

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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ONE PENNY.

Discord Between Preaching and Practice.

"If we believe, as our theology and public utterances aver," says the Methodist "Spectator," "that the fourth commandment is still in force, then it is as wrong to violate it as the eighth." Quite so; in making this statement the Methodist editor is strictly accurate, for to violate the fourth commandment is certainly as wrong as to violate the eighth; and it is for this reason Seventh-day Adventists keep the Sabbath on the seventh day, the only one which God sanctified and blessed. If Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, Independents, Disciples of Christ, and all other professing Christians, would harmonise their practice with their own teaching concerning the fourth commandment, which command, the "Spectator" says, "has never been revoked," what a mighty testimony would be given to the world of the power of Christianity to lead men to forsake all and follow Christ.

Christian teachers talk a great deal about the love of God. Listen to the definition of love which is given by the disciple whom Jesus loved: "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, That as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it." 2 John 6. "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning." 1 John 2:7. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:2, 3.

Just before His betrayal the Saviour said to His disciples: "If ye love Me ye will keep My commandments." "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, He it is that loveth Me." John 14:15, 21, R.V.

"Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John 15:14.

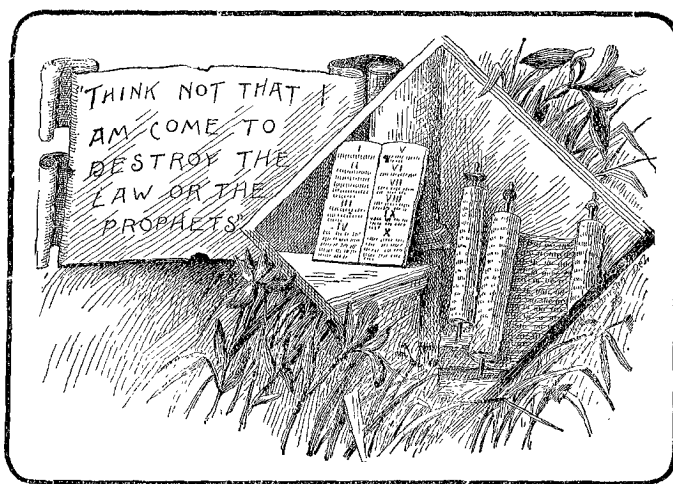
On one occasion a man came to Jesus saying, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Notice the reply which was given: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

The apostle John emphasises the importance of keeping the commandments, for he says: "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him." 1 John 2:3, 4.

Concerning the immutability and unchangeableness of the law of God nothing outside the Bible could be written stronger and more to the point than has been published from time to time by all the leading Christian

denominations, yet, when confronted with the indisputable fact that the fourth commandment calls for the observance of the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week (Saturday), that Christ and His apostles never observed any other day as the Sabbath, and that Sunday is nowhere in the Scriptures referred to as the Sabbath, they all with one consent begin to make excuse. Says one, "It does not matter which day you keep." If so, why did God particularly designate the seventh day, and

give most explicit instruction concerning the holiness of that particular day, and the reason why it was more blessed and holy than the other six which He calls "the six working days?" Eze. 46:1. Another offers the absurd objection, "You cannot keep one definite day on a round world," as if God who made the world was not perfectly cognisant of its shape when He made the Sabbath law. We have yet to hear of any person experiencing difficulty in keeping Sunday on a round world. Are we, then, to conclude that the planet assumes a different shape on Sunday in order that all may keep that day? A moment's reflection will convince anyone who is not



too biased to be convinced, that a definite Sabbath can be observed on a round world by all who are willing to keep it. The difficulty is not in the rotundity of the earth, but in the obstinacy of those individuals who, finding it more to their convenience or personal profit to follow custom, are ready to seize upon any excuse however absurd.

Another offers the objection, "You cannot tell which is the seventh day." To such we would simply say, there being but seven days in the week, the seventh day is the one immediately preceding the first. The whole Christian world is in agreement as to which day is the first day of the week. The calendars of all countries agree upon the day of the week, even though, as in the case of Russia, there is an actual difference of thirteen days in their date. Throughout the world, Sunday is acknowledged to be the first day of the week. What difficulty can there be, then, in ascertaining which is the seventh day of the week?

Objections of the flimsiest nature, and excuses the most absurd, are offered by rational people of whose intelligence there can be no possible doubt, whenever their attention is called to the difference between their practice in the matter of Sabbath-keeping and the teaching of their church, an instance of which is before us in the article already alluded to.

Speaking of the indifference of certain Methodist preachers to the matter of Sunday travelling this writer says: "When the question was recently being much canvassed, and a great opportunity thereby afforded the leaders of the metropolitan churches to strike a blow for righteousness, without exception they failed to clearly condemn Sunday travelling. Their utterances left the impression that every man might do as he liked, and nobody was to find fault with him."

Commenting on this further, the "Spectator" says:—

"The evident discrepancy between the creed of these gentlemen and their preaching will certainly be accounted for on the ground of an apprehension of the great depletion of city churches which would follow a proper observance of Sunday."

"Of this there can be no question, that according to Methodist standards, . . . the practice of Sunday travelling by tram and train is sinful, being the violation of a commandment that has never been revoked, by the robbery from other men of their right to Sunday rest and opportunity."

Self-interest is insinuated by the "Spectator" as the motive which kept the city preachers silent during the recent agitation against Sunday trains, for upon the Sunday trains the great majority of the congregations of the fashionable metropolitan churches depend. Looking squarely at the issue before us we feel constrained to ask, For what other motive but self-interest do the leaders of Christendom shut their eyes to the great fact that by the fourth commandment, which they all admit has never been revoked, Saturday, the seventh day of the week, should be observed as the Sabbath, and not Sunday? When challenged to produce a "Thus saith the Lord" for Sunday-keeping, no theologian can do so. Not a passage of scripture in the whole Bible can be adduced in support of the Sunday-sabbath. The fact that Christ arose from the dead on that day has nothing whatever to do with the matter, for had the Lord intended to substitute Sunday for the Sabbath, He certainly would have instructed His apostles of such intention.

Sunday, as a weekly festival, is a relic of paganism brought into the professed Christian church by the

Papacy, and should, therefore, be discarded by Protestants, who declare "the Bible and the Bible only" to be their rule of faith. If Protestants are to follow this high standard, which has been their watchword since the sixteenth century, they should henceforth, in the fear of God, walk in all His commandments blameless, "for whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

A Moral Collapse.

It is remarkable how rapidly the word of God is being fulfilled in reference to the fall of Babylon, a term used in the book of Revelation to signify the multiplicity of the churches which would exist in the last days. Higher critics may not point this out, but, nevertheless, little children may understand it. Babylon means confusion, and any sensible person must be not only astonished, but staggered, at the multiplicity of beliefs which men attempt to teach, and with which they oppose, mystify, and perplex one another. The present state of things, which astonishes and perplexes thinking men, especially those who are sincerely seeking for truth, is described by God Himself as "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots." Rev. 17:5. Ecclesiastical harlots. Think of it. Systems that, instead of being and remaining loyal to God, have associated themselves by both oath and precept to the kings of the earth, to governments, to customs, to laws, to traditions, until the result is that which may be seen so plainly to-day,—a confused conglomeration, diversified, mystifying, Babylonish, a perfect medley of confusion.

But however great are the diversities of the present systems of to-day in the religious world, there is one unique and central position upon which the modern Babylon agrees, and upon which, though diverse in teaching and thought, one system can look the other in the eyes, and exclaim, Brother; or, to follow the gender applied to Babylon, Sister. And this is as strange as it is remarkable, for they agree to a unit in the wholly unscriptural position that Sunday is the Sabbath. This is Babylon's only anchor. This is where she is perfectly united; the consolidating feature in her government, and the place where her union is complete. Sunday is Babylon's mark. Rev. 13:16. Think of it. She offers God an unscriptural Sunday in the place of a Bible Sabbath. She presents the ancient relic of the Assyrian and Babylonian to the God who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that therein is. This she presents to Him who blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; who rested upon it, and who says, I am God, and there is none else. This is her presentation to-day—her universal presentation,—and God calls it her mark. Rev. 14:9-11.

Amidst all the mystery that surrounds her this is where God sees unity, union, and force, and He notes the zeal with which Babylon guards her Assyrian relic, and the ardour with which she rejects His Sabbath; therefore His wrath is being moved, and we are approaching the time when divine action of the most decided form will be manifested from on high. God will no more accept Babylon's offering than He did that of Cain's.

Reader, we have reached an epoch in things. A cry is going forward now that "Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen. . . . Come out of her, My people." Rev. 18:2-4. Have you heard it? Do you realise the cause of

her fall? She rejects the commandments of God. God challenges her virtue; her jewels, her cinnamon, her frankincense, her wine and her oil, her purple, her fine linen, her silk, and her scarlet cannot, and will not, save her. Rev. 18:16, 17. She is becoming a cage for unclean birds. Rev. 18:2. There is no freedom in a cage. Truth alone makes people free. Babylon means bondage—an ecclesiastical prison. "Come out of her, My people." Her fall is approaching. Tenets of faith that she has held for ages are now being rejected. The miraculous conception of Christ is doubted; the resurrection is called into question; the Sabbath is broken, and the foundations of Bible doctrines are being undermined. Reason is placed above revelation. There is no dividing line between Babylon and the world. She is a moral collapse, and in accord with her euphonious title she is playing the role of the ecclesiastical harlot to perfection. She exhibits her lewdness to the full glare of day. She has fallen, fallen. Her teachings are corrupt, and the day is fast approaching that the many songs which she sings will be silenced, dreadfully silenced, when her harpers, her musicians, her pipers, and her trumpeters shall no more be heard at all. Rev. 18:22. In one hour her great riches will come to nought, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. Rev. 18:8. "Come out of her, My people."—J. B.

The Ten Commandments and the Public Schools.

By M. C. Wilcox.

"The whole civilised world," says Henry Yates Satterlee, Protestant Episcopal Bishop, of Washington, D.C. (Washington "Times," March 17, 1905), "has a moral foundation on the ten commandments," and he thus continues:—

"In the ten commandments is set forth the divine and social law of God; in them is set forth the sanctity of the family, the sanctity of the married relationship, the sanctity of human life, the sanctity of property, and of character. They are the ruling ideas of modern civilisation, and, if they disappear, civilisation will disappear. The ten commandments ought to be taught in the public schools. . . . Furthermore, if the ten commandments are not taught in the schools, every child will grow up with the inevitable impression that on this account they must be less important than reading, writing, and arithmetic. The majority have rights, as well as the minority, and I, for one, feel sure that the majority would unhesitatingly express their belief that the ten commandments . . . should be taught in the public schools."

Now, all that Bishop Satterlee says concerning the breadth and importance of the ten commandments, is true. They form all the moral basis there is in the civilisation of the world, and, if they should disappear, civilisation would disappear.

But the ten commandments are the law of God. That "law is spiritual." It can not be taught mechanically, nor can its moral power be received intellectually. It must be received by faith in Christ Jesus.

Further, would the Bishop agree to have the commandments taught in the schools as God gave them? The decalogue declares that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." No true rule of exposition, no just teaching, can ever make the commandment say otherwise. Would the Bishop agree with the law and the teacher?

Now if the child considers the ten commandments of less importance than arithmetic, because his teacher does not make them a part of school work, what would he think of the science of mathematics, as applied to God's law, if the teacher would tell him that the seventh day meant the first day? Would not the pupil, in the exercise of his common sense, lose faith in the decalogue, or the teacher, or his mathematics?

And, then, if some of the teachers should teach, as do some of their pastors, that the first day of the week was the Sabbath; others, that there was no Sabbath, the law being abolished; others, that a seventh part of time is all that is necessary; others, that you could not keep a definite day on the round world; and some others, that God's law means just what it says, and just what Jesus practised, confusion worse confounded would inevitably result, and Babylonian towers would be erected in our schools. What then?—The State would have to step in and decide between the conflicting opinions; and then the religion taught would be no longer Biblical, but the religion of the State. The State would have to decide between the rival sects, as did Constantine, and define which, in the mind of the State, was truly Christian. Are Protestants willing to take this step? Centuries ago this sort of thing gave us the Dark Ages; the same thing is repeating to-day. Would God, that Protestants might see it!

Last year a Victorian hat-mill used 1,500,000 rabbit skins in the production of felt hats.

Some of the Russian peasants are said to be so poor that insects avoid their houses because there is actually not enough to be found therein for sustenance.

The practice is growing in Russia of chopping off one's fingers to escape army service in Manchuria. If the practice extends far enough the Czar will certainly have to make peace.

In an address on "The Place of the Bible in the Work of the Churches," delivered at one of the meetings of the National Free Church Council, in Manchester, the Rev. Dr. Campbell Morgan said: "My plea is for the teaching of the Bible itself, in order that its radiant light may still flash upon the darkness of our age. The light, the light, is the essential thing. Personally, I think the lamp is also of divine workmanship. You may differ, but I beseech you, be very careful how you destroy the lamp, lest, peradventure, you extinguish the light, for it is very difficult to know just where the gold of the lamp and the glory of the light divide, so strange and splendid is the merging. I am still of Peter's mind that the dumb ass spake with man's voice; but I will not fight you over an ass, so long dead, since Balaam's enforced prophecy has had such gracious fulfilment, and I may take men to Bethlehem. I am convinced that God was quite as able to prepare a fish to conserve one man's life for the saving of a city, as is the British Government to construct a submarine boat to save a few and murder many; but I will not conduct a gladiatorial combat on the back, or even in the belly of a fish, while I ought to be telling men God cares for London and Manchester, and all our cities, as He did for Nineveh, and has demonstrated the fact to all the ages by the sign of the risen Jesus."



A. W. ANDERSON, EDITOR.

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, MAY 29, 1905.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ.—No. 20.**The Fourth Trumpet.**

"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." Rev. 8:12.

Under the successive invasions of her territories by Alaric, Genseric, and Attila, and the internal revolutions and petty wars which were such a pronounced feature of the history of the fifth century, Rome was reduced to but a shadow of its former greatness. Its fleets had been annihilated by the Vandals and its commerce destroyed. Immense territories had been wrenched from her by the powerful Goths. Some of the fairest portions of her possessions had been transformed into a desert by the Hunnish king, Attila. Of its former glory little remained "but the vain titles and insignia of sovereignty." Even these were stripped from her in due course, and it is to this that the prophecy of the fourth trumpet points.

"In the year 475, by one of the endless revolutions which marked the close of the western empire, the emperor Nepos was driven into exile, and the successful rebel Orestes was enabled to array in the purple his son, a handsome boy of fourteen or fifteen, who was named Romulus after his grandfather, and nicknamed Augustulus, from his inability to play the part of the great Augustus." "But Orestes's tenure of power was brief. The barbarian mercenaries in Italy determined to secure for themselves a position there such as that which their kinsfolk had won in Gaul and Spain and Africa. Their demand for a third of the lands of Italy was refused by Orestes, and they instantly rose in revolt."—"Encyclopædia Britannica."

Odoacer, a chief of the Herulians, a barbarian remnant of the host of Attila, left on the Alpine frontier of Italy, offered to obtain for them all that they desired if they would seat him on the throne. Having confidence in his ability to procure their desires, they accordingly proclaimed him king, August 23, 476. This year marks an important epoch in the history of Rome, because thenceforward the imperial dignity of Rome was transferred to Constantinople. Five days after his elevation to the position of king, Odoacer beheaded Orestes, and a few days later Paulus his brother was defeated and slain near Ravenna. Romulus Augustulus was commanded by Odoacer to abdicate his throne, but his life was spared. Says Gibbon: "The unfortunate Augustulus was made the instrument of his own disgrace; and he signified his resignation to the senate; and that assembly, in their last act of obedience to a Roman prince, still affected the spirit of freedom and the forms of the constitution. An epistle was addressed, by their unanimous decree, to the emperor Zeno, the son-in-law and successor of Leo, who had lately been restored, after a short rebellion, to the

Byzantine throne. They solemnly disclaim the necessity, or even the wish, of continuing any longer the imperial succession in Italy; since in their opinion the majesty of a sole monarch is sufficient to pervade and to protect, at the same time, both East and the West. In their own name, and in the name of the people, they consent that the seat of universal empire shall be transferred from Rome to Constantinople.

Another writer shows how remarkably this action of the Roman Senate fulfilled one of the specifications of the prophecy of the fourth trumpet. He says: "The power and glory of Rome, as bearing rule over any nation, became extinct. The name alone remained to the queen of nations. Every token of royalty disappeared from the imperial city. She who had ruled over the nations sat in dust, like a second Babylon, and there was no throne where the Cæsars had reigned. The last act of obedience to a Roman prince, which that once august assembly performed, was the acceptance of the resignation of the last emperor of the West, and the abolition of the imperial succession in Italy. The sun of Rome was smitten. Long had that name been a terror to the nations, and identified with supreme authority in the world. Long had the emperor of Rome shone and ruled in the earth, like a sun in the firmament. His was a kingdom, great and terrible, and strong exceedingly, to which all others were subjected or subordinate. His supreme or imperial authority had, in the decline of the empire, been greatly obscured, but till then it had never been extinguished. It had been darkened and disfigured by a great storm, eclipsed, as it were, by a mountain of fire; and outshone, as it were, by a falling star, like a fiery meteor. It had survived the assaults of Goths and Vandals and Huns. Though clouded and obscured, it had never been smitten; and though its light reached but a little way, where previously it had shone over all, it had never been extinguished."

"Neither, at last, was the whole sun smitten, but 'the third part.' The throne of the Cæsars had for ages been the sun of the world, while other kings were designated as stars. But the imperial power had first been transferred to Constantinople by Constantine; and it was afterward divided between the East and the West. And the Eastern Empire was not yet doomed to destruction. Even the Western Empire was afterward revived, and a more modern dynasty arose to claim and maintain the title of emperor of the Romans. But, for the first time, after sudden, and violent, and distinctly marked and connected convulsions, the imperial power in Rome, where for so long a period it had reigned triumphant, was cut off forever, and 'the third part of the sun was smitten.'"

Although the Emperor Zeno in reality owed his exaltation to the position of sole emperor to the Herulian king, Odoacer, yet Zeno regarded the increasing power of Odoacer with much jealousy. Gradually the friendship between Odoacer and the Byzantine court grew less. Being embarrassed somewhat by the close proximity of the warriors of Theodoric the Ostrogoth, Zeno contrived somehow to induce Theodoric to invade Italy and take charge of the affairs of that country, and thus his two most formidable neighbours were caused to quarrel, and so reduce their power. In 489 Theodoric entered Italy and gave battle to Odoacer, who was defeated. A month later he was again defeated by the successful Goth. Odoacer then shut himself up in Ravenna for four years. In 493 a compromise was arrived at by which it was agreed that Odoacer and Theodoric should be recognised

as joint rulers of the Roman state. Less than one month after entering into this arrangement, Theodoric invited Odoacer to a banquet in the palace of the Laetum, and there slew his rival with his own hand, cleaving him from shoulder to flank with his broadsword.

Theodoric ruled over Italy as an independent sovereign, but while he forbade the Romans to carry arms, yet he left their local administration intact, so that while the title of Emperor of Rome had been obliterated, or, as stated in the prophecy, "the sun was smitten," there yet remained the moon and the stars—consuls and senators. These officers of state, however, were also to be abolished in Rome. Calamity followed calamity, until every vestige of governmental authority was lost to Rome. Belisarius, the general of Justinian, waged war against the Goths, and defeated them, and in A.D. 541 the Roman Consulship was extinguished. Eleven years afterwards Narses, the successor of Belisarius, succeeded in driving the Goths from Rome, and establishing a new form of government, by which the senate was abolished, and the provinces of Italy were placed under Grecian dukes, controlled by a governor-general, who ruled in the eastern emperor's name at Ravenna.

Thus the three parts of the mighty government of Rome,—emperors, consuls, and senators, symbolised in the Revelation by the sun, moon, and stars,—passed into oblivion, and Italy became divided into a number of little duchies and provinces.

"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound." Rev. 8:13.

This announcement has reference to the fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpets, which are called woe trumpets, doubtless because of "the more terrible events to transpire under their sounding," an interpretation of which will be given in succeeding issues.

What Has Been Accomplished.

A writer who has evidently given some careful thought to the question has prepared the following summary statement of the result of the "New Theology" in contrast with old-fashioned Christianity:—

- "A pantheistic god, instead of a personal God.
- "A human saviour, instead of a divine Saviour.
- "Infallible scholarship, instead of an infallible Bible.
- "Modern thought instead of a 'Thus saith the Lord.'
- "A development of religious ideas from a human mind, instead of a revelation from God.
- "The natural in all things, the supernatural in nothing.
- "Reformation, instead of regeneration.
- "Culture, instead of conversion.
- "A change of environment, instead of a change of heart.
- "The energy of the flesh, instead of prayer and faith.
- "Interest in the secular, instead of zeal for religion.
- "Nobody afraid of hell, and nobody caring much about heaven.

"Everybody coming out right anyhow, and nobody on the wrong track except those who cling to the faith once delivered to the saints."

Those who are acquainted with the situation as it exists in the religious world to-day, and have not been infatuated with these Satanic sophistries, know that this summary is altogether too true. There is no compromise between these two systems of teaching. They cannot stand together. The one which holds its ground must overthrow the other.—Selected.

On the Downward Grade.

Juvenile depravity of a most mischievous nature was made public in two of the suburban police courts of Melbourne last week. One boy aged 8 and another aged 10 years were convicted of breaking into two houses, one of which they afterwards set on fire. The magistrate, after hearing the evidence, said he did not know whether the boys had been reading literature of the "Deadwood Dick" character, but old criminals could not have done such work more cleverly. On the same day, in another police court two girls, aged 8 and 9 years respectively, were convicted of stealing lead from the roof of a house, and causing damage to the property to the extent of £3.

That children of such tender years should be guilty of crimes of this character is a grave scandal. Even the possibility of such crimes should never enter the minds of young children. It is little wonder, however, that the ears of the community are so frequently being shocked by rehearsals of juvenile crime when the country is deluged with abominable literature of the type referred to by the magistrate. If parents permit their children to imbibe immoral and debasing ideas through "penny dreadfuls," they may surely expect a harvest of trouble in the future. Even the daily newspaper, with its revelation of the evils which permeate society, should not be permitted to shock the innocent sensibilities of the youth of tender age. Parents should make the most strenuous efforts to shield their little ones from the contaminating influences of city life. Their young minds should only receive impressions of those things which are pure and beautiful and lovely, and as they behold the goodness of God as revealed in nature's lesson book, they will instinctively learn to meditate on the good instead of the evil.

Doubtless we shall hear from many quarters that the responsibility for juvenile crimes lies at the door of our "godless system of education," but anyone who will pause and consider the matter calmly will see how futile must be the efforts of the State to impart true principles of Christian morality through the medium of persons who themselves are not actuated by those principles. Any attempt to introduce into our State system of education religious instruction by truly Christian teachers, who, it must be admitted, are the only competent persons to whom such a task could be safely committed, would bring into the ranks of the civil service a class distinction, which would be wholly incompatible with Australian ideas of liberty and equality. The only effectual method of checking the growing evil in the youth is to inculcate into the parents a sense of their duty to control their children and to educate them in fear of God. This, added to the unceasing efforts of the church, is the only possible solution of the difficult problem of overcoming the downward grade of society.

Nearly everything in the Old Testament the critics declare to be disproved and untrue, Jesus and the apostles vouch for as historically true. Therefore, to accept the conclusions of the higher critics of the Old Testament is to deny the testimony of Jesus and the apostles, invalidate the entire New Testament, and overthrow Christianity. Will this be done?—Not yet a while.—L. W. Munhall.

GENERAL ARTICLES

FROM OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Sabbath Eve.

By E. L. Maxwell.

As sinks the setting sun
Adown the glowing west,
Another week of toil is done,
Begins the day of rest.

We bow before the throne,
O hour of hours most blest,
And lift our prayers to Him alone
Who gives us Sabbath rest.

No earthly thoughts or cares
Shall mar this hallowed day;
Our thoughts shall be of Him who bore
Our sins and griefs away.

Blest Sabbath of our King,
May this our portion be
Each Sabbath day His praise to sing
To all eternity.

The Rest of God.

By J. Gibson.

The word "rest" suggests to many no other idea than bodily repose, physical inaction after strenuous toil, in order to renew exhausted strength. One writer has even declared the expression of God resting "gives something like a shock to a mind which has exalted conceptions of the Divinity."

When Scripture speaks of God resting after He had created the universe, we are not to understand that He was fatigued and needed a recess to prepare for another period of work. Omnipotence knows no weakness—"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" Isa. 40:28. Jesus also declared, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Though this is so, we are likewise assured that God is not without experience, but is affected by the actions of His creatures and the things which happen in creation. The psalmist David threw scathing sarcasm on the idolatrous by saying the gods whom they worshipped were the work of men's hands, having mouths but speaking not, eyes but seeing not, ears but hearing not, hands and handling not, feet and walking not; whereas the true God, the God of heaven, was a living God, with a heart filled with love to His children. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." When His beloved suffer His heart is pained—"In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bore them, and carried them all the days of old." When they rebel He is grieved—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." When His will is faithfully done He is pleased—"This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." When He had finished the creation of the uni-

verse He had the experience of rest—"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His works which He had made."

When men succeed in translating their cherished dreams into facts they pause and view with delight their accomplished work. A painter conceives a beautiful picture, and toils strenuously until his idea is realised upon his canvas; he then rests from his labour—not because he is wearied, or his genius exhausted; it may have been strengthened and developed,—but because he finds joy in surveying his conception in a permanent form of grandeur. In the beginning, according to the inspired narrative, after the nature of God, His omnipotence, His infinite wisdom and goodness, had been expressed in a series of magnificent creative acts, He rested. The system of things which He purposed to bring into existence was completed; all spiritual and natural laws were immutably established; every independent form of life had been originated; His future work was to sustain the universe He had called into existence, to watch the development of the forces He had caused to act, to uphold the laws which He had instituted. Like as the artist finds delight in viewing his completed task, so God found positive enjoyment in beholding the finished works of His hands. He crowned them with the highest and most wonderful honour by declaring that even He thought it good—"And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."

It was God's intention that man should share His rest, the joy of beholding the wisdom and beauty of His works. To answer this purpose He made the weekly Sabbath, on which day man was required to cease from his physical labour; his thoughts would be naturally led to a happy meditation on the grandeur of the universe, to thanksgivings for the blessing of being, and being blessed. In this ecstasy he would rise into the fellowship with God's own joy over His creation. They who truly admire the painting of the artist share the satisfaction which he himself found in the exercise and achievements of his genius; and they who fully and truly adore the works of God's hands experience the satisfaction and joy which God experienced when He declared what He had made was "Very good."

We only find rest when our spiritual powers are fully engaged; therefore we only truly keep the Sabbath of the Lord when we spend it in praise, prayer, and meditation. It is thus, and thus only, we share in God's experience of rest.

Christ—the Virgin Born.

By R. Hare.

In this world, and connected with this life, the perplexing questions are many. Visioned mountain-peaks of thought, all unexplored, rise everywhere around us, reaching to heights that defy our mightiest efforts at ascent. Distant scenes, all uninterpreted, rise ever before us. But human sight is dim, and human thought is weak, for now we see but through "a glass darkly."

Yet, for all this, there is no need for the child of faith to stumble. Jehovah lives, and the trembling heart of the finite may safely rest on the promises of the Infinite. True faith beholds the unseen, and reads the unknown;

because the word of God reveals that which is not, and tells the possibility of that which to man is impossible.

One of the problems over which the religious world is troubled to-day lies in the scriptural account of the virgin-birth of Christ. Human theology has, of course, mystified and rendered this point of faith still more mysterious by its illogical creeds and dogmas relating to three Gods and one God, and one God and three Gods. But, disregarding all human ideas, the eye of faith may see God's way, while the heart of faith will find nothing in that way that is unreasonable.

In order to provide a Saviour for man it was necessary that some Being should come into the world apart from Nature's law. That Being must be perfectly human in all the possibilities of His life, so that He could suffer and feel as man must feel and suffer. Then He must have a free life—a life that did not come under the curse passed upon Adam,—so that that free life might be given for man's forfeited life.

Had Jesus Christ come into this world as "Adam's seed," He would have been human, but then His life would have been forfeited already, and so could not have been given for the life that man had lost. Had He come as an angel His life would have been free, but He could not have suffered as man suffers, and, consequently, could not have been tempted in all points as man is tempted.

The only other plan possible was that He should come as the "woman's seed." In this way He could be perfectly human, and yet as the first of a new order of being, He could hold a life that the sentence passed on Adam would not touch. That free life might then stand in the place of man's forfeited life.

The promise of the "woman's seed," given in Gen. 3 : 15, the prophecy of the virgin-born, in Isa. 7 : 14, and the prediction of a Prophet "like unto His brethren," made in Acts 3 : 22, could in this way, and in this way alone, find fulfilment. Paul thus chronicles the fact—"But when the time was ripe for it, God sent His Son—born a woman's child, born subject to law—to ransom those who were subject to law, so that we might receive the privileges of sons." Gal. 4 : 4, 20th Century New Testament.

In the very nature of things it was necessary that Christ should be born as the "woman's seed." To fulfil the promise, prophecy, and prediction of Scripture, it was also necessary. This is enough for the child of faith.

Human reason may ask, "How?" and because the lips of humanity cannot explain, the unbeliever may deny. But let it be remembered that there are a thousand other wonderful things that touch the borders of this life that human reason cannot measure.

You may look out at the bright glow of the electric light, may feel the strange sensation caused by the application of that unseen force, may see the car propelled by its power; but ask the question, "What is it?" and human lips are dumb.

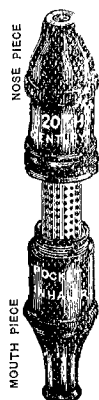
In your garden two blossoms grow side by side. They are the same in form and character, kissed by the same sunbeams, watered by the same dewdrops, yet one is red and the other blue. Why? You may say, "It is natural." Yes, but remember that nature is only a visible revelation of the supernatural. Behind nature's every operation the unseen power of Deity lives—the word-power that first set all nature's plan in operation.

So in the virgin-birth. The child of faith may understand how that the Spirit of God supplied the place of Adam's seed, and thus the "woman's seed" was born.

To reach the humblest, it was necessary that Christ should occupy the lowest place, so He was born in the "likeness of sinful flesh," that He might raise the lowly, and link the human with the divine.

The fact that the church of to-day is preparing to believe in a merely human Christ—denying the virgin-birth of promise, necessity, and prophecy—should speak volumes to the thoughtful. We are living in the last days when men will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. But with the child of God it need not be so.

The introduction of religion into the public schools is the introduction of the church into the public schools, and is, therefore, a union of church and state.—Dr. David H. Greer, Coadjutor Bishop of New York.



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World-Wide Field

Korean Sketches—the People—Some Strange Customs.

By F. W. Field.

The population of Korea is variously estimated at from six to ten millions, the lower figure being probably nearer the truth. As a race they have the same yellow complexion, black eyes and hair, as the other Mongolian peoples. There is no authentic record of their origin; but there is a theory that they originated from the union of a Mongolian branch with an Aryan race from Western Asia. It is said that there are elements in the language that show a derivation from the languages of India; and one often sees a face decidedly Aryan in type. In size they are quite well developed, being decidedly superior to the Japanese in stature.

In temperament the people are more expressive and boisterous than their island neighbours. An angry or excited Korean scolds and shouts, when a Japanese would only mutter, or perhaps smile. A Korean gentleman is polite and cordial, yet with far less ceremony than is observed by the Japanese. You miss the profound and repeated bowing seen in Japan; yet well-bred children are carefully taught to bow low before their elders, and to guests.

Intellectually the Koreans are bright and clever, and make good students. They excel as linguists, but do not take so well to mathematics and the sciences. It is to be regretted that they have no general system of education; the only schools are of a private character. Yet this very fact makes Korea a promising field in which to conduct Christian schools for the education of the young.

Every country has its customs that possess all the force of statute law. In Korea there are many sights and some sounds that seem strange to the foreigner. Several of the most striking ways of doing things may be worthy of notice here. We are accustomed to seeing the commodities of trade transported through the streets in waggons drawn by horses. In Japan it looks strange to see most of the drays and delivery waggons, or carts, drawn by men. But in Korea it looks stranger still to see everything carried upon men's backs. And here let me describe the rack or saddle which supports such a load. Two pieces of wood between three and four feet long are fastened together by several crosspieces, like a short ladder. Each of these two upright pieces has a natural branch projecting from it, these two branches project behind, and support the load. The whole is carried on the back, suspended from the shoulders by stout ropes of straw. At the ports of Korea, scores of men are seen carrying heavy loads of all sorts upon these queer saddles. Farmers carry loads from the fields in the same way. During our trips across the country, we employed a man with one of these contrivances to carry our baggage. A similar thing is used in the country districts of Japan, where waggons are scarce. It seems a hard way to make a living; but there is a heavier bond-

age resting upon the world than any which daily toil imposes. It is the bondage of sin.

The work which falls to the lot of women in Korea also presents some strange ways of doing things. One of the most interesting is their manner of doing laundry work. The soiled clothes are first taken to a well, or pool of water, placed upon a flat stone after being well soaked with water, and then pounded with a wooden club. After this treatment, the clothes are well rinsed in a small tub. I could not see or learn that any soap is used; but the process is certainly effective, for the clothes are made spotlessly white.

But still more curious is the method of making the clothes smooth after drying. A garment, instead of being ironed, is folded in several layers, laid upon a smooth, flat stone, and pounded with wooden clubs. Usually two women sit facing each other, with a club in each hand, and pound with alternating strokes that make quite a rhythmical rub-a-dub-dub. Sometimes the garment is wrapped around a wooden cylinder, and then beaten. In this case the roll is turned with the left hand, and beaten with the club in the right. Now, I may not have described this process accurately enough so that the reader could succeed well at it; but the women of Korea understand it well, as their smooth and even polished clothes bear witness. And there is never a garment scorched!

We may learn from the customs of other peoples that the whole sum of wisdom is not wrapped up in our ways of doing. Let us have charity and a teachable spirit; and then we shall be able to teach others the things that pertain to their eternal welfare.

"Experience is the best of schoolmasters; only the fees are heavy."

Our service to those and for those we love is easy and glad. Jesus Christ gladly served all because He loved all.

Fifteen converts were recently baptised at the Ra Coast, Fiji. At another village near by several others are awaiting baptism.

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HOME AND HEALTH

Mother Knows Best.

"Mother knows better than you, little one,
What should be said and what should be done;
She has been over childhood's way,
Learning surely, day after day,
The best to be, to say, to do—
And that is why mother knows better than you."

Sowing and Reaping.

By Mrs. E. G. White.

In the laws of God in nature, effect follows cause with unerring certainty. The reaping will testify as to what the sowing has been. The slothful worker is condemned by his work. The harvest bears witness against him. So in spiritual things; the faithfulness of every worker is measured by the results of his work. The character of his work, whether diligent or slothful, is revealed by the harvest. It is thus that his destiny for eternity is decided.

Every seed sown produces a harvest of its kind. So it is in human life. We all need to sow the seeds of compassion, sympathy, and love; for we shall reap what we sow. Every characteristic of selfishness, self-love, self-esteem, every act of self-indulgence, will bring forth a like harvest. He who lives for self is sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh he will reap corruption.

God destroys no man. Every one who is destroyed will have destroyed himself. Every one who stifles the admonitions of conscience is sowing the seeds of unbelief, and these will produce a sure harvest. By rejecting the first warning from God, Pharaoh of old sowed the seeds of obstinacy, and he reaped obstinacy. God did not compel him to disbelieve. The seed of unbelief which he sowed, produced a harvest of its kind. Thus his resistance continued, until he looked upon his devastated land, upon the cold, dead form of his first-born, and the first-born of all in his house, and of all the families in his kingdom, until the waters of the sea closed over his horses and his chariots and his men of war. His history is a fearful illustration of the truth of the words that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7. Did men but realise this, they would be careful what seed they sow.

As the seed sown produces a harvest, and this in turn is sown, the harvest is multiplied. In our relation to others, this law holds true. Every act, every word is a seed that will bear fruit. Every deed of thoughtful kindness, of obedience, or of self-denial, will reproduce itself in others, and through them in still others. So every act of envy, malice, or dissension, is a seed that will spring up in a "root of bitterness," whereby many shall be defiled. And how much larger number will the "many" poison. Thus the sowing of good and evil goes on for time and for eternity.

Notes.

After Mr. Harvey produced his wonderful steel plate armour, inventors of projectiles endeavoured for some time, in vain, to make a shot that would penetrate it. The hardest, toughest shots would be destroyed on impact with the face of the plate. By an extraordinary and paradoxical device a shell was finally rendered capable of passing through a ten-inch Harveyised plate. The inventor simply placed a cap of soft steel on the point of the shell. It is a human impulse to meet wrath with wrath, hardness with hardness; but, both in morals and physics experience proves that a little gentleness accomplishes more than unyielding rigidity.

The death in Newark, U.S.A., of a young woman from a dose of headache powder is a forcible warning to the large and steadily growing number of people who use recklessly any patent medicine which is advertised as a specific for the headache. Most of these contain coal tar products, which have a very marked effect upon the heart, and in cases where that organ is weak may easily prove fatal. In nine cases out of ten a headache is a symptom which should be heeded rather than suppressed. Fresh air, rest, exercise, relief from eye-strain, careful diet—these will in most cases bring a relief which is also a cure.—"Springfield Republican."

When Miss Alice Roosevelt was a little girl she uttered a complaint that must surely find an echo in the heart of every wilful lawbreaker whose case has fallen into the hands of America's exacting President. Her teacher at school had been inquiring for Mrs. Roosevelt, who was ill, and Alice answered, plaintively: "She isn't much better, yet. Yes, it's pretty hard. Papa stays at home most all the time, you see, and that makes it dreadfully inconvenient." "Why, how is that?" "Oh, don't you see? He doesn't understand, like mamma. When mamma tells me to be home at four o'clock, and I get there at half-past, she understands; but when papa says four, and I get there at even quarter past—he doesn't understand at all!"—Selected.

"A young man entered the bar-room of a village tavern and called for a drink. The landlord said, 'No, you have had too much already. You have had the delirium tremens once, and I cannot sell you any more.' He stepped aside to make room for two young men who had just entered, and the landlord waited upon them very politely. The other had stood by silent, and when the others had finished, he walked up to the landlord, and thus addressed him: 'Six years ago, at that age, I stood where those young men are now. I was a man with fair prospects. Now, at the age of twenty-eight, I am a wreck, body and mind. You led me to drink. In this room I formed the habit that has been my ruin. Now give me a few glasses more, and your work is done. I shall soon be out of the way. There's no hope for me. But they can be saved; they may be men again. Do not sell it to them. Sell it to me, and let me die, and the world will be rid of me; but for heaven's sake sell them no more!' The landlord listened, pale and trembling. Setting down the decanter, he exclaimed, 'God helping me, that is the last drop I will ever sell to any one!' And he kept his word."—"The Watchman."



Over and Over.

Over and over God paints the skies,
Over and over He makes the sun rise,
Over and over He tints the flowers,
Over and over He sends the showers,
Over and over He guides the stars,
Over and over the dawn unbars.

If over and over God designs to work,
Why should we faint, or one duty shirk?

—Juliet Sill.



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

Chapter XXII.



"A real Australian hot wind."

HERE is the English girl or boy
Who does not hail with gleeful joy
The last month of the year?

Never mind how unpleasant the day may be; if a real Australian hot wind is blowing, and clouds of dust fill your eyes and ears with discomfort, yet we're bound to have a merry Christmas!

"A Merry Christmas, Uncle Ben," shouted Tom, as he hammered at my window on Christmas morning.

"A Merry Christmas, Tom!" chimed in Mary from the kitchen, as Tom bounded across the yard with old Spot at his heels.

"A Merry Christmas to you, my boy," said Robert, as Tom danced into breakfast.

And how could we help having a real merry day when everyone had a happy face, and was wishing happiness for everybody else?

There's a secret for you, my little friends, don't you see?

The good old book says: "A merry heart doeth good like medicine."

You can be sure that's true, boys and girls. If you have any doubt about it, just give it a trial.

A merry face on a gloomy day is like a burst of sunshine.

A sunshiny face shining on dark clouds of pain and sorrow will always give them a silver lining; and maybe it will chase them away altogether.

While I was dressing Tom was sitting among the branches of the old apple tree at the back of the house, and singing with all his might and main that fine little song:—

"A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
Jesus wants me for a
sunbeam,
A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
I'll be a sunbeam for
Him!"



"Where the grand old sun is shining?"

"Ah, Tom," thought I, "it's easy to sing that to-day when all is bright and cheerful. Who could *help* being a sunbeam when the grand old sun is shining so brightly? But how will it be when the gloomy days come?"

That's it, boys and girls, and now I will tell you just how to be able to shine *always*, for I know that is what all my little readers want to do.

Jesus is the *Sun of Righteousness*. If we love Him with all the heart it will make us so happy that we will *shine on the darkest days*, and everyone will say: "What a happy little boy or girl that is to be sure."

Then, as we shine on others, they will forget their sadness and be happy, too.

Well, Mary had set the Christmas breakfast in the cheeriest little room in the house, and hung evergreens around on the pictures and over the clock. I can tell you, it looked real pretty.

What a genuine Australian summer day it was to be sure!

It was too early yet to feel the old sun's fiercest rays, but, as Robert said, "It'll be a real scorcher, boys!"

And so it was, sure enough.

But we did not grumble at the hot day, boys and girls, for the great and good God who sent it to us knows just what is best. Our summers, although so hot, are certainly good and healthful.



"A Merry Christmas, Uncle Ben."

All breakfast time I could tell that Tom had something on his mind, and I knew, too, that Mary shared

his secret, by the looks and smiles that passed between them.

Tom was finished first. (This made me suspicious, you know, for Tom isn't usually the *first* to get through eating by any means.)

"Uncle Ben," said he, "come into the parlour."

"Come along, father," said Mary, "we want you, too." So we all trooped into the sunny parlour, the place



"When the gloomy days come."

that Robert called "Mary's delight," because of the tidy, pretty little room that it is.

And what do you suppose we saw there?

Well I don't believe any of you could guess what that boy had been up to, so I will have to tell you about it next week.

UNCLE BEN.

Uncle Ben's Letter Box.

Here is a letter from a little friend in Grey Lynn, Auckland, N.Z.:

Dear Uncle Ben,—We get the "Signs of the Times" every week, and I always read "Uncle Ben's Gold Mine." We live in Auckland in a little suburb called Grey Lynn. We have a greenhouse full of flowers and ferns. We often show flowers and ferns at the children's flower show, and we have won several prizes. I have a sister and a big brother and a baby brother. I go to school, but it is Easter and we are having a week holiday. I go to West Street Sunday School every Sunday, and I read out of the Bible there. I have a very nice Sunday School teacher, who takes great interest in all of her class. I turned eleven last February. I remain another niece,

ANNIE LE ROY.

What a nice home you must have, to be sure, Annie. I wish I could see it. I hope you are digging for "true gold" out of the good old Bible that you are reading at your Sunday School. I am very pleased to hear from you.

The Larks of Scotland.

"It is said that the larks of Scotland are the sweetest singing birds of earth. No piece of mechanism that man has ever made has the soft, sweet, glorious music in it that the lark's throat has. When the farmers of Scotland walk out early in the morning, they flush the larks from the grass. As the larks rise, they sing; and as they sing, they circle; and higher and higher they go, circling as they sing, until at last the notes of their voices die out in the sweetest strains that earth ever listened to."

The Captive African Boy.

Fifty years ago there was a boy in Africa who was taken prisoner in one of the fierce wars between the tribes, and was carried away from his home to be sold as a slave. Poor fellow! First he was sold for a horse. Then his buyer thought him a bad exchange for the horse, and compelled his master to take him back. Then he was sold for so much rum. This was called another bad bargain by the man who had bought him, and again he was returned, to be sold for tobacco, with the same result.

Nobody wanted the poor, miserable slave-boy, who was on the point of committing suicide when he was bought by a Portuguese trader, and carried away in a slave-ship. Ah, how little that wretched boy, as he lay chained in the hold of that crowded slave-ship, thought what the future had in store for him, or what great things God would yet do for him. One day an English warship that was clearing the high seas of the slavers, bore down upon the Portuguese vessel, and rescued the captives. The African boy was placed under Christian influence, baptised, and educated, and to-day he is Bishop Crowther, England's black bishop in Africa, where he has founded a successful mission.

It would be a long story to tell all he has done for his poor people in Africa, how he has fought the slave-trade, preached to cannibals, been taken prisoner again and again, and how the Lord has kept him safe in every danger. Twenty-five years after he was made a slave he found his old mother, and she became a Christian, and died under the hospitable roof of her son's episcopal residence.—"Our Boys and Girls."

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The Melbourne Chinese Reform Association has determined to present a petition to the Federal Parliament to make the importation and use of opium illegal.

A flying-machine, resembling a bird with eight wings, has been invented at San Francisco. The operator has the machine under complete control, and can cause the mechanical bird to alight on the ground as gently as a feather.

Great anger has been exhibited by the Russian press because of Mr. Balfour's recent speech in the House of Commons, in which he declared that "no encroachments on Afghanistan, or proposals to run railways into that country from Russian territory would be permitted by England." It is recognised in Russia that at present it is hopeless to exhibit any open hostility towards England, for with Japan she has all she can attend to.

It is seldom anything so outspoken on the question of vice appears in the secular press as an editorial which was published in the Melbourne "Age" on the evils of juvenile smoking, from which we cull the following paragraph:—

"There is no doubt that, on a boy or youth, a little smoking has the same effect as excessive smoking on an adult. In fact, the medical dictum about juvenile smoking is that any of it is excessive. Its worst effects are on the most delicate and most vitally important nerves, such as those connected with sight. Deftness of finger and sensitiveness of the skin all over the body are ruined when nicotine is taken in excess. For boys who are going to follow technical pursuits the consequences of smoking are peculiarly disastrous."

The abnormal increase in military expenditure, which has been such a prominent feature of the last few years, was referred to by Congressman Livingston, of the United States Congress, who, as a member of the appropriations' committee, compares the figures for three years under President Roosevelt with those for three years under the last democratic ad-

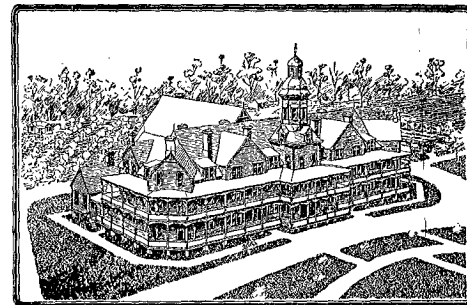
ministration. By this comparison he finds an increase of nearly £100,000,000—enough to construct a public building in every city and town of America, with enough to spare to improve every harbour and waterway; or enough to build 200,000 miles of perfect highway. Reflecting thus, it is little wonder that he is led to ask, "Whether such improvements would be not better for the country than the building of war ships to be turned into old junk within a few years, or than maintaining a standing army in idleness?"

The Awakening of China.

The transformation that has revolutionised Japan within a very few years has been and continues to be one of the most remarkable features of human history. Probably nothing that has ever been witnessed in the life of a nation has equalled the marvellous changes that have come over the little "Sunrise Kingdom." It is very gratifying to see her great neighbour, China, the sleeping dragon of past ages, awakening from her vain dreams and putting on the garments of day and of progress. Light and liberty are beginning to stream in upon her people. The government, so thoroughly steeped in the stupor of ancestor worship, and therefore so fondly in love with the effete customs of a dead past, is taking a most surprising interest in the general arousing of the empire. Schools are being established under government, missionary, and private control, and every encouragement is afforded them. The rulers are beginning to discover that even women have souls, and are capable of development and culture. Hence the establishment of schools for girls is carried out in many places.

It is true that matters are likely to move much more slowly in China than in Japan. It is also true that the Chinese women are far from having the same privileges accorded them, and the same recognition that Japanese women have. It is still an insult to mention his wife to a Chinaman, but the spirit of reform is in the air, and the day is dawning upon the poor slaves of cruel customs. Every Christian should be ready to extend help to China, now the help is needed.—"Medical Missionary."

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