

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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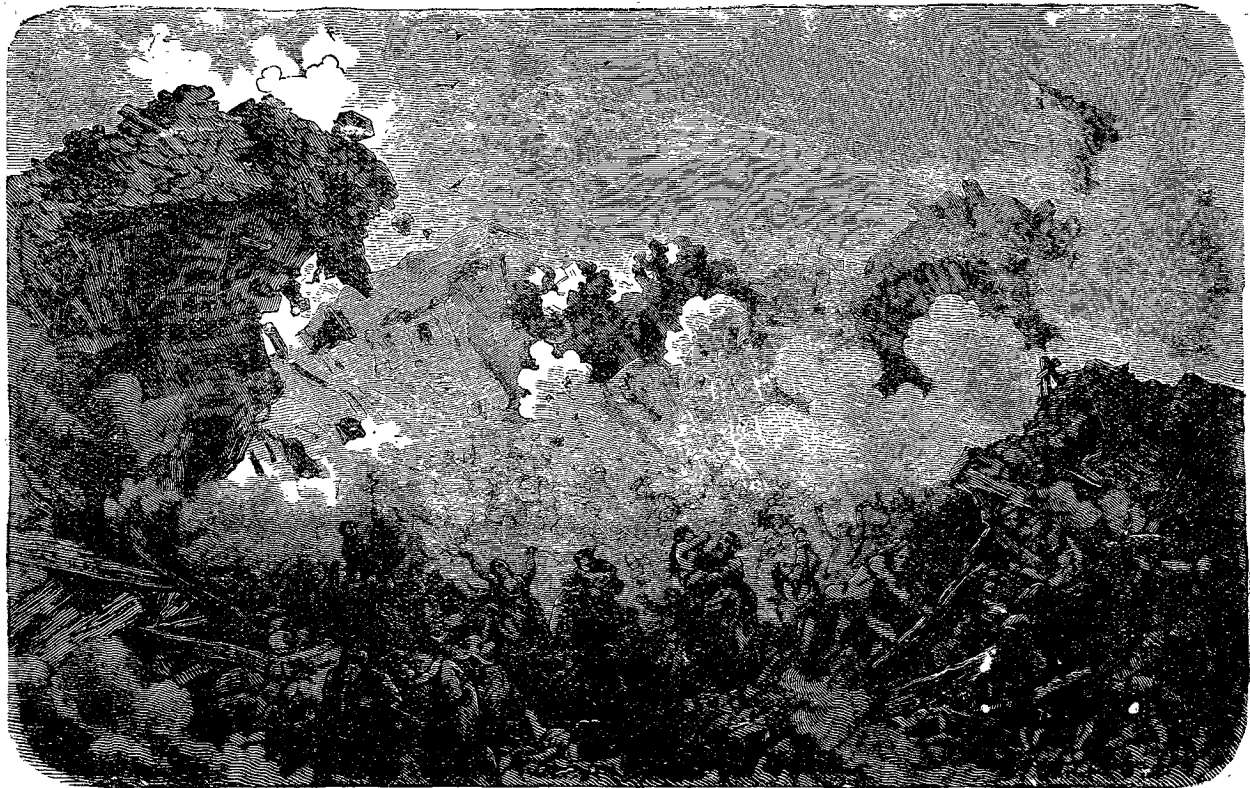
ONE PENNY.

The Fall of the Grand Army.

The fall of the Russian arms and the calamities attending the breaking up of Russia's Manchurian army have absorbed the attention of many during the week. War in all its terrible aspects has painted the history of the year that is past. The world has been looking on at a duel between two nations, a duel to the death, and

fortune. It is he who comes in for the brunt of the affair; while often, very often, those who originate the quarrels repose in luxury miles from the scenes of the tragedy. Many a ruler in Europe to-day is neither a Charles XII. of Sweden nor a Buonaparte of France.

Notwithstanding the din and smoke of Manchuria, and other recent battlefields which have supplied the world with a manifestation of the deadly perfection with which



Isa. 24: 17, 18, 19.

The Last Great Earthquake.

both the sea and land have been re-echoing with the belch of cannon, the rattle of musketry, and the groans of the dying. The fall of Port Arthur, the battles of Yalu, Liao-yang, Sha-ho, and Mukden have each carried their bloody records into the past, and, as a result, many a poor wretch has left his bones to bleach on the fields of Manchuria. It is the soldier who comes in for the mis-

modern inventions can scatter the flower of a nation in fragments, the nations go on making military preparations in order to settle the problems of the future. The nations still follow the time-honoured practice of depending upon cannon to support their varied interests, and each politician, as he deals with questions of foreign policy to-day, must have behind him his nation's cannon,

glistening, polished, and oiled, in order to substantiate his proposals. Only last week a French statesman demanded a yearly increase of £4,800,000, to be expended on ships, cannon, and armament, to place France upon a footing with Germany. The time will surely come, and is at no great distance now, when every effective cannon in the universe will be rolled on to the field of battle to do its part.

The peace of the world lies not in the hands of either Russia or Japan, and the war-clouds which hang about so threateningly will not permanently disappear with the cessation of the present war, for it hinges upon a pivot geographically much nearer to the heart of Europe than the "Far East." The universal peace of this world, according to the word of God, depends upon the position occupied by the Ottoman Empire. What shall be done with the Turk is a far greater question than the occupation of Manchuria by Russia. Constantinople is the strategic point to-day, for the balance of power will be completely upset when circumstances cause the Sultan in the near future to evacuate Europe and cross the Bosphorus to Jerusalem. When that event takes place the nations may know that their next call will be not to a battle which they may name, but to one which God has already named—Armageddon. Men may shut their eyes to this part of the world's prospects, but there it remains. God has plainly spoken concerning the future, and time only wants a few years to completely fulfil His word. The Armenians are ready to throw off a foreign yoke. The Macedonians and the Albanians only await the opportune moment. Bulgaria and Servia are no friends of Turkey, and perils in no modified form threaten the slipshod government of the Sultan.

In a general European war, such as the Scriptures assuredly predict, the vacuum caused by the fall of the Ottoman Empire would then bring the operations of the nations nearer to their own bases, and each nation would be able to concentrate its armies with rapidity at a given point. Russia would not have to do as in her war with Japan, send troops for thousands of miles by sea and land to the place of operation, at great expense, delay, and danger. England already patrols the Mediterranean. Austria, Germany, Italy, and even France would, in such a war, be near at home; whereas troops from India, Afghanistan, China, and Japan could come in from the East.

There will yet be a universal gathering of the Powers for that great and remarkable battle. At present we see by the trend of events that lines are being drawn closer year by year, which are bringing the crisis nearer, and making it more possible and imminent. It has long been rumoured abroad that Turkey's health is failing. An Italian admiral some time ago, while referring to the Eastern Question, on looking at the magnificent Italian fleet, said: "It was the preparation of thirty-five years, and"—meaning Turkish affairs—"it was ready for the crisis." Events at any moment may turn this world's affairs into the final channel, but the crisis may linger yet for a few years. These years, however, will see still greater preparation for the final upheaval, until, finally, the national atmosphere is congenial to the subtle influences of Satanic forces, and the time will be fully ripe for "the spirits of devils working miracles to go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14), a battle to which Mukden will be as a

mere bagatelle. When Napoleon retreated from Moscow he left his grand army to fall and perish in the snow. In Manchuria Russia sees to-day only a broken, dejected remnant of her grand army, but the day is fast approaching when the mighty armies of the earth, with the cannon and implements of war which they so much depend upon, will lie silent and cold, strewn upon the fields of Armageddon.—J. B.

Paganism and the Bible.

By W. W. Prescott.

An advertisement of a recently published book entitled "The Ethics of the Greek Philosophers" endeavours to show "the absurdity of applying this term 'pagan' to the old Greek philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, three of the greatest minds in the history of religion." As an unanswerable argument in the demonstration of the claim that these old philosophers should not be regarded as pagans, the following statement is made: "In the words of Socrates, five hundred years before the New Testament was written, will be found a clearer statement of the doctrine of the immortal soul and its future states of probation, reward, and punishment than can be found in any part of the Bible." We shall make no attempt to deny the truthfulness of this claim. In fact, we heartily indorse it. We fully believe that Socrates taught the immortality of the soul more plainly than it is taught in the Bible. More than this, we believe that Socrates taught the immortality of the soul with much clearness, while the Bible does not teach it at all. And this is one of the distinct proofs that Socrates was a pagan. Heathen philosophers have maintained with much show of deep reasoning the original falsehood of Satan that man possesses by nature an indestructible life, by virtue of which he will continue to exist to all eternity, making man in this respect equal with God. This teaching was introduced into the professed Christian Church in that time when, as Neander says, "Pagan vices, pagan delusions, pagan superstitions, took the garb and name of Christianity, and were thus enabled to exert a more corrupting influence on the Christian life."

In marked contrast with this pagan philosophy, which dishonours God and attempts to rob Him of His very existence, is the teaching of a pure Christianity which shows that life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel of Christ. This is the doctrine of the Bible concerning man and the soul. This is the very essence of the Christian religion as opposed to the paganism of Socrates.

In various parts of Russia the peasants are making strong demands for land. They claim the right of each man to secure about twelve acres of land, but while backing up their demands by force they disclaim any intentions to take human life.

The inflammability of flannelette is so well known that it would seem unnecessary to call attention to the fact, yet evidently there are numerous persons who do not sense the danger of approaching fire when clothed in this material; for it is stated that one district coroner in London held seventy-three inquests during last year on deceased persons who met their death from this cause.



A. W. ANDERSON, EDITOR.

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, MARCH 27, 1905.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ. — No. 12.**The Sixth Seal.**

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6:12-17.

As the sixth seal was opened to the seer of Patmos he saw in the book a description of the closing scenes of this world's history. Instead of being represented by figures, the actual scenes passed before him. The great earthquake, the darkening of the sun, the falling of the stars, the coming of the Son of man, and the awful fear of the wicked as they beheld the Judge of all the earth seated upon His judgment throne—these mighty events were presented to John as actual realities. Let us study them in comparison with other scriptures, for a correct understanding of these verses is of the greatest moment to every living person to-day.

In the study of the fifth seal we were brought down the stream of time to the closing period of the great tribulation spoken of by the Saviour in His great prophecy. Matt. 24. Speaking of that time He said—

"Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:22.

These days have reference to the twelve hundred and sixty years of papal supremacy, which commenced with 538 A.D., and continued to 1798 A.D. So relentless were the persecutions of the Protestants by the papists of the eighteenth century that for the elect's sake God caused them to cease. As the power of Protestantism developed in Europe, popular feeling revolted against the burning of people whose only crime was their belief of the Protestant faith, and the days of persecution spoken of by Daniel (chap. 7:25) were shortened by more than twenty years, in fulfilment of the prediction of the Saviour, the last of the martyrs being put to death in 1776.

The Great Earthquake.

The first great sign of the end of the age, which the Lord designed to give to the world, was a great earthquake. Martin Luther said,—

"A something strikingly awful shall forewarn that the world will come to an end, and that the last day is even at the door."

Could anything be more strikingly awful than the great earthquake of Lisbon, Nov. 1, 1755, which shook 7,500,000 square miles of land and sea. For a descrip-

tion of this event we refer the reader to the article "Is the World Growing Old?" page 153.

The Darkening of the Sun and Moon.

One of the signs mentioned by the Saviour in His prophecy, to which we have already had occasion to refer, was the darkening of the sun. That no mistake should be made in reference to the time when this sign should appear He located it very definitely, by declaring it should be seen "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Matt. 24:29), or as given by Mark, "In those days after that tribulation." Mark 13:24. We have seen that the expression "those days" refers to the twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days, or years, of papal supremacy. These expired in 1798, but the tribulation ceased more than twenty years earlier; therefore we must look for a darkening of the sun between the time when the persecutions ceased and the time of the overthrow of the Papacy in 1798.

Not long after the Austrian and Spanish edicts of toleration, granting to non-Catholics "the free exercise of their religion," in fulfilment of Matt. 24:22, did the world have to wait for the first sign in the heavens. In the last year of the same decade that witnessed the issue of these edicts the sun was supernaturally darkened, and May 19, 1780, has gone into history as "The Dark Day."

"Dark Day, The, May 19, 1780, so called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day, extending over all New England. In some places persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. . . . The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."—"Webster's Unabridged Dictionary," in Explanatory and Pronouncing Vocabulary, art. "Dark Day."

The Rev. Elam Potter, who preached on this phenomenon nine days after its occurrence, said:—

"But especially I mention that wonderful darkness on the 19th of May inst. [1780]. Then, as in our text, the sun was darkened; such a darkness as probably was never known before since the crucifixion of our Lord. People left their work in the house and in the field. Travellers stopped; schools broke up at eleven o'clock; people lighted candles at noonday; and the fire shone as at night. Some people, I have been told, were in dismay, and thought whether the day of judgment was not drawing on. A great part of the following night also, was singularly dark. The moon, though in the full, gave no light, as in our text."

Herschell, the great astronomer, also testifies to the unaccountableness of this darkness,—

"The dark day in Northern America was one of those wonderful phenomena of nature which will always be read with interest, but which philosophy is at a loss to explain."

The poet Whittier has recounted in verse the peculiar features of this sign:—

" 'Twas on a May-day of the far old year
Seventeen hundred eighty, that there fell
Over the bloom and sweet life of the spring,
Over the fresh earth and the heaven of noon,
A horror of great darkness, like the night
In day of which the Norland sages tell—
The Twilight of the Gods. The low-hung sky
Was black with ominous clouds, save where its rim
Was fringed with a dull glow, like that which climbs
The crater's sides from the red hell below.
Birds ceased to sing, and all the barnyard fowls
Roosted; the cattle at the pasture bars
Low'd, and look'd homeward; bats on leathern wings
Flitted abroad; the sounds of labour died;
Men pray'd, and women wept; all ears grew sharp
To hear the doom-blast of the trumpet shatter
The black sky, that the dreadful face of Christ
Might look from the rent clouds, not as He look'd
A loving guest in Bethany, but stern
As justice and inexorable law."

The night following "the dark day," notwithstanding that the moon had fulfilled the previous day, was of such inky darkness that one writer asserts that "a sheet of white paper held within a few inches of the eyes was equally invisible with the blackest velvet."

The Falling Stars.

This sign, occurring Nov. 13, 1833, was witnessed by many persons who are still living. Of the wonder of this event, we will let others tell. The celebrated astronomer, Prof. Olmstead, of Yale College, says :—

"Those who were so fortunate as to witness the exhibition of shooting stars on the morning of November 13, 1833, probably saw the greatest display of celestial fire-works that has ever been since the creation of the world, or at least within the annals covered by the pages of history.

"In nearly all places the meteors began to attract notice by their unusual frequency as early as eleven o'clock, and increased in numbers and splendour until about four o'clock, from which time they gradually declined, but were visible until lost in the light of day. The meteors did not fly at random over all parts of the sky, but appeared to emanate from a point in the constellation Leo, near a star called Gamma Leonis, in the bend of the Sickle. . . ."

"We pronounce the raining of fire which we saw on Wednesday morning last, an awful type, a sure forerunner, a merciful sign of that great and dreadful day which the inhabitants of the earth will witness when the sixth seal shall be opened. The time is just at hand, described not only in the New Testament, but in the Old. A more correct picture of a fig-tree casting its leaves when blown by a mighty wind, it is not possible to behold."—"Connecticut Observer," of Nov. 25, 1833, quoted from "Old Countryman."

These mighty heralds of Christ's second coming, with loud voice proclaim the nearness of that event, for "when ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors."

The Last Earthquake.

What remains unfulfilled of the events of the sixth seal?—Nothing but the rolling back of the heavens as a scroll and the mighty earthquake which will shake every mountain and island out of their places. Are you ready for such a catastrophe, the like of which this world has never seen? No city nor fortress will be able to withstand the shock which this earth will receive when the Son of man returns in the clouds of heaven, and with the trump of God, and the voice of the archangel calls from their dusty beds all those who shall take part in the first resurrection.

Now is the time to make preparation to escape that time of peril. Unprepared to meet the Lord Jesus, you

will certainly be left to participate in that great cry which the wicked will make to the mountains and rocks—"Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The Verbal Inspiration of the Bible.

Prof. Gaussen says :—

"The theory of a divine revelation, in which you would have the inspiration of the thoughts without the inspiration of the language, is so inevitably irrational that it cannot be sincere, and proves false even to those who propose it."

Prof. A. A. Hodge says :—

"The line can never rationally be drawn between the thoughts and words of Scripture. . . . That we have an inspired Bible, and a verbally inspired one, we have the witness of God Himself."

Canon Westcott says :—

"The slightest consideration will show that words are as essential to intellectual processes as they are to mutual intercourse. . . . Thoughts are wedded to words as necessarily as soul to body."

Dean Bergon, a member of the revision committee, and a man of vast learning, says :—

"You cannot dissect inspiration into substance and form. As for thoughts being inspired, apart from the words which give them expression, you might as well talk of a tune without notes, or a sum without figures. No such theory of inspiration is even intelligible."

Paul says : "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth." 1 Cor. 2 : 13. Jesus says : "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." John 6 : 63. The psalmist says : "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. 119 : 89.—I. W. Munhall.

Obedience.

One of the first and most important lessons of life is the lesson of obedience. Not to know how to obey, not to understand the obligatory grip of duty, not to have tasted the hardening discipline of subjection to right authority, is the same thing as not to know how to rule, not to be able to point out duty to others and to inspire them to its performance. What the ruin of such ignorance is, Mr. Kipling describes in "That Day" :—

"We was rotten 'fore we started—we was never disciplined;

We made it out a favour if an order was obeyed;

Yes, every little drummer 'ad 'is rights and wrongs to mind,

So we had to pay for teachin'—an' we paid !"—Selected.

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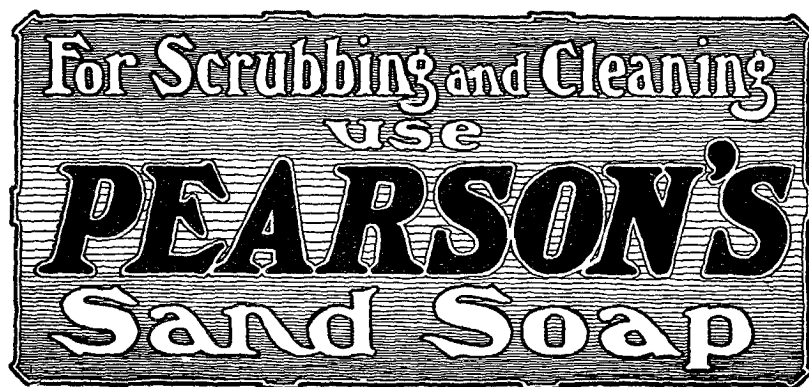
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GENERAL ARTICLES

FROM OUR CONTRIBUTORS

We wait for Him.

By R. Hare.

Are you listening, brother, listening
For the footsteps of the King?
Are you waiting for the triumph
When the angel choirs shall sing;
When the heavens shall glow with splendour,
And the Lord His own shall bring?

That day, the crowning day, is coming,
And the time will not be long,
Till from highest heaven descending,
With a countless shining throng,
Robed in everlasting splendour,
Christ shall come to banish wrong!

Star-worlds flashing in their beauty,
Glory filling all below;
Trembling worlds and mountains falling,
In their witnessing shall show
How the Christ at last hath triumphed,—
Triumphed over every foe.

Wait, my soul, that hour of gladness;
Wait in expectancy divine;
Trim thy lamp with careful patience,
That it may in darkness shine;
Then the bright, resplendent glory
Of His coming shall be thine.

Is the World Growing Old?—No. 4.

By R. Hare.

A Mighty Earthquake.

Among the many great convulsions of nature registered in the past, perhaps the Lisbon earthquake of Nov. 1, 1755, occupies the first place. It is to that mighty upheaval the prophet refers when picturing the history of the sixth seal, as found in Rev. 6:12-14. With it the history of the sixth seal opens, and it thus introduces the signs that tell of Christ's second coming. Beaton's Dictionary thus refers to that shock, and the extent of territory that it covered:—

"The shock of the earthquake which produced such terrible results at Lisbon in 1755 was felt with more or less intensity over an area of 7,500,000 square miles; it extended to Finland, in the north of Europe, and some of the West India Islands, and produced agitation of the waves of Lake Ontario, in North America."—"Universal Information," p. 732.

From a work entitled "Volcanoes and Earthquakes," we take the following description:—

"The oscillation of the terrestrial surface which produced this terrible disaster was not a local event. It was felt over a vast area, said to be four times the size of Europe. It was in Portugal, Spain, and in the northern part of Africa that the first shock was of the greatest violence. The port of Setubal, a few leagues from Lisbon, was also covered by an enormous wave; and at Cadiz, some high walls close to the shore were carried away by the sea, which rose sixty-five feet above its ordinary level. In Morocco many towns were devastated, and thousands of inhabitants perished. On the western borders of the Atlantic, in the Little Antilles, where the tide scarcely exceeds 29½ inches, the water all at once became entirely black, and rose to a height of more than

22 feet. At the same moment, the Swiss lakes, those of Sweden, and the sea which washes the Norwegian coast, were violently agitated, whilst perfect calm reigned in the atmosphere."—Page 177.

In an interesting work, "Wonders of the Volcano," by Ascot R. Hope, we find the following statement:—

"The greatest earthquake of Europe is that which, in 1755, is calculated to have made itself felt over a twelfth part of the globe—in Bohemia, Sweden, Britain, Canada, the West Indian Islands, and Africa, while ships sailing far out in the Atlantic quivered and creaked as if they had struck upon a rock."—Pages 88, 89.

This was surely no common occurrence, no trifling event. Man can but look in wonder at the operation of a power so tremendous. Think of the energy that must be exerted to move 7,500,000 square miles of land and sea. Such a power could surely overthrow all the monuments of human genius and bury them in the dust. In about eight minutes 98,000 persons perished under the hand of this destroyer. Words cannot picture the scene of devastation and dismay that followed this mighty shaking. Truly this was an historical landmark sufficiently great to mark the opening of the sixth seal—that page of pictured history that chronicles the signs of Christ's second coming.

Soon after this great earthquake the signs in the sun moon, and stars, predicted by Christ, took place—the former on May 19, 1780, and the latter on Nov. 13, 1833.

Nature's Last Convulsions.

There is yet one great shock in the future, one earthquake that has never yet been equalled, and the like of which there will never be again. It will be the climax, the crucial hour in Nature's sorrow. Then it is that everything that can be shaken, will be shaken, "that the things which cannot be shaken may remain." That hour of final dissolution is thus pictured by the Patmos seer: "There followed flashes of lightning, cries, and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake. Such an earthquake had not occurred from the time when man began to be upon earth—none so great. . . . Every island vanished, and the mountains disappeared." Rev. 16:18-20.—"Twentieth Century New Testament."

In Rev. 6:14, it is said that every island and mountain are to be "moved out of their places." The picture of the destruction is further described in that remarkable passage by Jeremiah:—

"I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was waste and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved to and fro. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful field was a wilderness, and all cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and before His fierce anger. For thus saith the Lord, The whole land shall be a desolation; yet will I not make a full end." Jer. 4:23-27, R.V.

After this final desolation the earth will be re-created, and in that re-creation the fear of pain will be lost forever. No more will its mountains tremble, or its heart be rent asunder by the earthquake.

Power of the Destroyer.

It is estimated that in the earthquakes of the past more than 13,000,000 of the human family have perished. Some have been crushed under the walls of their crumbling palaces, and some under the ruins of earth's falling monuments. Many have been swallowed by the rushing of angry waters, while others have gone down into the heart of the earth to rest amid its treasures until the final shaking shall again open their prison-house. Many,

indeed, have been the victims slain, but for the most part the object lesson that God had in mind has been disregarded. God has not been the author of this destruction; sin has caused the ruin; but God points to these things, and whispers, "This is not your rest, it shall destroy you even with a sore destruction."

The sin-burdened earth has already demonstrated its power to destroy, but in the coming overthrow, when "all the cities fall," the might of its power will be more fully seen. Like shattered toys the monuments of human pride will be levelled with the dust, and the heart of all the proud will be made to tremble. Hopeless and helpless, indeed, will be the heart that cannot in that day find shelter in God.

"Whom Shall I Send, and Who will Go for Us?"

By W. W. Fletcher.

The agitation for religious instruction in the State schools has not ceased by any means. At the Methodist Conference recently held in Melbourne, the retiring president, as reported in the "Age" of March 1, expressed the hope that "the Bible in State Schools League would not rest till the Bible was in the curriculum of the schools, and was taught by the State school teachers."

In view of the strenuous efforts that are being put forth to carry out this much cherished plan, one is tempted to ask, In what way will the cause of true religion be advanced by the proposed State school instruction? It is very doubtful whether the result of such a plan would be of the nature its advocates anticipate. Let us candidly consider some objections to the teaching of religion being delegated to secular agents. It will be well to view the matter in the light of the effect such a course would have upon the religious life of the people.

1. God demands that the one sent to teach the gospel shall be a sanctified instrument.

When, at the beginning of his work, the prophet Isaiah saw a vision of the Lord's glory, he exclaimed: "Woe is me; for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." But one of the seraphim flew to him, "having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken . . . from off the altar." This was laid upon the prophet's lips, with the words, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Then, as the voice of the Lord is heard saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah readily responds, "Here am I; send me." No man should take the fearful responsibility of carrying God's messages until this cleansing work is done.

2. The State school teachers, as a body, are no more qualified to give religious instruction than are the railway employees, the police force, or any other body of civil servants.

As a sound conversion is the first great need of a man or woman who is to be entrusted with the teaching of Bible truth the question arises, Is the proportion of sanctified men and women larger among the school teachers than it is in any other branch of the civil service? If not, why have the teachers been singled out above all others for this sacred work? This first great qualification the Lord demands; and all others sink into insignificance beside it. The training as teachers is of

small importance compared with the need of a religious experience.

3. If we place the teaching of religion in the hands of unbelievers, there can be but one result of their labours—more unbelievers.

This is why the Lord is so particular about the messengers He sends with the gospel. Many of the professed ministers of religion are, to-day, disavowing their faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures. Can we expect anything better from a secular body? We recognise the fact that there are many sincere Christians in the ranks of the State school teachers; but there is, probably, also as large a proportion of doubters among them as there is in any other profession. Are these to be entrusted with the imparting of Bible truth? What will be the effect upon the youthful mind of the Scripture lesson given with the half-concealed sneer of the cynic? Is it possible to plant the good seed in a child's mind thus?—No, no! Faith begets faith, and unbelief can produce no other fruit than that of unbelief. Although good would, perhaps, be accomplished by those teachers who are themselves the recipients of divine grace, there are thousands of cases in which the teacher would, by the cynical smile, the indifferent mood, some subtle suggestion, criticism, or, above all, the unsanctified life, sow such seeds of unbelief in the minds of the young that would greatly multiply the army of doubters. When the mind becomes familiar with religious truth in this way, and is taught to look upon it as mere sophistry, it becomes tenfold more difficult for the Spirit of God to impress the heart than would be the case had the mind been left free from such instruction. It is a blind policy for the church to endeavour to introduce a system that will certainly bring such results in a large proportion of cases.

4. Christ's charge to His followers is "Go YE into all the world, and teach all nations," and on no account may we hand this commission over to the State or any of its servants.

What would the Master say should the church delegate to others the work He has made peculiarly its own? He calls to His people to-day, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Let the church answer, with sanctified lips, "Here am I; SEND ME."

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pense of health

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World-Wide Field

The Missionary's Call.—No. 6.

By R. W. Munson, Padang, Sumatra.

It is a work of supererogation to declare that it is a grievous mistake for the missionary to find, after reaching his appointed field, that he has been deceived about his call. He should have found that out before starting. In such a work as ours, it often happens that a man must hold himself in readiness to go anywhere he may be most needed. But even then if the man is in right relations with God no mistake will be made, for those over him in authority will not err in their judgment unless they are manifestly unfit to occupy such positions of responsibility. To the fully consecrated man no such misfortune can possibly happen as his getting into the wrong place. God will never suffer it to happen. Very much depends upon the spirit of the man.

I have known both young men and young women to utterly spoil the work entrusted to them by a selfish consideration of their own ease, or their prerogatives. This is a pernicious disease, and it develops a malignant character very rapidly.

I once knew a young man who had been a marine on a British man-of-war who was taken into the home of the missionary, and shown every consideration, and given a lucrative position. He declared that he wanted to become a missionary. But he was ever coveting the most comfortable room and the softest bed, and the best morsel, and complained when he did not get them. He was very jealous of his rights, and contended for them in an unmanly way at times. His spirit was a source of anxiety and concern to the missionaries. It one day happened that one of the sisters of the mission, after seeking elsewhere in vain, came to him for help in giving night lessons to a Chinese lad who worked in the press by day, and who was looking toward the ministry. Did he gladly respond and unselfishly give up his own small plans with which a compliance to this call of duty interfered?—Oh, no; he bluntly replied that he could not give up his recreations for any such purpose, and the already overworked sister had to do the work he should have counted it a privilege to undertake. That young man left the field years ago, and the Chinese lad became a missionary, and died at his post. Which of these young men will you choose to emulate?

In this connection I want to remark that an unwillingness to make small sacrifices at home for those who need your help, is *prima facie* evidence that you are not called to the foreign field. Change of clime does not imply change of character by any means. For this reason our canvassing or city mission work are fine tests of the fitness of young people for larger scenes of labour and heavier burdens of responsibility.

Cultivate self-denial, for that is one of the first things you will no doubt be called upon to exercise when you reach the foreign field. It is quite certain that if you

have not a self-sacrificing spirit you will soon be shaken out of the confidence you had in entering the work, and sooner or later, and usually sooner, you will leave it altogether.

There are some miscellaneous suggestions that it seems to me fitting to make before closing this series of articles. One of them is that the condition of one's health is a most important consideration that should by no means be overlooked in arriving at a decision as to the future field of labour. Neglect of this has often caused a lot of loss to missionary societies, and seriously hampered the work by throwing suddenly on already hard-worked missionaries another man's work.

Most missionary societies require their candidates to undergo a thorough medical examination, and to pass a tolerably severe test before consenting to appoint them to a tropical field in particular.

On the other hand, it sometimes happens that those who appear strong and well-fitted to endure the severe strain of a hostile climate are the first to break down. A sound body rather than robust health is the surest guarantee, it seems to me, against breakdown.

I knew a young lady once who was asked to marry a candidate for the foreign field. She was rather slight, and apparently not strong. Her mother exerted her persuasive powers to the utmost to induce her daughter to abandon the idea, notwithstanding the fact that she loved the man, and felt that God was calling her to go. The mother assured her that she would not be able to stand the hot climate of India, and would probably die within a year, as others had done. She consulted her physician who told her that she could well endure the climate, and prophesied a long missionary career for her. She married the young minister, and left her mother prostrated when they took their departure for the coast, where they would take ship for the mission field. What was the sequel?—The young lady twice returned to visit her mother, and is still, after nearly a quarter of a century, a useful and efficient missionary, and the mother of a considerable family of children, who give promise of following in her steps.

When God calls you to the field, He will certainly give you the strength to do the work He chooses for you. Be sure of your call, and you need have no fear about your health. God does not call us to fail. It may be that we can do more by dying at our post than by living. If that is the work we are called to do, then hesitate not, for it is a glorious thing to die for Christ at the front.

I can never forget a young man of apparently sturdy physique, whom I went to meet at the wharf in the latter part of 1889. He was a noble fellow, big of heart as he was of stature. He was genial and winsome in temper, and a joy to his fellow missionaries. But within six short weeks after landing we carried him to the quiet cemetery, where he sleeps in anticipation of a glorious resurrection.

I wish all my readers could have witnessed his death. The presence of the angels was almost sensible. The radiance of heaven shone in his eyes as he looked up and away to a more glorious crown than any that awaited him here. There was a triumph in his voice that none but God could give as he exclaimed: "Brethren, is this death? Oh, fear it not! It is well with my soul!" Many were the tears that were shed around that death-bed, but not one would have wished him back amongst us. Not one could question his call to this field. All

were convinced that he had done the Master's bidding in laying down his work, and falling asleep for Christ.

When warned against the deadly character of the African climate, a negro candidate for appointment to that field replied, "Institutions must be founded on the graves of their pioneers." He who is not ready to die if need be, for the cause he is called to maintain, is out of his place when trying to promote it. This is particularly true of gospel missionary work. Yet the question of physical fitness ought never to be neglected until the missionary has reached the field. Consult a good physician, several if need be, in order to discover whether your health is such as to forbid your venturing into an unfriendly climate. Either the Lord will remove your disability, or He will show you that you are mistaken about your call. This is a question of such an intricate character that very earnest prayer and very great care alone can enable you to safely settle it rightly. God alone knows what is the right thing to do, but He will not leave any honest inquirer in doubt.

Timothy's Experience with a Chinese Minister.

By G. F. Jones, Singapore.

You will remember that Timothy is the young Chinese Christian who undertook a journey from Sumatra to China for the sole object of learning the Amoy dialect to use in preaching. He had but little money and fewer friends. But, nothing daunted, he feared not to go anywhere in the service of One who has proved to him to be "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Upon reaching his destination, he found all that he wanted, and upon getting mixed in with the missionaries there he discovered to his horror that some of them needed to be truly converted. My last letter showed how the people crowded to hear the gospel at his mouth. There visited him also a Chinese minister, the head of the Chinese ministry, who was kind, and brought a Chinese Bible to Timothy. This ripened into a closer acquaintance, but Timothy feared that if he knew he kept the Lord's Sabbath according to the commandment, he would lose his friendship, so he continues:—

"The following week I called to see him at his school, then I told him I kept the Sabbath. To illustrate the point I gave him a parable. A rich man instructed his servant to fetch him a certain white cup, but on reaching the kitchen the servant found another one the same size, but different in colour, and brought that instead of the right one; whereupon his master was angry because he disobeyed, but the servant argued that one was as good as the other, upon which the master sent his servant away for his presumption, stubbornness, and disobedience. Had the servant noticed more closely, he would have seen that the cups bore different seals, each stamped with its owner's name. If men require strict obedience from us, how much more does God who cannot err; for when He gave His commandment to 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt do no work,' then what think you will be His judgment of our conduct when we dare to argue with Him as to another day being equal in importance when He has already specified the day, and sanctified it? Shall we not indeed hear the words 'Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity,' instead of the words, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant?' Like the parable here, the master had purposely set apart one cup as his very own, for his own special use, but the servant considered his wisdom better than his master's, and would dictate to him. The fact was that the other cup was in use by another man, and his name on it. What presumption, then, for finite, sinful

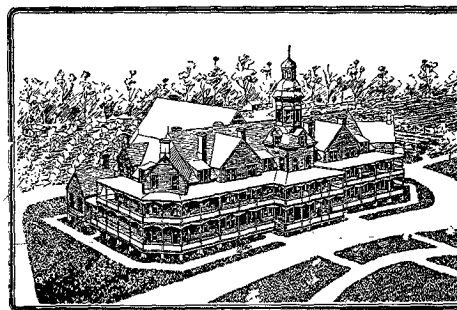
man to dictate to God as to the law He has made concerning the Sabbath, which He designates 'The Holy of the Lord,' and 'My holy day.' The Sunday is like the other cup which the servant brought, and belongs to the 'man of sin.' It is entirely a papal institution; it is its seal, and has not the seal of God in it. Like a counterfeit coin, it can be detected if tested.

"My minister friend got angry, and began to justify himself and the Sunday. I had a heavy heart when I left him that night, fearing the decision he would make on this and other important questions. Upon reaching home, I opened my Bible again, and read, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Then I opened my window, and shouted to God with tears, asking for help to change this brother's heart. Three weeks later I attended a prayer-meeting where this minister was, and after the meeting was over, I got him to accompany me to a quiet place up a hill. There we knelt down together, and prayed until midnight. His tears ran freely. The next night we came together again to the same place. I knew God was with us there. I told him how he and the reverend ministers used tobacco and liquor, and did other bad things, sinning grievously against God. Then he asked me to pray for him that he might throw off all those bad habits. We both knelt down with sincere hearts, shouting to God for help, and our prayers were answered that night; for after this he never touched tobacco or liquor, and desired to conform to all the commandments of God. After some more sincere prayer-meetings in solitary places and studying the Bible every day, he began keeping the Lord's Sabbath according to the commandment, which says it is the seventh day and not the first. We then both went out into the streets preaching to the heathen.

"This brother preacher came with me to Canton, where he was baptised. After this we returned to our former place with rejoicing, but on the return journey we met a severe typhoon, which dismasted us, and we were in a sinking condition, but we shouted to God to save us, and then the vessel was driven towards Swatow, where we landed safely. How thankful we were to God for saving us in the time of trouble. His hand was in all this, for the Swatow people were so kind to us they housed and fed us every day, and asked us to preach to them while they eagerly listened. A week of this work in Swatow brought us and them many blessings. 'God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.'

"Upon our returning by another vessel the English reverends were wild with anger that this minister was keeping the Sabbath, and had been baptised, but 'we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.' They turned out this brother minister from their churches, and then we stayed there and preached the truth, and many came to hear, but the ministers raised opposition and hatred through envy, 'nevertheless we made our prayer unto God,' and worked. We found our God 'a very present help in trouble.' Be of good cheer. Trust in Him at all times. Amen."—Timothy.

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HOME AND HEALTH

The Hurrying Hours.

How often the thought comes home to me,
As the moments hurry away,
Of the many things I intended to do
Somehow, sometime, some way.
There are promises that have not been kept,
Though I always meant to be true,
But time is too short for all the things
That a body intends to do.

I will answer a letter, or read a book,
I will write a bit of a rhyme;
I will do the things that I ought to do—
Some day when I have the time.
So I look beyond, as I hope and plan
For the days that are just ahead,
While the day that is here goes into the grave
With its opportunities dead.

To-day is the only day we have,
Of to-morrow we can't be sure;
To seize the chance as it comes along
Is the way to make it secure.
For every year is a shorter year,
And this is a truth sublime—
A moment misspent is a jewel lost
From the treasury of time. —Arthur Lewis.

Training that Crushes Individuality.

Dog trainers tell us that they get their best results by training a dog to do a thing because he wants to do it; that is, they give him a motive for doing it, until he does it spontaneously, without being forced. A noted trainer says: "My dogs work for me more because they want to please me than because they are afraid of a whipping if they don't obey. If, before a dog comes to me, he has been bullied for every little failure, it is next to impossible to make anything of him."

If an animal trainer can not get the best results by forcing an animal to do a thing against its will, how can a parent or teacher expect to get the best results from a child by the employment of fear or force? A normal boy and girl, if properly trained, will not need to be forced to do things. A young mind longs for activity and expression, but if spontaneity is crushed out of the life by slave-driving methods, ambition may be ruined, and the natural power of self-expression entirely destroyed. Many sensitive children have been ruined by being nagged and bullied for every little fault. Their natures became warped and twisted by being compelled to do things, instead of being so led that they were not only willing, but also anxious to do them.

Just as a dog trainer, by proper training, gets the best results from a highly organised, intelligent dog, but finds that the animal is all the more easily spoiled because of his very intelligence and sensitive organisation; so finely organised, sensitive children, while capable of the highest degree of development, are on that very ac-

count more likely to be ruined by harsh, compulsory methods.

Spontaneity is absolutely necessary to originality, and unless a child is allowed to develop along the lines nature has marked out for him, it is impossible for him to be original, and to preserve his individuality.

Parents should stop and think when a child does not show enthusiasm in his studies or in his work. There is something wrong; for enthusiasm is as natural to child life as song is to a bobolink, or as play is to a young puppy.

Encouragement, praise, and sympathy will do more to develop naturalness and self-expression in a boy or girl than any amount of threats, compulsion, or restraint.

Some parents try to fit a boy to a certain pattern, and to mould him into such a shape as they desire. They leave no room for the expression of his individuality, but try to conform him to some fixed and old-fashioned idea of their own.

The way to develop a child properly is to study him from the standpoint of what he is, not of what you think he ought to be. He may not at all fit into your conception of what a boy should be, but he may be much better and larger in every way. Find out what is in him, and help to draw it out. Encourage him every time he does well, lead him to free, untrammelled development of all that is best in him, and you will find the result will be far more satisfactory than if you had tried to cast him in your particular mould.—"Success."

Avondale School.

(A Pen Picture.)

It is evening. A solemn stillness broods over the estate, unbroken save by a chorus of weird laughter intermingled with happy twitterings, proceeding from many green-foliaged trees. A tint of smoke partly obscures the horizon as though a Holy Presence were there keeping guard over His chosen people. The sun is withdrawing his last rays from the earth, but a peculiar light is illuminating the landscape, mellowing and bathing everything in a tender glow. A few fires from open spaces in the woods are visible, shooting their red flames to heaven, as if to call down the vengeance of the clouds upon them for their presumption. High up on one stately tree the sparks are flying, throwing a vivid search-light on the scene. A flock of moving, twittering swallows flies past, making a small cloud, but their swift wings carry them on and on, and soon they are lost to view behind the haze of smoke. A wonderful light is flooding the windows of the college buildings, making them give back glowing tints as though a host of angels with shining wings had room inside. The clouds above are inky black, save in one place we see a beautiful, fleecy mass like a table covered with wool, while here and there a dash of red makes one think of the verse which reads: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." On the hills around, the trees look like moving battalions outlined against the blackness of the sky.

The clouds disperse, the strange light fades, and darkness settles down over the scene, leaving only a few lights twinkling here and there amid the gloom, like saints in a sinful world, few and far between.—C. E. R.



Which Way.

Round-about is a tiresome way,
And a long and hard way, too.
Avoid that path, or you'll go astray,
As so many travellers do;
For a thousand paths of fear and doubt
Make a labyrinth of Round-about.

Straight-ahead is the way to take,
If you wish to reach your goal;
Climb you must, and your back will ache,
And to strength you'll pay a toll;
But you can not miss your aim, 'tis said,
If you keep along with Straight-ahead.

—Frank Walcott Hutt.



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

Chapter XIII.



OFF we went through the orchard down toward the old gully at the foot of the hill.

What a beautiful picture the old orchard was to be sure. The almond and pear trees were covered with blossoms, and some of the cherry trees, too, for that matter.

Tom declared that he had never seen anything so pretty.

Then we came to the old log bridge which passes over the little stream that flows down inside the orchard on the north side. What a beautiful, cool spot it was to be sure, with its clear water, and ferns, and reeds.

And then the fence, not made with cobblestones like my old one at home, but great, high sweet-briar bushes, covered with pink roses, and scenting everything around with their sweet perfume.

"Come here, uncle," said Tom, "I want to show you what I found the other day."

And what do you suppose it was, boys and girls?—Why, the prettiest little bird's nest you ever saw, with three tiny speckled eggs in it.

Tom is a very kind boy, and wouldn't hurt a bird or rob a nest for anything.

In fact, he would not let me go near it till he was quite sure that the birds were not looking.

But that was a hard job, for the little fellows kept a sharp eye on us.

But they flew over to the little brook directly, and started drinking from the cool, rippling water.

"Now, Uncle Ben," said he, "just one look, and then come away quickly before the old mother sees that you are there!"

I do hope all my boys and girls are kind to God's little creatures. Always remember that the loving Father knows all about the nests of His little birds, and hears their cry when they are in distress.

"Here is the old gully, Tom," said I, climbing through the fence, "and there's my claim over yonder by that big bush."

You can be sure that Tom bounded off across the old lead, eager to see how deep my hole was, and what the prospects were for gold, as he said.

"Why, Uncle Ben," said he, "you must have been working here for days. How do you get down?"

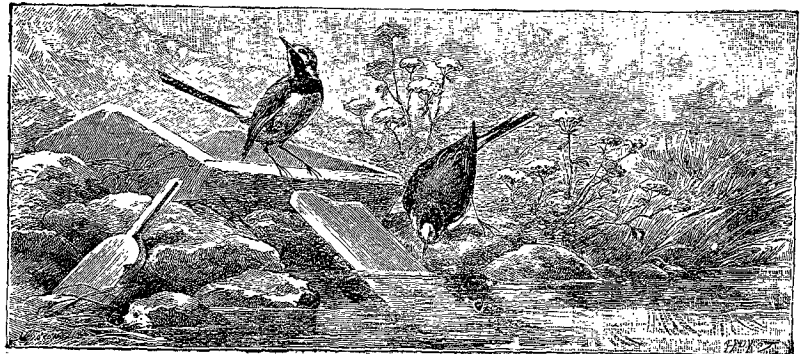
"Easily, Tom," said I, as I began to descend, putting my feet into the steps I had cut out of the sides of the hole, while Tom looked down and laughed at my strange performance.

"Why, uncle," said he, "it's grand. I do hope you'll get the gold. When are you going to wash some dirt?"

Well, boys and girls, of course I had to answer all the boy's questions, and promise him that I would let him work along with me and go shares. He was delighted,



"The prettiest little birds nest you ever saw"



A drink from the cool, rippling water.

I can tell you. When we got home I heard him telling Mary about his "mate," and that he really believed we would "strike it rich."

My brother Robert laughed heartily at the boy's excitement, and delighted him by telling him a story about the diggings while Mary laid the tea.

What a good tea we had to be sure! With chatting and laughing the hour soon passed, and the time came for Mary to light the lamp.

Tom soon began to wonder how he could get a story, and it did not take him long to decide.

"Mary," said he, "you know that old book you were showing Uncle Ben the other day. I can understand how they could write such funny-looking letters, but I can't tell how they could *print* them. When did they find out about printing, Mary?"

"You want another story, Tom, I can see," said Mary.

"It is true that the discovery and progress of the art of printing is one of the most interesting things you ever heard. I think I must tell you about that, Tom, for I am sure you will like it.

"Indeed," continued Mary, "it is a part of my other story about writing, and it would never do to leave that off in the middle."

Well, little friends, Mary's story was a real good one. I am sure you will be pleased to hear it, so I must try and tell you all I can about it next week.

Uncle Ben would be very pleased to hear from any of his little readers. If you send me any letters, my little friends, I will see if our kind editor will give me room to publish them here in our department. Tell me how you like our paper, if you have found any *true gold* yet, and what kind of work you are doing for the dear Master. How are you getting along at Sabbath School? Indeed, I can think of lots of things that would be of real interest to me, and I am sure the letters would be thoroughly enjoyed in the hundreds of homes where our good paper pays its weekly visits. Suppose you sit down now, before you forget it, and write me a little note. Address—Uncle Ben, Echo Office, North Fitzroy, Vic.

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In our next issue we are planning to insert some most interesting items. Questions are constantly arising concerning the alleged impossibility of ascertaining the accuracy of the septenary order of the days of the week, owing to the numerous changes which have been made in the calendar. In order to set at rest any questionings on this matter which may have arisen in the minds of our readers, we propose to publish a few historical facts gathered from reliable and authentic sources which should settle this question once for all. An interesting report of a meeting which Pastor Teasdale conducted in New Zealand recently will also appear, in which are reviewed some objections which had been raised by a local clergyman against the observance of the Sabbath.

A new and fitting name has been given to the public-house, according to Archdeacon Eyre. Speaking at a meeting of the Sheffield Savings Bank, he said that the working classes in that place were naming the public-house "the Lossings Bank." It was a bank that never paid its money out, and there was no interest paid unless it was degradation, disgrace, squalor, and crime.

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