

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

"THRUST IN THY SICKLE AND REAP, - - - FOR THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH IS RIPE." Rev. 14:15.

VOL. I.

BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN, OCTOBER 15, 1886.

No. 18.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

IS PUBLISHED SEMI-MONTHLY FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

By the Review and Herald Publishing Association,
Battle Creek, Michigan.

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For Terms, - - - See Last Page.

BUILDING ON THE SAND.

'Twas the strangest sight—that earnest face,
And weary form with the eager hands,
As he moved about from place to place,
So busy, building upon the sands.

Many the mansions that he had reared,
But he never ceased, by night or day;
It was all the same, he built and planned
For the future that before him lay.

He would say to travelers as they passed,
These sands will go with the ebbing tide;
But they said, "The man is surely crazed,
Or he'd place his treasure the other side."

Not one could believe the words he spoke,
And said, "If you think it really true,
Why not go across and build on stone?
You are only doing as others do."

Not a word he said by the silent stream,
As he hid in the sand the shining ore,
And scarcely looked for the light that gleamed
Across the tide from the other shore.

Alas! alas! when the time shall come
That the rich and great in terror hide,
And the hungry waves around us foam,
We shall want our treasure the other side.
But 'twill take some faith, and works, and prayer,
As well as talking, to place it there.

—Mary Martin.

Notes & Comments.

NOTICE.—Parties receiving this Paper, not having subscribed for it, may know that it is sent to them by the courtesy of some friend. Do not hesitate to take it from the Office, for none will be called upon to pay for any numbers they have not ordered. We invite candid attention to the Contents of the Paper, and when you have read it, please hand it to a Friend or Neighbor.

TRUTH is of God; and always, and in all places it has a right. Falsehood is a vile usurper, and has no rights. It exists only by sufferance, and is doomed to perdition.

FAITH is as necessary to the soul as the sun is to the world; were it not for these bright, prolific lights, both the one and the other must remain dark and fruitless.

WHEN truth, long hidden, first begins to shine out, some object, and ask, "Why has this not been found out before? Is it to be supposed that so many learned and good men would fail to see it if true?" Rev. Lyman Abbott gives the following very clear explanation of the difficulty: "There are many instances in which Biblical commentators appear to have derived their ideas respecting the Scriptures from previous scholars in the same field; the same thought is traceable from ancient father to the latest Sunday-school commentary. And sometimes, just as counterfeit bills pass unquestioned because they are well worn, erroneous interpretations pass current in the Christian church, without ever being subjected to a careful scrutiny; because each new student takes it for granted that the student who has preceded him has done this investigation, and he only needs to report the result."

PRAYER is an errand to God; it must be reverent, earnest, and definite. When you do errands of this kind for other people, forget yourself.

JUSTIN MARTYR, who was born A. D. 89, and suffered martyrdom for Christ A. D. 163, in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, says: "Should you happen upon some who are called Christians . . . and say there is no resurrection of the dead, but instantly when they die are received up into heaven, do not count these among Christians."

ERRORISTS, like the false witnesses against Jesus, do not agree in their testimony. The reason is, truth is ready made, and those who desire it have only to accept it as it is; while the inventive faculties of errorists are taxed, and each is at liberty to fabricate his reasons and build his own position. This accounts for so many reasons for keeping Sunday, to one for keeping the Lord's Sabbath. It is a noticeable fact that observers of the seventh day of the week are all united in giving one and the same reason for their belief and practice, while the reasons offered for first-day observance are very numerous, and none of them warranted by Scripture.

PREJUDICE is a prominent obstacle to the prevalence of truth. The judgment is often formed without light—without valid evidence. Should the truth be presented to a mind thus preoccupied before it can obtain lodgment there, it has an obstacle to encounter and remove, of a very formidable magnitude. The strength of prejudice is amazing. Though assailed by reason and argument and revelation, it often remains as deeply rooted and vigorous as ever. It is frequently nourished by the very efforts which are made for its destruction. It is of the greatest importance that we reserve the formation of judgment until the proper evidence bearing on the subject has been considered.

IN this life, when a man contemplates a change in his residence, he usually obtains all the information possible relative to the country to which he proposes to remove. The degree of earnestness manifested by him in obtaining information with regard to that new country, the eagerness with which he talks and inquires about it, is the standard by which to judge of his real interest in that direction. Just so with regard to a home beyond the grave. We know for a moral certainty that we must remove hence sometime. It is only a question of time, and that time is very short at best, when this earthly life will end. Now if there is to be a future existence (and that there is, Nature and Revelation loudly proclaim), we certainly have a right to all the information obtainable relative to that future life, and the circumstances under which it is to be spent. Such being the case, we know of no more interesting or praiseworthy study than the saints' inheritance. And since Inspiration has seen fit to portray in such unmistakable language the nature, location, time, and extent of that inheritance, a consideration of the same becomes a matter of paramount importance. To slight it is to treat lightly what God has seen fit to reveal to us. As in the case first mentioned, so in this, the degree of earnestness displayed in studying the various features of that future life and inheritance, is the gauge of our interest in the question. We thereby indicate how much we care for the future.

IT has been beautifully said, that "the veil which I covers the face of futurity is woven by the hand of mercy."

LOOKING for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13. In this scripture the second coming of our Saviour is designated by the apostle Paul as "that blessed hope." How many ministers of the present day set this before the church as the event for which they should hope and pray? How many hail the signs of his coming with joy, encouraging their brethren and warning the wicked?—Only a few; but, thank God, there are some who are giving the household meat in due season. On the other hand, we hear shepherds of the flock telling them that their hope is at death; that if they are righteous, they will go to heaven when they die. This certainly was not Paul's hope.

WHEN the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4, 5. "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin"—that is, all shut up under sin, as in a vast prison house—"that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." "Christ hath redeemed us [who believe] from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. 3:22, 13. The gospel, then, is mercy sounding at the doors of the prison; it is an offer of pardon to all who will accept it—not that the law has abated one iota of its demands, but because its claims have been met by "the Lord our righteousness." He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." "By his stripes we are healed." God can now "be just," and yet "the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

CHRISTIANITY fully developed in the heart, makes, says the Rev. Thomas Perry, a complete gentleman, and all the attributes of a gentleman in all their bearings are pivoted on courtesy. Be courteous at all times. There are circumstances where you cannot love, where you cannot fraternize or live at peace with men, but when you put away courtesy, you put a knife in your own self-respect. If there is a difference between you and another, courtesy always keeps the door open for the peace-maker. Courtesy is a kind of John the Baptist in the wilderness of society. Be courteous. The spirit of the exhortation is not directed to meet moral and public reformatory relations, but to help us in our daily life and business. It is to meet a society where offenses are bound to come, but if courtesy manipulates them, they will do little harm. If the shell which the *Alabama* shot into the stern of the *Kearsarge* had exploded, the havoc would have been dreadful. The Devil often shoots the shells of discord into the sweet communion of society, but courtesy catches them on the fly, and takes out the fuse before they explode.

MANY foolishly maintain that the law of God in the Old Testament, only required outward, formal service; that it did not take hold on the heart and affections. Every line of the Bible contradicts this. Listen to the following: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart." Deut. 6:5. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Lev. 19:18. "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Ps. 51:10. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps. 66:18. "My son, give me thine heart." Prov. 23:26. Is not this heart work? Is not this spiritual service? The New Testament is no clearer nor stronger upon this subject than the Old.

DOCTRINAL.

"Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Titus 2:1.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT DAY.—8.

BY U. SMITH.

THE sublime scene revealed to Daniel when the Judgment was set and the books of destiny laid in solemn pomp before the heavenly tribunal, did not open unheralded to the world. It was meet that the period of the investigative Judgment, when the cases of all who have ever turned to God were to be examined, their destiny be decided, their sins or names be blotted from the books, the atonement be made, the Sanctuary be cleansed, and the probation of all mankind forever closed,—it was meet that such a period should be ushered in by a solemn proclamation to the inhabitants of the world.

The work in the most holy of the heavenly Sanctuary, the investigative Judgment, began, as we have seen, at the end of the 2300 days in 1844; and right there the voice of a divine message was echoing around the world. The prophecy of this solemn warning is found in Rev. 14:6, 7: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his Judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

This angel preaches the gospel, and yet announces the coming of the hour of God's Judgment. The Judgment here mentioned is therefore some portion of the gospel, and must take place while probation continues. Paul says that the gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16. And he declared that no other gospel could lawfully be preached even by an angel from heaven. Gal. 1:8. It is therefore an inevitable conclusion that the message of the angel brought to view in Rev. 14:6, 7, represents some part of the great gospel proclamation. It certainly belongs to that preaching which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" and this fact alone is conclusive proof that this proclamation concerning the hour of God's Judgment must be made while human probation lasts. Two other solemn messages follow the one recorded in verses 6 and 7; and it is evident that the human family are still on probation as late as the last of these messages, which declares that, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God." These messages of Rev. 14 are consecutive, as the prophecy plainly shows; but it is not till after all these proclamations are finished that the Son of man is seen coming upon the white cloud to reap the harvest of the earth.

The message of verses 6 and 7, beginning to go in great power as early as 1840, in the advent movement of that time, reached an immense extent and unparalleled power as the world approached the great epoch of the ending of the days in the autumn of 1844. As the expectation of the people had been directed to an event which was not then to take place, believers were thrown into great confusion when the time passed and the Lord did not appear. Many entirely lost their bearings, but some held to their anchorage that God had been in the movement, and it must therefore have been essentially correct. Increasing light soon dispelled the shadows, and solved the mystery of the non-appearance of the Saviour. It was seen that the time had not yet come for the Lord to appear, but the days only marked the time for the cleansing of the Sanctuary to begin, and for the hour of God's Judgment to open—the very time and work which the message brings to view. The links of the prophecy were again picked up with a firmer grasp; and the message, proclaimed at first prophetically, was then uttered as an accomplished fact—the hour of his Judgment has come. Additional links were developed, the two messages to follow the first were seen in their true light, and the great truth flashed upon the mind that, while the hour of God's Judgment is passing,—during this solemn time,—the third message (Rev. 14:9-12) was to be proclaimed to the world.

The dawning light of the sanctuary question revealed the true meaning of many scriptures not apparently connected with that subject. One of these is found in Rev. 11:19: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." The scene here depicted occurs under the sounding of the last, or seventh, of the series of seven trumpets, which span the Christian dispensation from the first great calamities that burst upon the old Roman world, till human history ends amid "lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail." This opening of the temple taking place under the sounding of the seventh trumpet (verse 15), it occurs near the close of this dispensation. But could this opening of the temple be understood till it was seen that there is a tabernacle on high where Christ our high priest ministers,—a building which has two apartments, a first and second, a holy and most holy, into the latter of which Christ must go to finish his priesthood in the work of the atonement? That the opening of the second apartment of the Sanctuary is what is here brought to view is evident from what was revealed therein. "There was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." But the ark never had any other location than the most holy place. It was fixed by divine appointment to that position. Consider further that the most holy was opened only for the purpose of making the atonement and cleansing the sanctuary. The scene described in the first part of Rev. 11:19, therefore took place at the end of the 2300 days in 1844, and was the opening of the investigative Judgment.

A matter of wonderful significance is brought out by what John there beheld. It is nothing less than the fact that the great standard by which all cases shall be tested in that investigative Judgment, now going forward, is the law of God as written upon the tables contained in the ark. "There was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." In the type, the priest, in the most holy place, sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat, which was the cover of the ark, beneath which blood-stained cover reposed the law which the people had broken, and thus made it necessary that blood should be shed for them. So in the temple above, our High Priest ministers his blood upon the mercy-seat, the cover of that ark which John saw in heaven, beneath which reposes God's holy and immutable law, the standard of Judgment for all mankind.

That the ark as John beheld it contains the law, is evident from the name he gives it. The ark was called "the ark of the testament," because it contained the tables of the testimony or the law which God wrote on the tables of stone. It was made for this very purpose, and without the law never would or could have borne that name. But John, beholding the ark in heaven, under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, at the opening of the investigative Judgment, still applies the same name, "the ark of His testament." It therefore contains the same law, jot for jot, tittle for tittle, which He wrote with his own hand on Sinai.

Another conclusive evidence that the law for the investigative Judgment is the same as that written on the tables of stone, lies in the fact that Christ's work is the antitype of the work of the priests under the Mosaic dispensation. They atoned for sins in figure; Christ atones for them in fact. But sin is the same, and the standard of right and wrong which reveals sin is the same. But the standard then was the law on the tables of stone. With reference to that, the typical atonement was made; with reference to the same law, therefore, the real atonement must be made, or Christ's work is not the antitype of the former. But Christ's work is the antitype; and the ten commandments, just as written on the tables of stone, unrepealed, unaltered in a jot or tittle, constitute the law by which all cases will be tested in this Judgment work.

Another portion of scripture made very clear by this Judgment work of the Sanctuary is found in the tenth chapter of the Revelation: "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book open; and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created

heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Verses 1, 2, 5, 6.

This prophecy is simply another representation of that movement brought to view by the first message of Rev. 14. The angel in this chapter, as in that, solemnly appeals to the Maker of the heavens and the earth. The message in each case relates to time. The angel of chapter 10 has one foot upon the land and the other upon the sea, showing that his message is world-wide, just as in chapter 14 the proclamation goes to every nation. The angel of chapter 10 has in his hand a book open from which he proclaims his message of time. He declares that "time shall be no longer"—not literal time; for days are mentioned afterward (verse 7), and not probationary time; for a further proclamation of the gospel is brought to view in verse 11, but prophetic time. But it is a fact that the longest and latest prophetic periods are found in the prophecy of Daniel. From no other book could he utter such a proclamation concerning the close of prophetic time. But that book was closed up and sealed to the time of the end. Dan. 12:4. The fact that it was here seen "open," locates this message in the "time of the end," or in the last days. The angel of chapter 14 proclaims the "hour of God's Judgment come;" and here again we are thrown back upon the prophecy of Daniel; for his is the only prophecy which gives a prophetic period marking the beginning of this hour of Judgment. This he does give in the great prophetic period of the 2300 days of Dan. 8:14: "Unto two thousand three hundred days, then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed;" and this cleansing of the Sanctuary is, as we have seen, a work of Judgment; hence this period of the 2300 days must be the very one the angel of Rev. 10 refers to when he says that time shall be no longer.

THE SAINTS' INHERITANCE.—9.

BY J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH.

THE THOUSAND YEARS OF REVELATION 20.

VARIOUS opinions are extant concerning the one thousand years. We cannot give a detailed examination of all these views, but we wish to suggest some ideas, which, if received, will in themselves meet the various positions concerning it.

If the saints are not to inherit the earth until it is made new, and the earth is not made new until the wicked are destroyed, we should at once conclude that the saints do not inherit it until after the thousand years, because it is at the end of that period that the wicked meet their doom. What, then, is the condition of the saints during the thousand years, and what the condition of the earth?

Concerning this thousand years, all are agreed that this period when Satan is to be bound is at the end of six thousand years from creation (which are now nearly expired), at least there are so few exceptions that they are of no note. The greatest difference of opinion is in regard to the work of that period, rather than with reference to that period itself. One class claim that this thousand years is prior to Christ's second advent, and that during that time all the world is to enjoy a peaceful reign, having been converted at the commencement of that period. Tares and wheat (righteous and wicked) are to "grow together till the harvest" (Matt. 13:30); so there can be no world's conversion prior to the burning day.

Another class take the position that the thousand years' reign is on the earth, after the second advent of Christ, before the earth is renewed. These also claim that during that reign probation is still to continue, that the saints will reign over and teach mortal nations, and that these mortal nations are to increase vastly in numbers during that period. It is claimed that the Devil is bound that he may not deceive these nations. If this were the case, he is bound that he may not deceive those who have never known his wiles. The Scripture says he is bound "that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Rev. 20:3. This implies that he is bound that he may not deceive those whom he has been deceiving. At the end of

that period, it seems he does deceive them all with the idea that they can capture the saints of God. According to the record, the very ones who have escaped the Devil's deceptions for one thousand years, at the expiration of that period are again deceived by him, and devoured by fire from heaven.

Some of the reasons urged in support of this view we will notice briefly:—

1. Two texts are read together as though they were one,—“They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4) and “We shall reign on the earth” (Chap. 5:10). Now we fully believe the testimony of both these texts, but they do not say the saints will reign on earth a thousand years. They will reign on earth forever and ever, but that will be in the “new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness,” or wherein the righteous shall dwell. The text does not even say that Christ will reign on earth a thousand years; but they “reigned *with Christ* a thousand years.”

2. It is claimed that if the saints reign a thousand years, they must have somebody to reign over, and so it is said that they must reign over mortals. If they cannot reign a thousand years unless they have mortals to reign over, how can they reign forever and ever without the same?

This thousand years' reign of the saints *with Christ* seems to be something different from the remainder of their reign. May it not be that this is the period of investigation of the cases of the wicked of the six thousand years, and that then those texts which seem to give the saints a part to act in the final judgment of the wicked will have their accomplishment? Christ said to the twelve, “Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, *judging* the twelve tribes of Israel.” Matt. 19:28. This is when he sits “upon the throne of his glory.” St. Paul inquires, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?” 1 Cor. 6:2, 3. This judgment is contrasted with judgment concerning things pertaining to this life, and therefore we understand it to refer to a future judgment. We read also in the testimony of the psalmist, “Let the saints be joyful in glory . . . Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, . . . to execute upon them the judgment written; this honor have all the saints.” Ps. 149:5, 6, 9. From the above texts we see there is a work to occupy the thousand years' reign, although there may be no mortal nations for the saints to reign over during that period. The saints, it seems, are in some way to participate with Christ in the examination of, and passing of the sentence upon, the wicked nations who have previously lived on earth.

When the saints sing, “We shall reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:10), they are already kings and priests, and are prostrating themselves before the throne in heaven. They sing of Christ, “Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every tongue, and kindred, and people, and nation.” Although this language quoted is the language of the four living creatures and four and twenty elders, it is what all the saints will sing after their final deliverance. This being so, the saints will, at some time, go to heaven, and thus prostrate themselves in adoration before the throne.

Those who hold to the view that the thousand years' reign will be on earth, generally claim that the saints will never go to heaven; and therefore, if they reign a thousand years, it must be on earth. Our reply is, The word says, “They shall reign *with Christ* a thousand years;” and we shall proceed to show that at the commencement of the thousand years, at least, they are with Christ in heaven. There is no direct evidence to show that the thousand years' reign is upon earth, of that the saints will be on earth again after their ascension, till the end of the thousand years; we have hence concluded that the thousand years' reign will be in the New Jerusalem in heaven.

But we will now produce other evidence that the saints will go to heaven. St. Paul says, “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

But, says the objector, they immediately come down again, and possess the earth. There is no direct evidence to prove that they are on earth again till the end of the thousand years, when the wicked are said to compass “the camp of the saints about and the beloved city.” Rev. 20:9.

Another evidence that the saints are to go to heaven is found in the song of their redemption: “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.” Rev. 15:2, 3. Here is a company who are to stand (after they are redeemed) “on the sea of glass.” Where is the sea of glass? St. John tells us, “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven, . . . and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. . . . And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal.” Rev. 4:1-6. There can be no mistaking the location of the sea of glass. It is immediately before the throne of God in heaven. Here is also direct evidence that the saints will go to heaven. They are to sing the song of their deliverance on the sea of glass, before the throne of God in heaven.

The testimony of our Saviour to his disciples, as recorded by St. John, is proof that the saints will go to heaven at the second advent. We read, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. . . . Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.” John 13:33-36. When our Saviour told the Jews, “Whither I go ye cannot come,” he said, “I go unto him that sent me.” John 7:33. Our Lord's testimony to St. Peter was, Thou canst not follow me to him that sent me—to heaven—now; but thou shalt follow me there after I have been there. This message fell with sadness upon the disciples, and troubled them; but the Master immediately said, “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:1-3. Here is direct evidence that the saints will go to heaven with Christ after his second coming.

As there is no testimony to prove that the saints will not go to heaven with Christ after his second advent, we claim that the texts above quoted fully prove that they will go there. The saints are to reign with Christ a thousand years, and we have found that they commence that thousand years *before the throne* in HEAVEN. Who can claim that the thousand years' reign is on earth, with no evidence that the saints are on earth again until after the thousand years?

It is claimed by some that there are promises which have been made to certain nations that have never been fulfilled, and which cannot be fulfilled in the new-earth state; and so must be fulfilled during the thousand years, when the saints will reign over mortal nations. We have not space here to notice, one by one, those peculiar promises that are spoken of, but we will present some forcible objections to the conclusion that they are to be fulfilled on earth during the one thousand years.

To claim that men can find pardon for their sins after the second advent of Christ is not in agreement with the plain declaration of Holy Writ. Says Christ, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly.” Rev. 22:11. From this text we learn that just previous to Christ's coming, this solemn decree goes forth, showing that each class must still occupy the position in which they are then found. If you say the class who are to have probation are neither just nor unjust, we reply, There is no such class recognized in the word of God. Says Christ, “He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.”

Concerning the promises above mentioned, a part of them have been fulfilled. Many of them

were conditional; for the conditions were distinctly expressed, and, as the people failed on their part to fulfill the conditions, of course the promises, being conditional, became null and void.

There is no principle recognized in the word of God by which pardon can be obtained after the second advent of Christ. It cannot be effected by the mediation of Christ; for that ends when he lays aside his priestly garments, and takes his position as king. When our Saviour ceases his mediation, he that is unrighteous must remain so still, for mercy then no longer pleads in their behalf. His offering will then be of no avail to those who have not sought him, as they will be cut off from interest in his blood by the solemn decree, “Let him be filthy still.” If they offer beasts, the blood of beasts cannot take away sins. Because there is no principle recognized for salvation except the blood and intercession of Jesus, we can see no chance for salvation after that intercession ends; and if so, there can be no probation after his second advent.

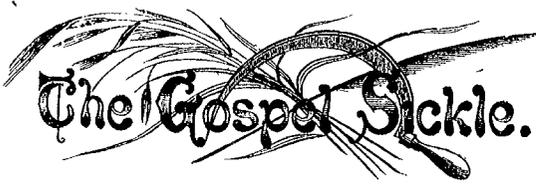
It is urged that, as the earth is the territory of the kingdom, and the kingdom is established at Christ's second coming, it must be that it is established on earth, and that the one thousand years' reign is on earth. We do not disagree with the position that the kingdom is finally to fill the earth; for “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,” are to be given to the saints of the Most High. It is the *new earth*, however, that is to be the inheritance of the saints. We understand that the kingdom is established at the coming of Christ, and that it commences when he puts on his kingly robes. His government, or kingdom, is fully organized in the city above; and when sinners are destroyed out of the earth, and the earth made new, the dominion and greatness of the kingdom will be under the whole heavens.

If the thousand years' reign is in heaven, and if the kingdom is not established on earth till after that period, the question arises, In what condition is the earth during the thousand years? Whatever condition it is placed in at the commencement of that period, must be its condition to the close, unless we have evidence to the contrary. The prophet Isaiah gives a plain statement of the condition in which the earth will be placed at Christ's coming, “Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. . . . The land shall be *utterly emptied*, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word. . . . The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.” Isaiah 24:1-6.

It does not say there are a few men left on the earth, but the testimony is that the “Lord maketh the earth *EMPTY*.” “The land shall be *utterly emptied*,” etc. Then these few men left are not on the earth. Those then left are the saints, who, as already shown, will go to heaven with Jesus after his second advent.

Again we read: “Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, TO LAY THE LAND DESOLATE; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.” Isa. 13:9. As the day of the Lord will desolate the land, there will be no mortal nations then for the saints to reign over. The wicked dead have no resurrection till the end of the thousand years; and as the reign of the saints is *with Christ*, the earth must be desolate during the thousand years.

If you would keep a book, and every day put down things that worry you, and see what becomes of them, it would be a great benefit to you. You allow a thing to annoy you just as you allow a fly to plague you, and when you lose your temper and justify yourself by being thrown off your balance by causes which you do not trace out. But if you would see what it was that threw you off your balance, and put it down in your little book, and follow it out and see what becomes of it, you would see how foolish you were in the matter. The art of forgetting is a blessed art, but the art of overlooking is quite as important. And if we would take time to write down the origin, progress, and outcome of a few of our troubles, it would make us ashamed of the fuss we made over them.



"The fields are white already to harvest."—John 4:35.

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., OCTOBER 15, 1886.

CONSIDERATION OF REASONS ASSIGNED FOR SUNDAY SACREDNESS.

True pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is supposed by many to be an evidence in favor of first-day sacredness. The Bible record is as follows: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." Acts 2:1, 2.

It is well to notice that not a word is said in the text about the first day of the week. Yet this is regarded by the adherents of Sunday sacredness, as one of the strongest evidences in its behalf. It is claimed that the disciples were assembled on this first-day sabbath, and that the Lord poured out his Spirit in honor of the day and of their act, thus adding to its sanctity. To this claim we answer: (1.) There is no evidence whatever that there was any first-day sabbath at that time to commemorate. (2.) Their being assembled on that day was nothing more than had occurred on each of the previous nine days, as they were all commanded by the Saviour to "tarry at Jerusalem till endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49. They had been thus waiting "with one accord in prayer and supplication," about one hundred and twenty in number. Acts 1:12-26. (3.) There is no hint from the connection that this occurred on the first day of the week. If the object of God had been to honor that day, he most assuredly would have given us information that the occurrence transpired then. (4.) This outpouring of the Holy Spirit came, evidently, as the antitype of the feast of Pentecost. This is doubtless the reason why that day is mentioned.

A strong effort is made by some to prove that Pentecost came that year upon the first day of the week, though this is disputed by a large number of the ablest authors, themselves observers of Sunday. The word Pentecost signifies "the fiftieth," so many days being reckoned from the Passover. Olshausen, the celebrated German commentator, says: "Now according to the accounts given regarding the time of the feast, the Passover, in the year of our Lord's death, fell so that the first day of the feast fell from Thursday evening at six o'clock till Friday evening at the same hour, it follows, of course, that it was Friday evening at six o'clock that the fifty days began to be counted. The fiftieth day fell, therefore, upon Saturday." Jennings, in "Jewish Antiquities," concludes his arguments by saying, "The first day of Pentecost must fall on the Saturday, or the Jewish Sabbath." Dr. Albert Barnes says: "If the views of the Pharisees were followed, and the Lord Jesus had with them kept the Passover on Thursday, as many have supposed, then the day of Pentecost would have occurred on the Jewish Sabbath, that is, on Saturday. It is impossible to determine the truth on this subject." Dean Alford, in his "New Testament for English Readers," says: "The question, On what day of the week this day of Pentecost was, is beset with difficulties attending the question of our Lord's last Passover. It appears probable, however, that it was on the Sabbath, *i. e.*, if we reckon from Saturday the 16th of Nisan." Prof. H. B. Hackett, D. D., professor of Biblical Literature in Newton Theological Institute, in his "Comments on the Original Text of Acts," pp. 50, 51, thus remarks: "It is generally supposed that this Pentecost, signalized by the outpouring of the Spirit, fell upon the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday." Other eminent authors—Lightfoot, Kuinöel, Hitzig, Wiesler, etc., take the same position. We conclude, therefore, that taking the authority of first-day authors themselves, it cannot be established that Pentecost came upon the first day of the week at all, and if it could be so established, it would be no evidence in behalf of Sunday sacredness.

Another claim made in behalf of the first-day sabbath is this: Redemption is greater than creation, therefore we should observe the day of Christ's resurrection in preference to that of the Creator's rest. In reply we would say this is merely human opinion.

Not a syllable of Scripture can be found to sustain it. Who knows that redemption is greater than creation, since both require omnipotent power? Is man prepared to decide the comparative greatness of works that he is wholly powerless to perform, and of which he cannot have any adequate conception? And who knows that God would have us keep a Sabbath to celebrate redemption? Not a hint has he given us in his word to that effect. Would he not have told us so, had he wished us to do it? Paul says that the Holy Scriptures "thoroughly furnish us unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:17. As the keeping of Sunday as a sabbath in honor of the work of redemption is in no instance implied in God's word, we must conclude that it is not a "good work." Every religious institution of divine appointment, has for it the authority of God's word. But there is none for the observance of a day to commemorate redemption. Such observance must therefore be merely "*will worship*." But we inquire, Is redemption yet completed?—Certainly not, while our earth groans under the curse, and the people of God are either waiting in the grave for the final resurrection, or are living in a world of wickedness, longing for immortality. It is most surely out of place to appoint a memorial to commemorate a work yet unfinished. Christ our Advocate still intercedes for us while we "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption; to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:23. Our friends are at least eighteen centuries too early in appointing their redemption sabbath.

And even if a day was to be appointed to commemorate Christ's work in redemption at his first advent, should it not be the day of his crucifixion rather than of his resurrection? The Bible nowhere says we have redemption through his resurrection; but it does say, "In whom we have redemption through his blood." Eph. 1:7. Again, "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Rev. 5:9. Christ shed his blood (the great agent in our redemption) on Friday, the sixth day of the week. The death of Christ is the most marvelous event ever beheld in this world. It is not surprising that God should raise his Son from the grave after he had died for the sins of men; but it is mercy most astonishing that he should ever consent that his "only begotten Son" should die that ignominious death on the cross. Shall we therefore keep Friday as a sabbath to commemorate this sublime act of mercy and love?—Oh, no. God has instituted his own memorials to commemorate this as well as other important events. The Lord's supper answers this purpose. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. 11:26. In baptism we have a beautiful and appropriate memorial of Christ's burial and resurrection. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12. How beautifully fitting is this act to commemorate Christ's resurrection!

We shall find, if we investigate the subject of God's memorials, in his word, that there is always a peculiar fitness—a likeness, a similarity—between the memorial and the thing commemorated by it. This principle is illustrated by the creation Sabbath, the rest signifying a completed work; the rite of circumcision, a circle cut in the flesh signifying the surrounding of Abraham's seed, with peculiar providences as his peculiar people; the feast of the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, bringing forcibly to view the fleeing out of Egypt, and the act of the destroying angel in passing over the houses of the children of Israel, thus saving their first-born; the feast of tabernacles, bringing to view their dwelling in tents; the joyful sending of gifts in the feast of purim, the gladness felt at their great escape from the malice of Haman. So of the Lord's Supper and baptism. Every Bible memorial is appropriate.

But how about this man-made memorial of Sunday-keeping? What fitness is there in keeping as the Sabbath a day of rest every seven days to celebrate the resurrection of Christ, as a part of the work of redemption, yet incomplete? We have seen that the real resurrection day was a very busy one, the disciples preparing their drugs to do a hard day's work in embalming his body, hunting here and there to find him; two of them traveling fifteen miles on foot, Jesus doing the same; a day of anxiety, for they did not be-

lieve he was risen until just as the day was closing; no religious meetings or public speaking. What likeness of manner is there between the day most Christians keep as a Sabbath, and the original day they propose to keep in memory by it? In order for it to be a fitting memorial, it should be true that the work of redemption occupied six days, and that Christ rested the day following—something no person ever claimed. And as baptism is a memorial of Christ's resurrection, we should, in that case, have two memorials of one and the same event—a thing unprecedented in the Scriptures. We therefore conclude that the claim that Sunday is set apart to commemorate redemption, is absurd and entirely contrary to the facts in the case.

G. I. B.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

SOME weeks since, there was published in the SICKLE a series of articles on the "Signs of the Times," which we trust were carefully noted by our readers. We are constrained to speak further on this subject, hoping to impress more firmly the minds of our readers with the necessity of studying these signs, with a view of ascertaining their significance. So common has the expression "Signs of the Times" become, that men use it almost without thought, and let it pass as without meaning. But if it means anything, it means a great deal. A sign, in the sense here used, is that which foretokens or gives evidence of coming events. A sign of the times is that which marks any particular time, as showing its relation to times past or future.

In order that we may have signs, there must be a prediction of future events, the approach of which is to be from time to time foretokened or indicated by other events. But these other events must also be foretold, or they could not be signs. For instance, we might have the most startling phenomena in nature; but they would be without significance respecting what is before us, unless it had been foretold that certain events were to occur, and that their approach should be marked by these abnormal exhibitions. But these signs, being thus foretold, become themselves predictions, and their accomplishment a fulfillment of prophecy.

The signs of the times, therefore, are simply those prophecies which are fulfilling in our own day, which show that the time has come, or is at hand for the fulfillment of other predictions which stand in the same chain of events. Signs of the times are themselves prophecies of what is before us, and they are the seal which God sets to what has been declared in the past. They are the solemn voice of God to us as if he were himself now walking through the land reiterating the declaration of his prophets of old, and proclaiming the truthfulness of his word to all the inhabitants thereof.

Therefore, one well-defined, clearly-established sign of the times, is an event of immense importance. It ought to arrest the attention of all mankind, and be with them the chief topic of interest. Neglect of this will be no less a subject of censure in this generation than it was with the Jews, whom Christ rebuked for not discerning the signs of their day. Nor will such neglect result less fatally now than then. And is there such a sign existing in our day? Every student of prophecy knows that there is not merely one but a whole array of them, not ambiguous and indistinct, but clear, prominent, and startling. Yet the mass of mankind shut their eyes to these things; professed Christians ignore them; and all immediately set about the work of trying to account for, and explain away any unusual occurrence, instead of considering what lessons of instruction they are to draw from it. They would fain persuade themselves that the moral darkness and gloom, which they are constrained to admit is everywhere spreading and deepening, is but the blackness of a transient cloud, which will soon give way to the clear blaze of millennial glory. And thus they blind their eyes to the view as it really is, and wait for that sudden destruction, which the apostle declared should come upon men just when they had yielded themselves to the fast embrace of fatal delusion.

The signs of these times are events which are laid down in the prophetic word as tokens of the near approach of the great consummation, and the opening of eternal scenes. To forewarn mankind of the coming of this eventful day, the world was to exhibit remarkable phases, and witness remarkable scenes. These may be classified under four general heads:—

1. Unusual occurrences and phases in the religious and moral world;
2. Remarkable advancement and discoveries in the scientific world;
3. Unprecedented activity and threatening movements in the political world; and—
4. Strange and startling phenomena in the natural world.

That the state of things here indicated does exist in all these divisions, no one will deny, who is ordinarily well-read in reference to passing events. Wherever we may look, there is no lack of occurrences calculated to excite wonder, and elicit comment. Every literary vehicle is loaded with them; every mouth is full of them. Why all do not look upon them in the same light as the student of prophecy, is because they are either ignorant of the fact that these things are pointed out in prophecy as tokens of the coming end, or are unwilling to admit the application of the prophetic declarations to them. The former, however, is largely the prevailing cause; for when a person will candidly compare the words of prophecy with the present state of the world in all its divisions, he can but see such a faithful correspondence between them, as to be convinced that these are verily the things which the prophets have said should come to pass. No, the masses are not aware of what the prophets have spoken; and hence, although they are struck with wonder at the unusual occurrences and strange events of this time, they fail to see their significance, and realize their importance. But it is not sufficient merely to have attention aroused and wonder excited; for men may wonder at the remarkable works of God, and view with astonishment the stately march of fulfilling prophecy, and knowing not its significance, may, with all their wonder and astonishment, perish at last. U. S.

TALMAGE ON THE MATERIALITY OF HEAVEN.

In a recent sermon while at the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence River, Mr. Talmage made some good points in favor of the materiality of both the saints and their home hereafter. His subject was the city of the New Jerusalem. Among other things, he said:—

"There is no such city," says the undevout astronomer. "I have stood in high towers with a mighty telescope, and swept the heavens, and I have seen spots on the sun and caverns in the moon; but no towers have ever risen on my vision, no palaces, no temples, no shining streets, no massive wall. There is no such city." Even very good people tell me that heaven is not a material organism, but a grand spiritual fact, and that the Bible descriptions of it are in all cases to be taken figuratively. In reply to this, I bring what Christ said, and he ought to know: "I go to prepare"—not a theory, not a principle, not a sentiment, but "I go to prepare a place for you." The resurrected body implies this. If my foot is to be reformed from the dust, it must have something to tread on. If my hand is to be re-constructed, it must have something to handle. If my eye, having gone out in death, is to be re-kindled, I must have something to gaze on. Your adverse theory seems to imply that the resurrected body is to be hung on nothing, or to walk in air, or to float amid the intangibles. You may say, If there be material organism, then a soul in heaven will be cramped and hindered in its enjoyments. But I answer: Did not Adam and Eve have plenty of room in the garden of Eden? Although only a few miles would have described the circumference of that place, they had ample room. And do you not suppose that God in the immensities can build a place large enough to give a whole race room, even though there be material organism?"

I wish that theologians would always talk as good sense as this, and as much in harmony with the teachings of the Bible. If there is any one thing that the Bible plainly teaches above another, it is that heaven is a real, material place; that God and the angels are real, material beings, having form and shape and personality; that the righteous hereafter will have flesh, bones, bodies, shape, and form; that they will eat and drink, and be real beings just as they are now; that the city of God where they shall live, will have mansions, and the new earth on which they shall dwell, will be real. All these will be just as tangible and material as they are now. There will be water, and flowers, and trees, and fruits, and animals. How delightful it will be to live in such a home as that, where there is no sickness, no sin, and no death! John Wesley and Martin Luther and many of the great lights in the church have held to this plain, simple doctrine. The vague theories of an immaterial soul have done much to obscure these grand doctrines of the Bible. We are glad, therefore, now and then, to see a plain statement like this from some of the popular ministers. It is well known that Mr. Moody holds the same views. In his little book enti-

led "Heaven," he has spoken very decidedly as to the materiality of that place. He says: "We believe this is just as much a place and just as much a city as New York is, or London, or Paris." So we believe, and so the Bible teaches. D. M. C.

HOW MUCH JEWISH?

Some object to keeping the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, claiming that "it is Jewish." This objection is fairly met by showing that the Sabbatical institution dates back to creation, when "the Sabbath was made for man"—for Adam and all his posterity; that Jew comes from Judah, who was born 2,225 years after the creation, and thus the distinction of Jews and Gentiles did not exist for more than two thousand years after the day of rest was blessed and sanctified; and that the seventh day is never called in the Bible a Jewish Sabbath, or the Sabbath of the Jews, or of the Greeks, or of the Romans, but is always and invariably called "the Sabbath of the Lord."

Some years ago, at a railway station, a gentleman asked me a few questions about the Sabbath in the presence of two clergymen, which I answered, proving by the Scriptures that the seventh day of the week is the only Bible Sabbath, and that it is enforced by the fourth precept of the decalogue, and is binding upon Christians in this dispensation; while there is no scriptural or inspired authority for the observance of Sunday as a Sabbath, or a holy day, or the Lord's day, whereupon one of the preachers affirmed that Christ broke the seventh-day Sabbath; and in the very next breath, he asserted that the ten commandments were abolished at the cross.

I asked him if he really held these two positions, when he answered in the affirmative. But soon after, he was led to admit that his views would make our Saviour a transgressor before the cross, making it needful for him to die for his own sins, although we read that he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, etc. He further admitted that if, because the law is abolished, we are at liberty to break the Sabbath precept, for the same reason we are also at liberty to break any other precept of the decalogue—to kill, commit adultery, steal, covet, etc.

But the other preacher would not have the controversy end thus. Said he, "That Sabbath is Jewish, and our friend might as well be a Jew and hold to circumcision also." I replied, How much Jewish? The word reads "The seventh day is the Sabbath [not of the Jews, but] of the Lord thy God." It is no more Jewish than our Bible, which is certainly not for the Jews exclusively, or than the God of the Bible, who rested upon the seventh day, etc. Who were the inspired writers, the prophets, patriarchs, Christ, and his apostles? They were Jews, and salvation is of the Jews. To keep the moral precepts acceptably, the rest day of God's own appointment not excepted, we need not be Jews outwardly, neither have that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but we need to be Jews inwardly, and to have that circumcision which is of the heart, in the spirit, etc. Rom. 2:28, 29. Again, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." 1 Cor. 7:19.

A. C. BOURDEAU.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

The simplicity of Scripture is a theme of frequent encomium; nor is there any danger that it will be too highly appreciated; but there is a danger that it may be too exclusively appreciated. The Bible is so simple that he who runs may read; but it is so difficult that only he who sits long and thoughtfully over it may most profitably study it; it yields its ripest and best fruit only to the student. It is like a fruitful field which gives a rich yield even to the hoe, but best repays the deep ploughing; or like a gold country, where the mere superficial traveler may pick up shining particles of the precious metal in the sand, but where only the miner with pick and hammer, breaking up the hard quartz, gets the best nuggets.

We give three reasons why you should make the Bible not merely a reading book, but also a study book:—

1. It does not present truth built into systems, but in fragmentary and isolated forms, which leaves us to gather and to put together. There is a system in it, as there is a house in the forest which the wood-cutter and carpenter must construct. If the Apostles' Creed were the whole of Christianity, it would be easy to commit Christianity to memory. But God has not given us truth thus in epitome. Moses comes bringing it in law; David comes singing it; Isaiah comes

bringing the glorious vision of it; Paul comes preaching it; Christ lives it. If any one asks what are the essential principles of our American Government, he must go to the founders, and read and compare the words of Washington and Jefferson and Madison and Hamilton; and if one would know what are the essential principles of the Christian religion, he must go to the Book and cull and compare the various utterances of its various writers. He no more gets the true meaning of the Bible who merely reads without such a process of comparison and construction than he knows astronomy who merely looks at the stars.

2. The Bible is a book of seed thoughts. It is not God's substitute for thought, but God's inspiration to thinking. There are two full-fledged birds in it that sing like the twenty-third psalm; but there are also nests of eggs, like the book of proverbs, that need our incubation. It abounds with apothegms, parables, proverbs, and paradoxes, which do not reveal their meaning at a glance. The sermon on the mount is a model of simplicity in preaching. But there are verses in it which do not disclose their meaning without much pondering and comparison with other scriptures. Take, for example, the precept, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is but a superficial view which sees in this command only a warning against censorious judgments. What more does it mean? Take your concordance, examine every passage where the verb "judge" appears, and decide for yourself.

3. The themes of which the Bible treats are the grandest in the realm of thought. They transcend the reason; they transcend the imagination. It deals with experiences which defy description, with a heart-life which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the imagination of man conceived. It deals with the invisible world, in which every new discovery opens boundless fields for further discovery still beyond.

Take the simplest and most fundamental truth in the Bible, the existence, character, and attributes of a living, personal, present God, a God regnant in nature, a God dwelling in the hearts of those that will humbly receive him. The utmost study never can fathom the depths of the Divine Being; never can measure the length and breadth and depth and height of the love of God. The mere reader of the Bible is like the mere traveler on the ocean, who sees the surface of the waves. The student of the Bible is like one who takes measuring instruments and sounds the ocean depths, and studies its hidden currents, and brings from its depths its secret treasures. It is only by the study of the Bible that its teachings concerning the character of the incomprehensible God can ever be understood; and no study can ever exhaust the theme.—Sel.

THOUGHTS ON PRACTICAL SUBJECTS.

STRIKE SOMEWHERE.

My friend, if you ever mean to do anything, do not be everlastingly deciding about it. Begin somewhere; hit something. This age is not made for slow, hesitating men. You have not time to stop to consult with your brother, and uncle, and first cousin, and particular friend, and everybody, before you begin. The first you know, your time for usefulness will have run out, and you will be lamenting what you might have done if you had only gone about it long before.

POLITENESS.

"True courage and courtesy go hand in hand. The great men are the most forgiving and anxious to avoid quarrels. It was said of Sir John Franklin that he was a man who never turned his back upon a danger; yet he was of that tenderness that he would not brush away a mosquito." Bravery and courtesy generally go hand in hand. What is courtesy?—Simply the application of the golden rule to all our social conduct. It is real kindness kindly expressed. Such politeness never can be acquired by merely studying rules in books of decorum. These, good in themselves, only furnish the husk. The real heart and life of true courtesy must come from a good heart, an earnest desire to please, profit, and benefit others, even at the cost of self-denial. Hawthorne once said that God may forgive sins, but awkwardness has no forgiveness in heaven or earth. Good manners, in fact, are closely allied to good morals. An awkward, ill-mannered person, however good his desires are, is liable to do harm and give offense when he would really like to make good impressions. Thus it appears that a knowledge of politeness and how to exhibit it, is invaluable, under all circumstances.

WHERE ARE THE DEPARTED DEAD?

BY D. M. CANRIGHT.

TEXT: "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Eccl. 9:5, 6.

We have usually been taught that when the body dies the real man does not die, but lives right on,—thinks, acts, loves, and hates in heaven or hell just as actually as while in the body upon earth. But is this true? Many false doctrines have been taught in the world; may not this be one of them? What proof do we have that a man lives after we have seen him die? Observation teaches us all that he is really dead. Every day we see men die. Did any person ever see anything leave the body at death?—No, not in a single case. Has a human soul or spirit, separate from the body, ever been seen by any one?—No, never. So far, then, as actual sight and observation go, all the evidence is against this popular doctrine.

Reason is against it. How can a man think without brains, walk without feet, see without eyes, hear without ears? It is absurd, and contrary to all reason. But does not the Bible teach that the dead are conscious?—No, not in a single text; but it everywhere teaches just the reverse, as I can readily show you. If the dead live right on, and go to heaven or hell as soon as they die, what need is there of a future Judgment? Is it reasonable to believe that God would send a man to hell before he was judged, and after he had been there a thousand years in torment, bring him out and judge him? See 2 Pet. 2:9. Would you hang a man and then judge him? Is it not absurd to believe that God would take a man to heaven for thousands of years, and then bring him down from heaven, and judge him to see if he ought to go there? This is too absurd to be believed. See Rev. 11:18.

Again, if the soul or spirit can live just as well out of the body as in the body, or perhaps even better; if it can be like an angel, can fly rapidly from one place to another, can live, and think, and act, and be so exceedingly happy without the body; and if the body, as many preach, is only a prison-house, a cage and a clog to the soul,—what is the use of a resurrection of this body? See 1 Cor. 15:32. Why raise the body and put the soul back into it again? or, why was the soul ever put into the body at all, if it could do better without it? Yet no doctrine of the Scriptures is plainer than that of the resurrection of the dead at the last day. See 1 Cor. 15.

Then, again, if the saints as soon as they die go up to heaven, where Jesus is, and where they can enjoy all the glory and happiness of heaven, what will they care for the second coming of Christ? Yet all the Bible writers were constantly wishing for it, longing for it, and praying for it. See Heb. 9:28. These fundamental doctrines of the Bible—the Judgment, the resurrection, and the second advent—are all set aside and destroyed by the doctrine of the conscious state of the dead.

The Bible directly asserts that the wicked are reserved unto the day of Judgment to be punished. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of Judgment to be punished." 2 Pet. 2:9. See also Job 21:28-32; Rev. 20:12, 13. Now, if the wicked are reserved till the Judgment to be punished, they certainly are not being punished in hell before that time. This is so plain that any child can see it, and so reasonable that everybody ought to believe it.

Another plain fact which clearly shows that the righteous do not go to heaven when they die, is that they are not to be rewarded till the second advent, the resurrection, and the Judgment. If they went to heaven at death, they would have thousands of years of reward before the Judgment. But now see how plainly this doctrine is everywhere taught, that the time of reward is not at death, but at the Judgment: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27. When will every man be rewarded?—At the coming of Christ. "For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Luke 14:14. When will you be recompensed?—At the resurrection. No promise of it before. "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Pet. 5:4. When

will you get your crown?—When the great Shepherd comes, not till then.

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great." Rev. 11:18. When will the Lord's saints, small and great, be rewarded?—When the time comes to judge the dead. How plain is this doctrine! Scores of texts all through the Bible might be given, teaching the same thing. But if this be true, then it cannot be true that the righteous go to heaven when they die. Well, if men do not go to heaven or hell at death, where do they go? Let the Bible answer this question, and it will do so in very plain terms.

1. *It says that they are dead.* Death is thus defined by Webster: "The extinction of life." Notice the following plain declarations: "For Naboth is not alive, but dead." 1 Kings 21:15. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead." John 6:49. "David . . . is both dead and buried." Acts 2:29. "The dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16. "He being dead yet speaketh." Heb. 11:4. "Abraham is dead, and the prophets." John 8:52. "Lazarus is dead." John 11:14. How plain are these declarations,—David is dead, Lazarus is dead. And death is an extinction of life. Then all these men are dead, and not alive.

2. *They are in the grave.* Nothing is more plainly stated than this. We will quote several scriptures upon this point. The reader will notice that it does not say simply that the body is in the grave, but it says that *the man*, the person himself, is there. It does not say that a part of man goes there, or that the house that the man lived in goes there, but it says that he himself, the man proper, is there. Notice carefully these scriptures: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:19. Who was to return to dust?—The conscious, intelligent, responsible man Adam. To Abraham, God said, "And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." Gen. 15:15. " whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl. 9:10. What is going into the grave?—That part of man which is capable of having knowledge, wisdom, devices, etc. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Isa. 26:19. Notice, it is *men* who are dead, as well as bodies. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." Dan. 12:2. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29. Who are in the grave?—They that have done evil and they that have done good,—intelligent, responsible men. "And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him." Acts 8:2. Who was buried?—The martyr Stephen—not simply Stephen's body, but Stephen himself. The reader will readily remember scores of texts through the Bible making the same statements.

3. *The dead know nothing,—have no thoughts.* This is an important proposition, which we wish the reader to distinctly notice. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day, his thoughts perish." Ps. 146:3, 4. In the very day a man dies, his thoughts perish. Can a man be in heaven or hell alive, and have no thoughts? "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Eccl. 9:5, 6. What do the dead know? The declaration is positive,—they "know not anything." Says one, This is the body. Also, it cannot be; for the next verse says, "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Men love and hate with the mind; hence it is the mind of man which is referred to. "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Ps. 115:17. "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Ps. 6:5. "Let the wicked be

ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave." Ps. 31:17. "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee." Isa. 38:18. All these scriptures plainly state that after death men have no thoughts, know nothing, are not intelligent anywhere, or in any manner.

4. *The dead are asleep.* We all know that in perfect, sound sleep there is no thought, not even a dream. We are simply unconscious. It is a well-known fact that the Lord everywhere uses sleep to describe the state of the dead. A person in sound sleep is peacefully, quietly resting, with no sorrow, no trouble. Carefully read the following scriptures:—

"So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David." 1 Kings 2:10. "And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father." 1 Kings 11:43. "And Hezekiah slept with his fathers." 2 Kings 20:21. "For now shall I sleep in the dust." Job 7:21. "So man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Job 14:12. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12:2. "And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." Mark 5:39. "These things said he; and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. . . . Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." John 11:11, 14. "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. . . . But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. . . . Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." 1 Cor. 15:6, 18, 20, 51. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." 1 Thess. 4:13-15.

If the saints are dead, they are not alive. If they are in the grave, they are not in heaven. If they have no thoughts, then they are not thinking. If they know nothing, then they are not intelligent. If they are asleep, then they are not awake. If they are to be rewarded at the Judgment, they are not being rewarded now. Dear reader, this is the doctrine which we believe and teach. Is it not the doctrine of the Bible?

But it is said that this is such a dark, gloomy prospect, to sleep for ages in the cold grave. If this be so, it is no evidence that it is not the truth; for many things are true which are very undesirable, such as sin, war, sickness, and death. We must not decide what is truth by our desires. But look on the other side. The popular theory is that the wicked go into hell torments as fast as they die. The majority die wicked. Every day souls are falling into hell. Millions are writhing there now in unutterable woe. Is not this dark? How much better to know that all are quietly resting in slumber. In sleep there is no consciousness of the lapse of time. A thousand years would seem no longer than one day to them. Then eternity will be long enough for the saints. We sleep here one-third of our time. Do we think this terrible?—No. In fact, it is the most consoling thought imaginable to know that our friends are sweetly resting near us. We know just where they are and how they are.

HUMILITY is perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted, or vexed, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed. It is to expect nothing; to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed and despised. It is to have a blessed home in myself, where I can go in and shut the door, and kneel to my Father in secret, and be at peace as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and above me is troubled. Let us bear in mind that whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

DAILY WORK.

In the name of God advancing,
Sow thy seed at morning light;
Cheerily the furrows turning,
Labor on with all thy might.
Look not to the far-off future,
Do the work which nearest lies;
Sow thou must before thou reapest,
Rest at last is labor's prize.
Standing still is dangerous ever,
Toll is meant for Christians now;
Let there be, when evening cometh,
Honest sweat upon thy brow,
And the Master shall come smiling,
At the setting of the sun,
Saying, as he pays thy wages,
"Good and faithful one, well done!"

—From the German.

BEGIN AT JERUSALEM.

In the first fervor of a new love, the young Christian desires to do some great thing for Christ. This is a mistake; he had better do a great many little things. This is at once more difficult and more important. He looks about him for a new way of serving Christ; he had better look about him for opportunities of serving in old ways. Religion, like charity, begins at home; though neither ends there. If every villager will make his own door-yard neat, and plant trees in front of his own lot, there will be no need of a Village Improvement Society. There is a sense in which "Take care of number one" is a good motto. If he that provides not for his own household is worse than an unbeliever, it does not follow, as some people seem to imagine, that he who provides for his own household is better than a Christian; but nevertheless in his own household is the place to begin. The man who does not conduct family devotions at home, and goes to protracted meetings throughout the week, makes a poor exchange; so does the mother who leaves her children half-orphans to attend to the interests of the naked children of Borriobolaga. It is true that some Christian activity outside the home makes the healthiest state of Christian activity within the home; but it is also true that doing great things in the parish is a poor excuse for doing nothing in the family. The place to begin Christian activity is just where you are—with your present companions, in your present circle, availing yourself of your present opportunities. The best infant class a mother can teach is the one God has given her.

Christ's teaching illustrates this principle. His illustrations of character to be commended were drawn from the common deeds of common life: a steward faithful in the administration of his lord's estate; a servant, not eating and drinking, but giving out the food intrusted to him in due season; a traveler picking up a fellow-traveler in distress, whom he happened to meet on the highway, and helping him to the nearest inn. And Christ's example enforces his precept. He went about doing good; but he either sought or made great occasions. He preached a few sermons—five or six in all; most of what we call his discourses were conversations. He meets a woman at a well, and makes a request for a drink of water serve the purpose of spiritual instruction. He sits down, an invited guest, at the table of a Pharisee; the conversation does not carry him along into talk about society and business and earthiness—he carries it along to heavenly things. And yet even this he does by telling his followers what sort of parties to give, and whom to invite. He sits down with his friends at the Paschal supper, the annual feast of his nation, and the turn he gives to the occasion invests it with a new meaning, and converts the national feast into the great festival of Christendom. His words then, and on a previous occasion, transform the mere animal act of eating into a divine sacrament. He does not seek to carry his followers away from the common activities of life; he illuminates them, and makes them sacred by the spirit with which he irradiates them. He begins his ministry in the province where his boyhood was spent; he does not carry it beyond his native land. This is not because his sympathies were narrow and provincial, but because what his hand found to do he did with all his might, sure that others

would be ready to do the larger work when the time came. He began at Jerusalem, and left Paul to go to Rome.

• It is true that it is not given to Christ's followers to equal their Master. He possessed what, for want of a better designation, we may call spiritual genius, one such as no one of his followers has ever equaled. We cannot hope to give equal elevation to the request for a drink of water or to the eating of bread at the supper-table; but we may follow him, even though it be afar off. We may endeavor, not so much to find great opportunities for doing good, as to do good to all men as we have the opportunity. We may make it our ambition to carry into all of life such an elevation of character that we shall elevate every occasion and every individual. If Christ is in us, we shall do this whether we try or no.—*Christian Union.*

God holds the person of one talent just as responsible for its proper use as he does the man who has ten.

THE FIELD.

"THE FIELD IS THE WORLD."

PROGRESS OF THE CAUSE.

Brief mention of work done and results accomplished by Seventh-day Adventists, in different parts of the field, according to reports received since our last issue:—

ARKANSAS.—Elds. J. G. Wood and J. W. Scoles hold meetings at Hindsville, one result being a company of fifteen believers ready for church organization.

CANADA.—Five converts reported at Ways' Mills, as a result of tent meetings; tent meetings held at Coaticook.

COLORADO.—J. D. Pegg gives a course of lectures at Fort Collins, one result being a company of sixteen believers.

DENMARK.—Eld. Matteson reports general progress in the work throughout Denmark.

DELAWARE.—Meetings held at Harrington by Victor Thompson and D. C. Babcock, result in awakening a wide-spread interest in the doctrines preached, and some have embraced them.

FRANCE.—The tent meetings at Nimes result in fifteen converts; further meetings held at Vergeze.

ITALY.—A. C. Bourdeau holds interesting meetings in the tent at Saint Germain, with a good prospect of success.

IOWA.—Tent meetings held at Atalissa.

INDIANA.—Twelve believers at Logansport sign the church covenant; C. F. Jenkins reports several believers in Newton county; thirty believers reported at Homer; twenty-six sign the church covenant at Waldron.

KENTUCKY.—Meetings held at Adairville and Keysburg, by Elds. Osborn and Garrett, result in several conversions.

KANSAS.—Elds. Gibbs and Rogers hold a series of meetings at Sterling, resulting in sixteen believers; W. D. Curtis reports fifteen Sabbath-keepers at Topeka, as the result of meetings held there; ten new members added to the church at Olney; twenty-two believers sign the covenant at Altoona, as a result of meetings held by Elds. Barton and Page; seven additional converts among the colored population of Topeka.

LOUISIANA.—T. H. Gibbs reports that success continues to attend the mission work in New Orleans, and that eleven new accessions have recently been made to the company of believers in that city.

MINNESOTA.—Camp-meeting held at Owatonna, where twelve new believers are reported.

MICHIGAN.—Tent-meetings held at Morrice result in seventeen converts; a company of twenty-three believers raised up at Bear Lake; several converts reported at Onokama; camp-meeting at Grand Rapids was largely attended, and generally successful, sixty-three persons being baptized, and five candidates for the ministry ordained; \$7,500 raised to extend the work; meetings at Jamestown result in nineteen believers.

NEW YORK.—Annual State camp-meeting held at Newtown.

NORWAY.—Tent meetings being held at Moss, by Elds. Olsen and Johnson; church of nineteen members organized at Ratvik.

NEBRASKA.—Four converts baptized at Irving; church organized at Greeley, also one at Jackson, the latter consisting of twenty-one members; annual camp-meeting held at Lincoln results favorably; four-

teen new believers sign the covenant at Red Cloud, making a church of nineteen.

WASHINGTON TERRITORY.—The work continues to prosper at Seattle, and new members are being added to the church.

THE THEOLOGICAL WORLD.

WISCONSIN.—Eld. I. Sanborn visits the churches at Hebron, Baraboo, Elroy, and Sparta, holding encouraging meetings; five converts baptized at Elroy.

... There are no Protestant missionaries among the million and a half of people in Tripoli, North Africa.

... The Chinese Government has paid \$10,000 to the Canada Presbyterian Mission in Formosa for property destroyed in the Franco-Chinese war.

... The Presbytery of Freeport, Ill., recently passed resolutions disapproving of the use of text-books in the public schools that exclude religious and Christian instruction.

... The London Baptist is quoted as saying that Mr. Sprague's sermons are more in demand among the English ritualistic clergy than those of any other preacher.

... It is stated that one of the most important questions to be decided at the Episcopal Convention which meets in October is the adoption of the revised prayer-book.

... The Central Association of Free Baptists, of New York, has unanimously adopted resolutions favoring union between the Free Baptists and the Christians of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

... The sad intelligence comes from London by cable that the young king of Uganda has put to death all the converts of the Protestant and Catholic missions, and that the missionaries are in great peril.

... Pope Leo XIII. has issued a Brief confirming the Jesuits in all their privileges, as an order of the Roman Church. It is said that the pope has taken this step in order to gain strength in a political emergency.

... Dr. Thompson characterizes the Dornier doctrine of future probation as "incipient theological dry rot." We think it has got far beyond the incipient stage of theological rotteness.

... The pope, in an encyclical to the Bishops of Hungary, condemns neutral and mixed schools, and opposes the bill in the Hungarian Diet to legalize marriage between Jews and Christians.

... In the Scottish Episcopal Church, views of the most extreme type are now all but universally prevalent. High Churchism in Scotland is hardly distinguishable from popery itself.

... The smallest Methodist Conference in the world is that of France, which is composed of twenty-five ministers and four or five laymen. The total Methodist membership in France is under two thousand.

... In ten years, more than thirty thousand people have embraced Christianity in the Samoan Islands. It is thought there are not more than twenty houses in the whole group where there is not a Bible and family worship.

... It is said that the Holy Inquisition has promulgated a decree threatening with the severest discipline of the Church those magistrates and officers of state in France who shall venture to apply the law of divorce passed eighteen months ago by the French Parliament.

... The pope has appointed a special commission of cardinals to examine and report upon the divorced laws of different countries, with a view to enable the Pontiff to suitably instruct the bishops of the Catholic church throughout the world, on the subject of divorce.

... The Provincial Synod of the Church of England in Canada, after fully discussing the educational question, decided that members of the Synod should do everything in their power to influence the legislatures of the various provinces to authorize the reading of the Scriptures in the public schools.

... At the General Conference of the Canada Methodist Church, just held at Toronto, it was recommended that the Conference ordain that the non-alcoholic wine be used in the sacrament of the Lord's supper; that juvenile temperance societies be organized in all the congregations, and that a day be set apart in each year, known as Temperance Sunday, which should be entirely devoted to temperance questions.

... The next Baptist Congress will be held in Baltimore, beginning November 16, and continuing two days. Among the questions to be discussed are the following: "Inspiration of the Scriptures," "Faith Cures," "Religious Instruction in State Education," "The Future Life," and "Popular Indifference to Religion." The subject of "Sabbath Observance" will be discussed under these three heads: "Scriptural Grounds," "Utilitarian Grounds," and "How Best Secured?"

... Advice from Hong Kong state there is a dispute between Methodist and Catholic missionaries in China as to which denomination is responsible for the indiscretions that incited the recent wholesale massacre of Christians in the Province of Se Chuen. The Catholic bishop of Chun-King attributes the outbreak in that city to the indiscreet conduct of the Methodists. The latter declare that in Chun-King the massacre of native Christians, and the destruction of their churches and property, are due entirely to the popular indignation aroused by the Catholic bishop, who, the Methodists say, persistently used yellow tiles in the construction of his new cathedral, in spite of repeated warnings that it was dangerous to do so, because it outraged native faith by making common use of a color venerated as sacred, and reserved exclusively for the use of the emperor.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., October 15, 1886.

Are you a believer in the doctrine of man's natural, inherent immortality? Please read an article found elsewhere in this issue, entitled "Immortality and Universalism," and see if your belief will not compel you to be a Universalist also.

The perpetuity and absolutely unchangeable nature of the law of God are forcibly impressed by several paragraphs in the current article on "The Judgment of the Great Day." Read that article carefully, and observe the argument in favor of the unchanged and unchangeable nature of the ten commandments.

Our readers have doubtless discovered before now that we believe the "saints' inheritance" is not a mystical affair, "beyond the bounds of time and space," but that it will be a literal, tangible inheritance. The writer of the articles on this subject, now being published in the SICKLE, is treating the same very exhaustively, and it is really surprising to note the large array of scripture evidence in relation to this important question. We invite careful and candid attention to these articles, feeling assured that they will richly repay such perusal.

Again we call special attention to the articles on "The Judgment of the Great Day," that are now running through the SICKLE. We are aware that the positions maintained in these articles are somewhat at variance with those commonly entertained by popular religious denominations, but the most important consideration is to be in harmony with Holy Writ. We are sure that the candid, earnest seeker after truth, can but be interested in the discussion of this question, as upon a correct knowledge of it depends an understanding of many other questions, and much scripture teaching.

THE UNRELIABILITY OF THE EARLY FATHERS AND TRADITIONS.

That illustrious champion of Protestantism, the great Chillingworth, once said: "I see plainly, and with mine own eyes, that there are popes against popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the church of one age against the church of another age."—Quoted by Alex. Campbell, in "Debates with Bishop Purcell," p. 206.

IMMORTALITY AND UNIVERSALISM.

If man is immortal, Universalism is true. The case stands clearly thus. John saw a time coming when "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them" will be heard, saying, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." There is no exception made here for a great receptacle of the countless hosts of the lost, where they will be wailing in agony, and descending continually into more hideous forms of sin and intenser misery, and assailing the throne and name of God with curses and horrid blasphemy. Such has been our teaching from our youth up. But as we examine for ourselves the plan of God as revealed in his word, we find no room for such a place of long continuance. The time is coming when every creature throughout the wide universe, will be heard rendering blessings and praise to God instead of cursing, and filled with emotions of joy instead of agony.

Now, if all men are absolutely immortal, and must live forever, it follows that all, irrespective of character, will eventually rise to this state of happiness; and Universalism is proved. But we are abundantly assured in the word of God that the wicked never will; and therefore when the time comes that there are no beings in the whole universe but happy beings, and no sounds heard but those of blessing and praise, where will the wicked be? The question is fairly before us. The wicked never will arrive at a state of blessedness; but the time is coming when all that are found within the limits of creation will be blessed. When that time comes, where will the wicked be? When the believer in man's natural immortality has thought sufficiently upon this question, he will find the answer in Ps. 87: 10: "Thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be."—Sel.

RESULT OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

COMMENTING on this subject, the *Christian Union* gives utterance to the following sentiments, which the SICKLE heartily indorses:—

The method of the National Association is antagonistic to the spirit of American civil liberty. Every argument which has been or can be used in favor of the theological amendment of the Constitution, has been used a thousand times, just as logically, for the union of Church and State. Moreover, every one of these arguments would justify prosecution in the courts of the land for opinion's sake. Suppose that you have carried your amendment. Instantly you have revolutionized the civil spirit of this Republic. From the moment of your victory, you make the holding of certain theological opinions, different from your own, an offense indictable in our courts and punishable in our prisons. When you have gained so much, what have you left of American liberty?

Both as Christians and as patriots, therefore, we solemnly protest against the measure now in agitation. It is a measure in every way evil. Its success would be fatal at once to religion and to freedom in America.

ETERNAL TORMENT.

Why the God of mercy and justice should consign poor sinners to an endless life in an eternally burning hell, as a punishment for the sins committed during a few short years in this life, is a great mystery to many minds, and, we may say, one very prominent cause of the wide-spread infidelity. The following lines by Ralph Erskine, describing the perpetuity of the sinner's sufferings according to popular theology, are very comprehensive, to say the least:—

"Infinite years in torments shall I spend,
And never, never, never, have an end?
Ah! must I live in torturing despair
As many years as atoms in the air?
When these are spent, as many thousands more
As grains of sand crowd the ebbing shore;
When these are done, as many yet behind
As leaves of forest shaken with the wind;
When these are gone, as many to ensue
As blades of grass on hills and dales that grew;
When these run out, as many on the march
As stary lamps that glid the spangled arch;
When these expire, as many millions more
As moments in the millions passed before!
When all these doleful years are spent in pain,
And multiplied by myriads yet again
Till numbers drown the thought, could I suppose
That then my wretched years would have a close,
This would afford some ease; but, oh! I shiver
To think upon the dreadful sound, FOREVER
The burning gulf where I blaspheming lie
Is time no more, but vast eternity."

Who that reads these lines can truly believe that they justly represent the God of love? How much more in harmony with the infinite mercy of the divine nature would be the belief that sinners, after receiving their just amount of punishment, will be utterly destroyed and the remembrance of them cut off from the earth. Why not believe the Bible when it says that all they who "do wickedly shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch"? or, as expressed by Obadiah, "They shall be as though they had not been"?

FROM FAITH TO INFIDELITY—BY A DESCENT OF FOUR STEPS.

1. The day of the Sabbath has been changed.
2. The Sabbath has been abolished.
3. The ten commandments have been abolished.
4. The Bible has been abolished, superseded, and is of no more value than a last year's almanac.

To leap at once from faith to infidelity would be fearful. But by the use of these four steps the descent is made easy; the distance from step to step being so small that a person walking in sleep (as most are) would not be awakened by the slight jar. The fourth step is no longer than the first; for the first is a denial of the truth of revelation.

The descent is perfectly natural, too. To a person standing on the first step, it is much easier to descend the remaining three than to climb up the one to the platform of truth. Wanting Bible evidence to sustain him where he is, he takes the second step. He finds it easier to say that the Sabbath has been abolished than to prove that it has been changed. He now claims Bible testimony; for he finds the word "abolished" in the Bible. 2 Cor. 3. But the testimony says nothing of the Sabbath, only as it was one of the precepts "written and engraved on stone;" therefore he must take the third step, and say the ten

commandments are abolished. This is but a short step; for if one of the ten is dead, why not all? And now, having plucked away the very heart and vitals of the Bible,—its only moral code,—and finding no evidence that any one of the commandments has ever been re-enacted, it is but a very little step from this to deny the Bible *in toto*.

Reader, are you standing upon the platform of truth? Have you faith in the word of God, believing it means what it says, and practicing in accordance with the same? If so, hold fast; for you are built upon the rock. But, are you standing upon one of the steps below, let me entreat you, as one who loves you, to make a mighty effort, imploring help from God, to reach the platform above. It will require a mighty effort; for though the distance from step to step is small, the platform is very high above them all. It can only be reached by "repentance toward God," whose holy law you have violated, and "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," through whom alone you can find pardon and acceptance. Do be persuaded to make the effort. The lions which you see in the way will vanish at your approach, while by faith you walk steadily forward.

And oh, the prize! the rich reward! Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Have faith in God! for this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.

R. F. C.

No one is too poor, too full of labor and care, to give a smile and a kind word. The loving Saviour makes use of means so simple to bring souls into his kingdom.

Condensed List of Books and Tracts.

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