he; and his form straightened into the stature of younger days, and something of inspiration glowed in his countenance. "Listen, please, to the truth from one who knows; then wing it round the world, and no man of three score and ten will be found to dispute it: The devil has no happy old men."—Selected.

Do you want to know the man against whom you have most reason to guard yourself? Your looking-glass will give you a very fair likeness of his face.



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Difficulties have already arisen between the imported Chinese and the Kaffirs on the "Rand." In a fight between the two factions one Chinese was killed and eight wounded, while three Kaffirs were killed and twenty-five wounded.

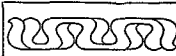
A Berlin newspaper, voicing the feeling against Great Britain which makes itself felt at frequent intervals, observes that "England's emphatic claim to command all the seas is a factor which the German naval policy is bound to consider.

People are horrified by the slaughter in the Far East, yet the dead and wounded for the first year of the war are not likely to exceed the record for two years of railroad slaughter in the United States. For the year ended June 30 last 55,130 persons were killed or injured on American railroads.

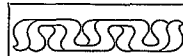
It has been calculated that one per cent. of the families of the United States possess a little over 50 per cent. of the total wealth of the country. The remaining ninety-nine per cent. have the privilege of possessing a little less than one-half of the national wealth.

While men and women are starving in our great cities, they have the grim solace of reading that wealthy ladies in Newport, Rhode Island, are giving birthday parties to their pet dogs, at which waiters serve the favoured animals with cake, ice-cream, and chocolate. The husband of the lady who gave the birthday party is the leader of New York fashionable society, and lately attracted public notice by giving a banquet in honour of a monkey. No age of the world can produce more disgusting exhibitions of callousness to human want and suffering than society provides to-day, and no heathen land can outdo in these exhibitions the highly-favoured republic across the water, which is supposed to exist for the advantage of its people. Some of the darkest chapters in human history followed closely upon such scenes as this, and there are indications enough that it will be so again.—"London Present Truth."

"Drinking dissipated the social force, industrial energy and political strength of the people. The public-house was the ante-chamber of the workhouse, the chapel-of-ease to the asylum, the recruiting station to the hospital, the rendezvous for the gambler, and the gathering ground for the gaol."



Obituary



LAW.—On December 2nd, 1904, we laid away to rest, in Coburg Cemetery, the infant daughter of Sister Law, of North Fitzroy church. To each mourner the Lord says, "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for . . . thy children shall come again [from the land of the enemy] to their own border." Jer. 31 : 16, 17.

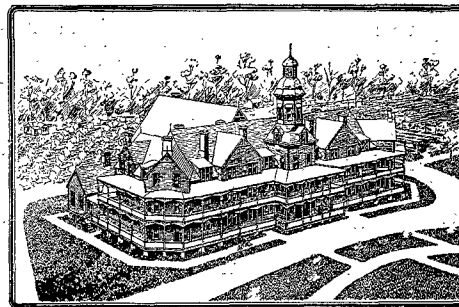
J. H. WOODS.

GULLY.—Florence Isabel Gully was born in Malmsbury, Victoria, April 2nd, 1887, and died at her parents' residence, Carlton, Dec. 17th, 1904. Eighteen months ago she contracted a cold which developed into consumption, causing her death. We visited her before she passed away, and found her rejoicing in her Saviour and quite prepared to die. She was a member of the church in North Fitzroy, and before her illness was also an active worker in the young people's society. We confidently expect her to be raised to glorious immortality when Jesus comes, and forever placed beyond the reach of wasting disease and the chilling touch of death. Words of comfort were presented at the graveside, in Kew Cemetery, by the writer, assisted by Bro. A. W. Anderson. Several hymns were well rendered by the choir, including her favourite piece :—

"He's able to keep you from falling;
He's able all things to subdue;
To bind up the broken in spirit,
And save to the uttermost too."

J. H. WOODS.

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