

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

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

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For Terms, - - - See Last Page.

LIVE FOR SOMETHING.

LIVE for something, be not idle;
Look about thee for employ!
Sit not down to idle dreaming;
Labor is the sweetest joy.
Folded hands are ever weary,
Selfish hearts are never gay;
Life for thee hath many duties—
Active be, then, while you may.

Scatter blessings in thy pathway!
Gentle words and cheering smiles
Better are than gold or silver,
With their grief-dispelling wiles.
Pleasant sunshine gladly falleth
Ever on the grateful earth,
So let sympathy and kindness
Gladden well the darkened hearth.

Hearts there are oppressed and weary;
Drop the tear of sympathy,
Whisper words of hope and comfort,
Give, and thy reward shall be
Joy unto thy soul returning,
From the perfect Fountain-head;
Freely as thou freely givest
Shall the grateful light be shed.

—Selected.

Notes and 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.

HERE is a most valuable comment made by Chrysostom: "An intimate acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures is a secure haven, and an impregnable bulwark, and an immovable tower, and imperishable glory, and impenetrable armor, and unfading joy, and perpetual delight, and whatever other excellence can be uttered." With what earnestness and zeal, then, should we study the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation.

MANY eminent critics have borne testimony to the likeness of Catholicism to Paganism. Thus Middleton speaks, having reference to Catholicism: "All whose ceremonies appear plainly to have been copied from the rituals of primitive paganism, as handed down by an uninterrupted succession from the priests of old Rome to the priests of the new Rome."

IN Paul's epistle to Titus, chapter 1:14, occurs this most excellent advice, which is especially applicable in these days: "Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth." From the time of the Reformation under Martin Luther until now, every advance step in reform has been opposed by those who were under the influence of fables and traditions of men. As an instance of this, the famous Dr. Eck spoke against Luther as follows: "I am surprised at the humility and modesty with which the reverend doctor undertakes to oppose, alone, so many illustrious fathers, and pretends to know more than the sovereign pontiff, the councils, the doctors, and the universities! It would be surprising, no doubt, if God had hidden the truth from so many saints and martyrs until the advent

of the reverend father." Thus were efforts made to oppose the great Reformation that Luther led off in, and thus do men at the present time attempt to place the traditions of men in opposition to light from the word of God.

THE decalogue containing the moral law is the very foundation and center of the Holy Scriptures. And this moral law, engraved on tables of stone by the finger of God, was the first written document on earth. The great Creator set the first copy. Written language is of divine origin, and was revealed for the express purpose of communicating the will of God to men. Not only were the law and books of Moses the first ever written, but they were the first ever printed with types. A noted Spiritualist, speaking of the "old Bible system before the art of printing," says that science has thrown the Bible into the shade by the extremely cheap literature of the present day! He then calls on the people to "dismiss the old, dilapidated, and costly machine as belonging to the Dark Ages, before printing was known." This is a fair specimen of the blindness of infidelity. The Bible was not only the first book printed, but is the cheapest book in existence. It was the importance of Bible truth that stimulated science, and caused the invention of the art of printing.

DEATH MEANS DEATH.—Dr. Watts, the church's poet, in his "Ruin and Recovery of Mankind," p. 11, sec. 3, deposes the following candid testimony on the penalty pronounced upon Adam. He says, "There is not one place of scripture that occurs to me, where the word 'death,' as it was first threatened in the law of innocence, necessarily signifies a miserable immortality of the soul, either to Adam, the actual sinner, or to his posterity." There is more truth than poetry in this paragraph of Watts's; for the statement is exactly in harmony with the divine Scriptures.

WITH regard to the origin of the Sabbath, Dr. Lange, the great German commentator, says: "If we had no other passage than this of Gen. 2:3, there would be no difficulty in deducing from it a precept for the universal observance of a Sabbath, or seventh day, to be devoted to God as holy time, by all of that race for whom the earth and its nature were specially prepared. The first men must have known it. The words 'hallowed it,' can have no meaning otherwise. They would be a blank unless in reference to some who are required to keep it holy."

THERE is no intimation in the Scriptures that infants are proper subjects for baptism. On this subject Martin Luther said, "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles." Speaking on the same topic, Calvin says: "Because Christ requires teaching before baptizing, and will have believers only admitted to baptism, baptism does not seem to be rightly administered, except faith precede."

DWIGHT'S TESTIMONY.—Dr. Dwight, the well-known theological writer, makes the following statement concerning everlasting misery: "There are, I know, persons who speak of future punishment with an air of cool self-complacency, as being, in their view, easy of investigation, and free from embarrassment. I am inclined, perhaps uncharitably, to give them little credit for candor, clearness of intellect, or soundness of character; and greatly doubt whether it has been investigated by them."—Dwight, vol. 4, p. 457. How few there are, if they would candidly examine the matter, but would be of the same mind with Dr. Dwight!

NO spirit is wholly cast off from God if it longs after God. If thou canst be content without God, thou art indeed a lost one; but if there be in thee a wretched, rankling discontent at the very thought of being severed from thy God, then thou art his and he is thine, and no division shall come between thee and him.—Spurgeon.

B E broad. You cannot afford to be a man of a single groove, ignorant of all else besides. Be narrow. You cannot do everything; and it is better to do one thing well than to do half a dozen things badly. Be shallow. There are depths of useless knowledge which it is not worth your while to sound. Be profound. When there is one thing which you must know thoroughly, cease not endeavor till you have sounded its remotest depths.—S. S. Times.

REFLECTING the other day upon the sad state of the churches at the present moment, I was led to look back to apostolic time, and to consider wherein the preaching of the present day differed from the preaching of the apostles. I remarked the vast difference in their style from the set and formal oratory of the present age. But the main difference I observed was in the subject of their preaching. Surprised I was when I discovered that the very staple of the preaching of the apostles was the resurrection of the dead. The apostles, when they preached, always testified concerning the resurrection of Jesus, and the consequent resurrection of the dead. It appears that the alpha and omega of their gospel was the testimony that Jesus died and rose again from the dead, according to the Scriptures.—Spurgeon.

OF the necessity of dwelling upon the law of God, Bishop Simpson once uttered the following golden words, being the closing remarks of a lecture delivered by that eminent man on "Preaching," at Yale College:—

"The law of God should be distinctly set forth. The congregation should be gathered as around the base of Sinai, as from the summit is heard the voice of God in those commandments which are eternal and unalterable in their character. The effect of preaching the law will be that some hearts will be opened; others may be repelled, and say, 'Let not God speak to us any more.' Some will object to the preaching of the law, and say, 'Prophecy better things.' But still the law must be preached. It brings the sinner to a recognition of his sins, that he has transgressed God's holy law, and shows him the fearfulness of the doom which is impending over him. The law must be followed by the gospel. The awakened sinner must be pointed to the Saviour, that he may see that, deep as his transgression may be, the blood of Christ can wash it away. There are many preachers who love to talk of the gospel alone. They dwell especially upon the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Christ. This is well. It is more than well. It is essential. But sometimes they neglect these matters of the law, and assign them to a place in the past age, claiming that men now can be best moved by love alone. They may thus rear a beautiful structure; but its foundation is on the sand. No true edifice can be raised without its foundation's being dug deep by repentance toward God. The gospel has no significance, except as it is based on the positive law, which Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfill. The law without the gospel leads to service; the gospel without the law leads to Antinomianism; the two combined—charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned."

Doctrinal Articles.

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

THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT DAY.—12.

BY U. SMITH.

WE have anticipated a little in order to follow sin to its final extinction in the person of Satan, the antitypical scape-goat. Let us now return to the cleansing of the Sanctuary, the investigative Judgment,—a Judgment which, as we have seen, must precede the coming of Christ,—a Judgment which commenced at the end of the 2300 days in 1844, and consequently has now been in progress for over forty years.

The view that such a Judgment as this must precede the coming of Christ, is not confined to S. D. Adventists. The great fact that the resurrection of the righteous is declarative of their acceptance with God, and therefore proof that the investigation and decision of their cases precede their resurrection and the coming of Christ, has been very distinctly seen and stated by some of the clearest minds in the Adventist ranks. The late Sylvester Bliss, for many years editor of the *Advent Herald*, thus states his view of the matter:—

"We are inclined to the opinion that the Judgment is after death and before the resurrection; and that before that event the acts of all men will be adjudicated; so that the resurrection of the righteous is their full acquittal and redemption, their sins being blotted out when the times of refreshing shall have come (Acts 3: 19); while the fact that the wicked are not raised [for 1,000 years], proves that they were previously condemned."—*Advent Shield*, p. 366, published in 1845.

This writer saw with perfect distinctness the fact that there can be no trial of the righteous after they have been made immortal. But it is very evident that he did not well understand how and when the examination of their cases should take place; for the subject of the Sanctuary was not then understood.

Eld. Josiah Litch, in the early history of the Advent movement, and then an able writer, states the view even more distinctly than Mr. Bliss. In his "Prophetic Exposition," written in 1842, on pp. 49-54, he says:—

"THE MEANING OF THE TERM 'JUDGE.'"

"1. It is used in the Bible in the sense of a trial according to law and evidence, the idea being drawn from a civil or criminal court.

"2. It signifies a penal judgment: or the execution of judgment.

"The terms are both used in reference to the judgment of the human race. All men will be brought to trial, or into Judgment, and all their deeds and their moral characters will be examined, and their everlasting states will be determined, by the evidence produced from God's books, including the book of life, which will decide the moral character and everlasting destiny of each individual of Adam's race. If their names are found in the 'book of life,' they will be saved; and if not found there, they will be cast into the lake of fire, the second death. But the degree of reward or punishment will be graduated by what each one has done. . . .

"THE TRIAL MUST PRECEDE THE EXECUTION."

"This is so clear a proposition that it is sufficient to state it. No human tribunal would think of executing judgment on a prisoner till after his trial; much less will God. He will bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.

"But the resurrection is the *retribution* or *execution* of judgment; for they that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life. 'We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' 'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.' Here is clearly a retribution in the resurrection. It will be administered when the saints are raised. But no more certainly than that they that have done evil will come forth damned, or 'to the resurrection of damnation.' They will come forth to

shame and everlasting contempt. The saints will be raised and be caught up at once to meet the Lord in the air, to be forever with the Lord. There can be no general judgment or trial after the resurrection. The resurrection is the separating process, and they will never be commingled again, after the saints are raised, no matter how long or how short the period to elapse between the two resurrections; it is all the same, so far as the separation which the resurrection produces is concerned. If there is no more than a second which elapses between the two resurrections, the separation it makes is final.

"These two senses of the Judgment are recognized in Rev. 20: 12. 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' This is the trial of the dead in the invisible and spiritual world before Jesus Christ comes in the clouds of heaven. The only evidence on which the trial proceeds is, the books and the book of life.

"They tell the whole story; and we must abide the issue of the trial on that testimony. The dead as dead were judged. Then follows, in the next verse, the penal Judgment, in connection with the resurrection. 'The sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged [judgment was executed upon them] every man according to their works.' There is no reference here to a trial, or to the opening of the books; but simply a penal judgment. Judgment will be executed finally on each party; the righteous and the wicked, each class at the time of their resurrection; the righteous at the first resurrection, and the wicked at the final resurrection.

"GOD, THE 'ANCIENT OF DAYS,' WILL PRESIDE IN THE TRIAL."

"1. Dan. 7: 9, 10, presents the Ancient of days coming on his throne of fiery flame; the Judgment is set, and the books are opened. He is distinct from the Son of man, spoken of in verse 13, when he comes to the Ancient of days.

"THE SON OF MAN WILL EXECUTE THE JUDGMENT."

"Thus the Saviour declares, John 5: 27: 'And hath given him authority to EXECUTE JUDGMENT also, because he is the Son of man.' Also 2 Cor. 5: 10. 'For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' Also Paul's testimony in the Acts of the Apostles: God 'hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.' What we are assured of by the resurrection of Christ, is the execution in the resurrection of a righteous judgment on all men.

"THE TIME OF THE TRIAL OF THE DEAD."

"It is under the opening of the sixth seal of Revelation sixth chapter, where the servants of God are sealed. . . . And under the seventh seal (chap. 8: 1), when there is silence in heaven about the space of half an hour; when the great Mediator ceases to plead for sinners, the day of grace ends; then the judgment, or trial, will proceed on the living inhabitants of the earth. That done, Christ will appear in the clouds of heaven, and come to the Ancient of days, and the scene of trial, to announce the verdict with a shout, and deliver all his saints as soon as they are declared innocent, or justified, and raise them to eternal life in the twinkling of an eye. We are now justified by faith; we must however be declared justified at the day of Judgment, before the effects of the fall will be taken away, and the saints be restored to God's perfect image and glory."

In subsequent remarks on the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, Mr. Litch even raises the query if this judgment on the dead did not commence at the end of the 1260 years in 1798, when the dominion of the papacy was taken away. In these extracts the reader must be deeply interested as showing how the minds of men were led in the direction of the solution of some of the great problems connected with the closing up of earthly scenes. They are not quoted because every idea can be indorsed, because they cannot be; but they are presented to show how the light on the subject of the Sanctuary, which has arisen so clearly since

that time, relieves of all mystery great conclusions of which they themselves saw the necessity, and for which, in some degree of darkness and confusion, they were eagerly groping. Thus Eld. Litch thought that when Christ descended to this earth, was the time when he came to the Ancient of days; but that, as has been shown in former articles, cannot be. His reasoning, however, relative to the investigation and decision of the cases of the righteous before the resurrection, is weighty and conclusive. It is worthy of notice that he places the judgment of the righteous at the tribunal of the Father, as presented in Daniel 7. He believed that this part of the Judgment work was to be fulfilled while the living were yet in probation; for he suggested that it even might have commenced in 1798. These able writers saw the fact that this work must take place before the resurrection of the just, but they did not see the time and place for this work. They did not see the heavenly Sanctuary, and therefore had no clear idea of the concluding work of human probation as presented to us in the Saviour's ministration before the ark of God's testament. The temple of God in heaven reveals the very nature of this work, and the great prophetic period of 2300 days marks the time of its commencement. The stirring proclamation of the angel that the hour of his Judgment is come, and his solemn oath to the time gives to mankind the knowledge of this momentous work, and the certainty that the present is the time for the investigative Judgment and its eternal decisions. This doctrine is of the highest practical importance. It shows that we are now in the antitype of the great day of atonement, and that our chief concern should be the affliction of our souls and the confession of our sins.

THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH STILL OBSERVED FOR SEVERAL CENTURIES AFTER CHRIST.

BY GEO. I. BUTLER.

AFTER Constantine's time, there seems to have been in a measure a revival of interest in, and reverence for, the Sabbath in the minds of many Christians, at least in the Eastern churches, where the influence of the Roman Church was less powerful.

Prof. Stuart, in speaking of the period from Constantine to the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 364, says:—

"The practice of it [keeping of the Sabbath] was continued by Christians who were jealous for the honor of the Mosaic law, and finally became, as we have seen, predominant throughout Christendom. It was supposed at length that the fourth commandment did require the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath [not merely a seventh part of time]; and reasoning as Christians of the present day are wont to do, viz., that *all* which belonged to the ten commandments was immutable and perpetual, the churches in general came gradually to regard the seventh-day Sabbath as altogether sacred."—*Appendix to Gurney's Hist. Sab.*, pp. 115, 116.

The church had by this time become greatly corrupted. When Constantine professed Christianity, it became the popular religion. In order to serve in the army or in the courts, or hold any official position, men had to profess to be Christians; and Gibbon declares that many did this, but continued to worship their idols in secret. Vast numbers joined the church. The bishops sought high positions, wealth, and place, dressing in gorgeous attire, and there was very little resemblance indeed between religion now and in the days of persecution. What did this great Catholic Church now do, when they saw the Sabbath once more gaining some of its former sanctity, and an interest in it reviving?—They held a great Council at Laodicea, A. D. 364, and among other things passed a decree that Christians should *not rest on the seventh-day Sabbath, and pronounced a curse upon all who should do so.* We present the following statements of eminent authors on this point:—

Mr. James, in addressing the University of Oxford, uses this language: "When the practice of keeping Saturday Sabbaths, which had become so general at the close of this century, was evidently gaining ground in the Eastern church, a decree was passed in the Council held in Laodicea A. D. 364, 'that members of the church should not rest

from work on the Sabbath like the Jews, but should labor on that day, and preferring in honor the Lord's day; then, if it be in their power, should rest from work as Christians."—*Sermons on Sacraments and Sabbath*, pp. 122, 123.

Prynne thus testifies: "It is certain that Christ himself, his apostles, and the primitive Christians for some good space of time, did constantly observe the seventh-day Sabbath, . . . the evangelists and St. Luke in the Acts ever styling it the Sabbath day, . . . and making mention of its . . . solemnization by the apostles and other Christians, . . . it being still solemnized by many Christians after the apostles' times, even till the Council of Laodicea [A. D. 364], as ecclesiastical writers and the twenty-ninth canon of that Council testify, which runs thus: 'Because Christians ought not to Judaize and to rest in the Sabbath, but to work in that day (which many did refuse at that time to do). But preferring in honor the Lord's day (there being then a great controversy among Christians which of these two days . . . should have the precedency), if they should desire to rest they should do this as Christians. Wherefore if they shall be found to Judaize, let them be accursed from Christ. . . . The seventh-day Sabbath was . . . solemnized by Christ, the apostles, and primitive Christians, till the Laodicean Council did in a manner quite abolish the observation of it. . . . The Council of Laodicea [A. D. 364] . . . first settled the observation of the Lord's day and prohibited . . . the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath under an anathema."—*Dissertation on the Lord's Day Sabbath*, pp. 33, 34, 44. 1633.

We also quote from an old English writer, John Ley: "From the apostles' time until the Council of Laodicea, which was about the year 364, the holy observation of the Jews's Sabbath continued, as may be proved out of many authors; yea, notwithstanding the decree of that Council against it."—*Sunday a Sabbath*, p. 163. 1640.

From this time onward the general disregard of the ancient Sabbath was a foregone conclusion. It did continue, as we shall show, in some localities where the Catholic Church had not the power to put it down. But the influence of that church was so great, and its jurisdiction so extensive, and its hatred to the Sabbath of the Lord so bitter, and its efforts in behalf of the Sunday-Sabbath so active, that for centuries the ancient Sabbath makes but little figure among Christian communities. We charge plainly and squarely upon the corruptions of Christianity which developed into the Roman Catholic Church, the change of the Sabbath, and the abolition of the ancient Sabbath of the Lord contrary to the practice of the church of Jesus Christ. The influences which hastened this result dwelt in Rome itself in a special sense, far more than in other sections. The bishops of Rome manifested their enmity against the Sabbath far more than those of any other city.

About the year A. D. 200, the Church of Rome turned the Sabbath into a fast day. This was evidently done to make the Sabbath disreputable. Says Mr. James, before the University of Oxford, "The Western Church began to fast on Saturday at the beginning of the third century." Dr. Charles Hose, of Germany, says: "The Roman Church regarded Saturday as a fast day in direct opposition to those who regarded it as a Sabbath. Sunday remained a joyful festival," etc.—*Ancient Church Hist.*, Part I., div. 2, A. D. 100-312, sec. 69.

Says the great German historian, Neander: "In the Western church, particularly the Roman, where opposition to Judaism was the prevailing tendency, this very opposition produced the custom of celebrating the Saturday in particular as a fast day."—*Neander*, p. 186.

By Judaism is doubtless meant the observance of the Sabbath. Fasting is never popular, and of course, seeing the Sunday was made as joyful a day as possible, the Sabbath was disliked. The Eastern churches did not follow in this practice of fasting on the Sabbath for a long time, and censured the Roman Church for doing it.

The Roman Church made the first edict in behalf of Sunday. It required the observance of the Passover on the Sunday following Good Friday, while the great majority of the other churches celebrated it on the fourteenth day of the first month, no matter what day of the week this might be. Victor, Bishop of Rome, in the year 196, tried to impose this upon all the churches; that is, to compel them to observe it on Sunday. Dowling calls it the "earliest instance of Romish

assumption." The churches of Asia Minor would not comply with his wishes. Bower says that upon the receipt of their letter saying this, Victor gave way "to an impotent and ungovernable passion, and published bitter invectives against all the churches of Asia," etc.—*Hist. of the Popes*, vol. 1, p. 18.

Constantine's edict in behalf of the "Venerable day of the sun," went forth backed by the whole influence of Rome, where, indeed, it had its source. At the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, through the powerful influence of Constantine, the position of the Roman Church concerning the celebration of the passover on Sunday, was carried through. Thus Rome secured a victory in behalf of Sunday. One special reason urged by the Emperor in behalf of Sunday was this: "Let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews." This hatred of the Jews was one of the strongest causes why the Sabbath was suppressed. Sylvester, bishop of Rome at this time, and Eusebius, the historian, were special favorites of the emperor, and doubtless used their utmost influence with him to bring about these results.

We see, therefore, the Roman influence in all these moves to put down the Sabbath. These culminated in the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 364, when the keeping of the Sabbath was denounced, and those who observed it were placed under a curse. Who can fail to see the leading spirit in this movement? Whenever the Roman Church has had authority, the Sabbath has been put down. It continued much longer in the Eastern churches than in the Western, where the Roman influence was paramount. After the removal of the capital city from Rome to Constantinople by the Emperor Constantine, there was quite a struggle on the part of the bishop of that city for the mastery; but to no purpose, though it finally resulted in the separation of the Roman and Greek Catholic churches. But throughout the Western churches the adherents of the Sabbath had little favor; though we find here and there traces of Sabbath-keepers in retired places all through the Dark Ages. Of these we will speak hereafter.

Thus we see that the Roman Catholic Church, with the pope at its head, "exalted" itself "above God" by setting aside his law. Thus he fulfilled the prophet's prediction, "He shall think to change the times and the laws."

The Christian Life.

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

GIVING.

The sun gives ever; so the earth—
What it can give, so much, 't is worth;
The ocean gives in many ways—
Gives paths, gives fishes, rivers, bays;
So, too, the air, it gives us breath—
When it stops giving, comes in death.
Give, give, be always giving;
Who gives not is not living.
The more you give
The more you live.

God's love hath in us wealth upheaped;
Only by giving it is reaped.
The body withers, and the mind,
If pent in by a selfish rind.
Give strength, give thought, give deeds, give self.
Give love, give tears, and give thyself.
Give, give, be always giving;
Who gives not is not living.
The more we give
The more we live.

—British Workman.

A JOYFUL SERVICE.

"WHAT business are you in now?" asked one young man of another.

"I am working for Christ," was the reply.

The friends had met after a brief interval of absence, each to find the other changed.

"An honest, but not a paying work. You will need to work for the world as well as religion. You always said you meant to be a rich man, an influential man; but you have started wrong for that. Large drafts upon your time, your purse, and the sacrifice of many plans, are demanded by this religion of yours."

"I have started just the right way, my friend, to reach wealth, influence, and all the earthly good I have so foolishly boasted I would have. I have sacrificed nothing, but gained all things. I will try to prove all things."

And the young man did prove it nobly to his friend and to the world. In his business relations, in his

intercourse with the world, he stood firmly upon the Rock which he had chosen for his foundation, and many whose shelter had been early washed away, looked up to his secure dwelling, and built on the same Rock. Religion was his every-day dress, and no Sabbath cloak was needed to cover its soils; for prayer and watchfulness kept it pure day by day. To give as God had prospered him, of wealth, of time, of talent, was a part of his joyful service, and God gave him back in return fourfold.—*Selected*.

SOMETHING TO DO.

"If I only had something to do!" exclaimed a weary devotee to society; "there are servants enough to do the housework, sewing I know nothing about, of music and drawing I am heartily tired. If I could only do something grand—something that would make me famous; if I could follow in the footsteps of Florence Nightingale, or"—

Just here Hannah looks in. "Please, Miss, a ragged little fellow at the door says, 'Will you please give me a bit of bread, or something, for my sick mamma? She is very sick, and has nothing to eat.' That is all a made-up story, Hannah. You should know better. Tell him to go to work and earn his bread, instead of begging it through the streets."

The kind-hearted Hannah slips a few pennies from her own pocket into the child's hand, and sends him away, the fine lady having refused the very work for which she had been sighing. And she is only one of a thousand. Because work finds its way to our hands unsought, or because it chances to be something so common, found in the every-day grooves of life, we often let pass the opportunity for doing good, looking for wonderful things ahead, forgetting that it is only in the present we can act. Those persons whose reputation for charity, noble deeds, and self-sacrifice, are world-wide, did not go about seeking for something that would engrave their names on the monument of fame, but strove, day by day, to perform well each task that came before them. Their deeds of love and mercy were performed to render others happy, not to aggrandize themselves. We cannot all stand on the topmost round of the ladder of life, but we can cling fast to the one on which we rest, while we strive for, and look aloft to, the next.

There is something for every one to do. No one need be idle who has sufficient energy to bestir himself. If you can do nothing more than speak a kind word to some burdened, suffering heart, do that, not in the hope of a reward, but because your soul so yearns to comfort this sorrowing one that you cannot help doing it. If, perchance, you are a servant, and out of patience with the petty duties you have to perform, remember it is not the "position that degrades the person, but the person that dignifies the position." Do well the work ready for you, resting assured that if God intends you to labor in other fields, he will open a way for you to enter there. If you are doing the best you can, you have no cause for discouragement; but if you are not, if you have not yet awakened to the duties and realities of life, give a few moments' thought to the object for which you are living, asking yourself if the world is any better or happier for your being in it.

Do not waste your time in idle complaints when you should be wide awake, ready to seize the first opportunity of being useful. There is no use in going through the world with our eyes and hearts shut. Open both, and do not close them at the first unseemly picture that presents itself. Should you receive reproaches instead of thanks, even then do not let the smile fade from your face in despair; for you know there is One who does not keep accounts as mortals are apt to do, and who overlooks not the smallest item.

"Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait."

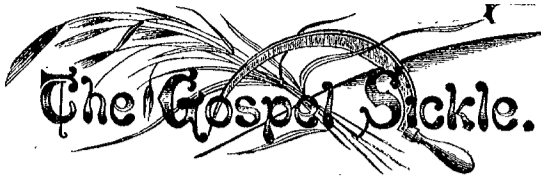
—Household.

If thou art wise, thou knowest thine own ignorance,
and thou art ignorant if thou knowest not thyself.—*Luther*.

When you have learned to submit, to do faithfully,
patiently, duty that is most distasteful to you, God
may permit you to do the work you like.—*Professor
Riddle*.

The best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness; to
an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to
your child, a good example; to a father, deference;
to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of
you; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity.—*Mrs.
Baiford*.

How often it is difficult to be wisely charitable; to
do good without multiplying the sources of evil! To
give alms is nothing unless you give thought also.
It is written, not "blessed is he that feedeth the poor,"
but "blessed is he that considereth the poor." A little
thought and a little kindness are often worth more
than a great deal of money.—*Rushkin*.



"The fields are white already to harvest."—John 4:36.

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., JANUARY 1, 1887.

PREDESTINATION.

THAT the Bible teaches predestination, is true; that it teaches what modern theology defines the term to mean, we think is not true. As set forth in the Scriptures, it is a doctrine full of comfort and consolation; as taught in the creeds, it is full of spiritual paralysis and despair. In the Scriptures it is the assurance of salvation so long as we maintain a certain relation to God; in theology it is a relation determined for us independently of our own will, and a fixed destiny to a life which we cannot lose, or a death which we cannot avert. Webster defines the word "predestination" in its theological acceptance to mean, "The purpose of God from eternity respecting all events; often the pre-assignment or allotment of men to everlasting happiness or misery."

The tendency of this latter doctrine must be at once apparent. It leads the individual to throw off all responsibility and intermit all efforts for himself. He says, "If my destiny has been fixed from all eternity by an irreversible decree, I might as well resign myself to my fate, and let the current take me where it has been predetermined that it shall take me: if I am to be saved, I shall be saved, and no one can prevent it; if I am to be lost, I cannot avoid it."

It is impossible to arouse such a soul to repentance. The answer comes, "If I am to repent, God will make me repent when the time comes; and I need not concern myself about it. Such an one cannot be induced to heed the divine injunction to flee from the wrath to come; for he says, 'If I am appointed to that wrath, flee as I will I cannot avoid it; and if not, then for me there is no wrath to come.'"

We once heard of a Presbyterian minister who, by some strange infatuation, conceived the idea that a certain one of his two sons was elected to be saved, and so taught him; but he considered that the other was foreordained to be lost, and taught him accordingly. Result: the elect son has entered the ministry; the reprobate is on the high road to that damnation which his father has held up before him as his inevitable portion. If that son is lost, what responsibility will rest upon that father! Give a man the natural inclinations of the heart to contend with, and then teach him that heaven is to him an impossibility, and it need not take long to divine what the result will be.

Four times the word "predestinate" is used in the Scriptures,—twice in Romans 8, and twice in Ephesians 1. Once we have the word "foreordain." 1 Peter 1:20. The word "ordain" is also used four times with a future signification. Six times we have the word "election," and twenty times the word "elect."

The meaning of the word "election," is a "choosing out, selecting;" and the elect are simply those who are "chosen out" by God, as the recipients of special privileges, because they are "choice" and "precious" in his sight. The question is, whether this "choosing out" is an act absolutely arbitrary on the part of God with reference to individuals, or whether it pertains to a certain plane of life or to a people as a class, and reaches the individual only on conditions which he is himself to supply.

Let appeal be made to the leading texts upon this question. And as a direction to thought, let them be considered with reference to these propositions: 1. God "hath appointed" (Luke 22:29) or foreordained Jesus Christ to the kingship of this world. This he did "before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20); that is, this foreordination was coeval with his purpose to create the world. It was not ordained on what ground he should finally hold this position. Had man never sinned, it would have been on the ground of Creator alone; but since man fell, and the original purpose could then be carried out only by his redemption, Christ will hold his position by virtue of being both Creator and Redeemer. 2. God has ordained that all who will conform to the image of his Son shall be saved. Such are the elect.

3. But he has not ordained that such and such individuals shall believe on Christ and be saved, whether they will or no; and such and such other individuals cannot believe on Christ however willingly they would do so, and hence must be lost at last. On the question of accepting or rejecting Christ our own free moral agency operates. On the plane of belief in Christ or connection with him, God's foreordination or election operates. Reaching that plane we are its subjects, and become the elect. Falling from it we lose our title to life, and cease to be the elect. Hence we are exhorted to make our calling and election sure." 2 Peter 1:10. We may accept or reject Christ as we will. All else is beyond our control. Believing in him, we are elected and foreordained to be saved, as surely as God's throne is to stand; rejecting him, we are as sure to be lost as sin is to be punished.

In Eph. 1:4, 5, the "choosing" and "predestination" are "in Him," that is, in Christ. We are adopted as children to himself "by Jesus Christ." But if we reject Christ, we frustrate all these good purposes and promises, so far as our own cases are concerned.

Rom. 8:29, 30 doubtless refers to the company raised at the resurrection of Christ, among whom he was the "first-born," who were "justified," that is, were accepted in anticipation of the general Judgment, and also "glorified," when he led them up with him on high (Eph. 4:8, margin), to be his assistants in his mediatorial work. Rev. 5:8-10. If this application is correct, the testimony refers to a particular case, not to the destiny of men in general.

In 2 Thess. 2:13 it is said that "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation;" but the apostle immediately limits the statement by adding "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." But suppose the Thessalonians had rejected the Spirit and refused to believe the truth, as they certainly were free to do, where then would have been their salvation?

Another expression, found in 2 Tim. 1:9, is supposed to prove election before the world was: "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." As to the time, the Greek reads, *πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων* (*pro chronon aionon*), "before the ages of time." But *aion* may mean simply a dispensation; and the passage may refer to the time when the plan of salvation with its different dispensations was laid. That which was given us at this time was the "grace" or favor of God; but this was "in Christ Jesus." Now if any man rejects Christ, what grace does he receive?—None.

1 Peter 1:1, 2. The English version of this passage makes the strangers of Pontus, Galatia, etc., "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." In the original, however, they are addressed simply as "the elect sojourners." So the revised version reads: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, etc. Now all that is asserted respecting God's foreknowledge is this: Either Peter was an apostle according to the foreknowledge of God, or the elect whom he addresses (elect according to the principle stated above) were sojourners according to the foreknowledge of God. But in either case it has no bearing on the question of election as here under discussion. U. S.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST.

In a former article we discussed the question, Who changed the law of God? and found from the testimonies of the Scriptures, and from facts of history, that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, or rather the exchange of the Sabbath for Sunday, cannot possibly claim any higher authority than that of the Roman papacy. In fact, though Christians had honored the first day by the side of the Sabbath before, it was not till after the edict of Constantine in favor of the "venerable day of the sun" that the bishops of Rome and their ecclesiastical councils made Sunday a rest day, and pronounced a curse upon those who should still rest on the Sabbath.

In this article we aim to prove that this change of the law of God "without any scriptural authority," as the Catholics themselves admit it to be, is the mark of the beast. If you read the description of the beast of Rev. 13:1-10, and compare it with that of the little horn of Dan. 7, you will see that both must apply to the same power. Consequently the beast of Revela-

tion is the same power which is described by Daniel under the symbol of the little horn, which is thus briefly described: "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws." Dan. 7:25.

The times and laws here referred to can be no other than those of the Most High. It must refer to the moral and unchangeable law of God, the ten commandments. To change the law of God, the Church of Rome (but no other human government that has ever existed on the earth) claims the ability and right to do; and she puts forth the change from the Sabbath to Sunday as the mark of her power and authority over the conscience of mankind. The mark of the beast is called the mark of his name, that is, the mark of his authority. In harmony with this thought, to the question, "How prove you that the Church hath power to command feasts and holy days?" the Church of Rome answers: "By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday." Again, to the question, "Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?" she answers: "Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority." From these testimonies and many more which might be cited from almost every standard Catholic publication on doctrinal points, it is clear that the mark of the beast is the assumed change of the law of God by the authority of the Church, and which is exemplified by the act of abolishing the Lord's Sabbath and substituting the day of the sun in its stead.

The Lord also has a mark, sign, seal, or token of his power and authority, which is intended to distinguish his servants, his loyal subjects. It is found, of course, in connection with his law, which is the expression of his authority. Those who receive this seal are said to have the Father's name written in their foreheads. Compare Rev. 7:1-4 with chap. 14:1. It marks all who receive it as loyal subjects of the living and true God. It is found in that commandment alone which distinguishes Him from every false god; and this is no other than the fourth commandment, the Sabbath law. No other one of the ten precepts points to the power and authority of God as the maker of the heavens and the earth; so that without the facts stated in connection with this precept, no one could tell who is the true God, the giver of the law. And besides this, the Lord expressly claims the Sabbath as a sign between him and his people. He says: "I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." "And hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." Eze. 20:12, 20. Again, "Verily my Sabbaths shall ye keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed." Ex. 31:13, 16, 17.

In these testimonies the Sabbath is set forth as a sign of the knowledge of the true God; and the reason given why it is a sign is because that in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh. Take away the Sabbath commandment from the decalogue, and there would not be left enough to tell who the true God is, the giver of the law. His signature or distinguishing title is in this precept, the only one which sets him forth as the maker of the universe, thus showing the extent of his dominion, and his consequent right to give law to every living creature. When Satan would strike an effective blow against Jehovah, he knew at which commandment of his law to aim. If he could remove God's memorial from his law, the only thing in it which distinguishes the Creator from all "the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth," and put in its place the mark of that power "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God," nothing could give greater joy to him and his angels, short of dethroning the Almighty and reigning supreme in his stead; for as the consequence of this change, many souls will go down to perdition.

God is now warning the world against following the papacy in its change of the law, by means of the proclamation of a message long ago foretold in his word. Rev. 14: 9-12. This warning will save some from the wrath without mixture which will follow. Let us heed the warning. "Keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," that we may be of that number.

R. F. C.

CAN YOU TELL?

TEXT: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1 Thess. 5: 4.

Dear reader, we ask your candid attention to the following important scriptural propositions:—

1. *The prophecies of the Bible can be understood.* Is not the Holy Bible a revelation from God?—Certainly. But if any part of it is not to be understood, that part cannot be a revelation. Why should God give to men a book which they cannot understand? This would be unwise and unjust. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Pet. 1: 19. Read also verses 20, 21; Deut. 29: 29. But we are especially enjoined to hear and understand the book of Daniel. Jesus says, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (*whoso readeth let him understand*)." Matt. 24: 15. So, of the prophecies of Revelation we read, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand." Rev. 1: 3. These scriptures plainly declare that these prophecies are to be read and understood.

2. *The second advent of Christ will be literal.* It will not be spiritual, symbolical, figurative, or in any way mystical. He once came to this earth actually, personally, literally. He was born of a woman, he walked on our earth, breathed its air, ate of its fruit, drank of its water, died, arose, and ascended to heaven. This same personal Jesus is really coming again. Listen to what the angels said to the apostles when Jesus ascended to heaven: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1: 11. Who is to return?—This same Jesus. How?—Just as he went into heaven. Language could not be more plain or positive. John exclaims, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Rev. 1: 7. In harmony with this, Paul says, "For 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." 1 Thess. 4: 16. Notice, the Lord *himself* is to come. It is not to be somebody else; it is not simply his Spirit, but the Lord *himself*. The words of Jesus upon this point are as plain as language can be expressed. "Wherefore, if they say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." Matt. 24: 26, 27, 30. This is our faith and our hope.

3. *The second advent of Christ was the constant theme of all the inspired writers.* For this they looked, and watched, and hoped, and longed, and prayed. If they warned sinners, it was in view of this event; if they comforted saints, it was with this hope; if they consoled themselves, it was in view of this. "The coming of the Lord" was constantly on their lips. I have space to quote only a few scriptures. Please take your Bible, and look out the rest. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16: 27. "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 1: 7. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Phil. 3: 20. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3: 4. "And to wait for his Son from heaven." 1 Thess. 1: 10. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9: 28. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." James 5: 7. See also John 14: 3; Acts 1: 11; Titus 2: 13; 1 Pet.

5: 4; Rev. 22: 20. But what a sad change has come over the professed church of Christ! In these days, little or nothing is said about the second advent of our Lord, and those who do preach about it are despised and persecuted. Reader, why is this?

4. *The apostles did not look for the coming of the Lord to take place in their day.* Now we hear men everywhere say, "You can tell nothing about the coming of the Lord. He may come to-night, or it may be a thousand years hence." But this is not the way Bible writers talked. They did not teach that he would come in their day; but they did teach that after certain things had happened, he would come. Thus Paul says, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." 2 Thess. 2: 1-3. By this we see that Paul knew the coming of the Lord was not near in his day. The great apostasy must first come. Peter knew that he would die before the Lord came. See 2 Pet. 1: 14. And Jesus warned them not to look for that event too soon. Matt. 24: 6. But all those things have come to pass of which Paul, and Jesus, and all the prophets spoke; hence we should now look for his coming.

5. *No one knows the definite day or time of the second advent.* This is so plainly declared in the Bible that it is strange that any person could believe otherwise; for thus Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matt. 24: 36. Thus we believe and teach. We have no sympathy with those who set the day or year for the Lord to come. We always oppose those who do set the time. Many strive to give the impression that we are those fanatical people who are constantly setting the day for the Lord to come. But this is not so; Seventh-day Adventists have never set the time for it. We do no such thing.

6. *We can know when it is near; can know when the last generation has come.* To this statement we invite the careful attention of the reader. There are two extremes upon this question, both of which are entirely wrong and unscriptural. One is to set the definite time for the Lord to come. This is in direct opposition to the plain word of God. The other extreme is to teach that nothing can be known about it; that it may come to-night, or it may be a thousand years in the future. This position is just as far from the truth as the other, and is just as squarely opposed to the Bible, as we will now show. In answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" Jesus said that there should be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. Luke 21: 25, 26. Then he said, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Verses 27, 28.

When they shall see these signs *begin* to come to pass, then they are to look up, watching for the Lord to come. After giving the parable of the fig-tree, he says, "So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, *know ye* that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Verse 31. How plain is this declaration! We can know something about it; we can know when it is nigh. The next verse tells us how near we can know: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." Verse 32. What generation? The answer is given. That generation that sees these signs shall not pass away. See verses 28-32. That is, when the last generation has come, to them the Lord will give the signs of the end. So when we see the signs, then we are to know certainly that that generation is not to pass till the Lord shall come. The same plain truth is stated in Mark 13: 29, 30; Matt. 24: 32-35.

D. M. C.

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

THERE is one phase of the investigation of Spiritualism which does injustice to the truth and to science. Whenever a scientific scholar embraces Spiritualism, it is set down as a testimony from science in favor of Spiritualism. This is not correct. No one has ever pretended to prove Spiritualism by scientific tests, or on scientific grounds. The most that they can say is, that they cannot discover any collusion nor trace it to its origin. They admit its claims because they cannot determine its origin.

Now it is evident that this is not the voice of science in favor of Spiritualism. It is only a confession on their part that it does not fall within the range of scientific tests. Of course, when it is removed from the field of scientific research, it becomes, to them, a matter of conjecture as much as to the unlearned. Their testimony is entirely of a negative character. They admit its claims because they are not able to give any satisfactory solution of its mysteries. But this does not prove anything. It certainly does not prove that the claims of Spiritualism are correct; it shows only that they do not know anything about it.

Whether the testimony of the scientists is of any value at all depends altogether on the thoroughness of their investigations. But it must be remembered that their investigations are phenomenal, not scientific; and therefore their conclusions are worth no more than are those of the unlearned who observe the phenomena with equal carefulness. No one has a right to affirm that a proposition is true because he does not know that it is not true.

Where science and human reason fail, the Bible comes to our aid. The claims of Spiritualism are based on certain phenomena or facts of occurrence. These occurrences are, by careful observation, determined to be of unknown origin, that is, their origin is not from anything *natural*; they are *supernatural*. But that which is supernatural is beyond the bounds of science and mere reasoning. It must be established by testimony above nature.

Having arrived at this evident conclusion, we must either admit the claims of Spiritualism *on its own word*, or take some other testimony which claims to be above nature. Such testimony we find in the Bible. It claims to be of divine origin; to establish its claims by the fulfillment of its prophecies, by the purity of its morality, by the harmony of its teachings, and by its vindication of divine justice even in dispensing mercy to the erring. In each of these points, Spiritualism entirely fails to establish its claims to our acceptance. The teachings of the Bible are elevating; those of Spiritualism are degrading.

The Bible informs us that there were intelligences created before the creation of man; that they rejoiced in the creation of this world, and guarded the way of the tree of life after the fall of man; that some of them sinned, as man has sinned, and lost their first "estate;" that under the name of demons (devils), they carry on their deceptions, and their rebellions against God; and that they work miracles or "lying wonders" to turn men away from the truth. The mediums of Spiritualism and their works are described in the Bible, and identified beyond all question. Their doctrines are called the doctrines of devils.

Spiritualists prove the Bible true by denouncing it, by denying the authority of God, denying Jesus Christ and all means of salvation outside of man's own nature, by denying a future judgment and human accountability, by denying that any action is morally wrong, and by affirming that the purest state of society and the highest morality can only be found in the abrogation of marriage and the unrestrained passion attraction of the sexes!

With these facts before us on every hand, why is it that men of education, of good reasoning ability, admit the claims of Spiritualism and entirely ignore the testimony of the Bible!

This question may be readily answered by any one who has observed the tendency of the schools of these degenerate times. The disposition has some time been growing among men to accept science as the highest possible source of knowledge, and to rule out the testimony of the Bible as of no real value. Indeed, they have been placed in opposition to each other, and that even by professed teachers of the Bible; and the testimony of science has been decided positive and determinate, and that of the Bible speculative and uncertain. The Bible has thus been caused to lose its hold upon the popular mind and heart. And when science is found to be at fault, when it fails to measure the supernatural, men are left without a compass, at the mercy of the winds of speculation. Having lost their reverence for the Bible, they have thrown off restraint; and now, when their dependence fails, they would rather float even to the vortex of a whirlpool than to return to the teachings of the Bible, which restrains their selfishness and requires humility.

The apostle Paul speaks of "the oppositions of science falsely so called," and says they are "vain babblings." Much that is called science under this age will fall under this head. We often hear men flip-

pantly talk of what "science proves" when not a single well-attested fact exists to support their assertions. Many are but reproducing what the apostle so graphically describes in Rom. 1: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man," etc. "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator."—*Signs of the Times.*

CHURCH AND STATE.

The time was when the church of Rome, with the pope at its head, ruled over the kings of the earth. Kings and emperors feared and trembled before "His Holiness;" and to obtain his favor and to appease his anger, in case they had stirred up his vindictive wrath, they would humble themselves before him to do the most menial service, kiss his toe, or submit to the most severe penance which he in his majesty saw fit to impose upon them.

But a change came. Reformers protested against this bold and blasphemous assumption of power, and began to oppose its corruptions of the gospel of Christ; and kings and rulers were emboldened by this to assert their rights, and break off the shackles of oppression and tyranny which had bound them. But while earthly governments helped the church in her struggle to free herself from her Roman persecutor, they claimed a divine right invested in kings and queens to dictate in matters of religion and the church, and assumed the headship of the church in their respective governments. Roman popery was, as it always seemed to me, exchanged for a sort of popery at home.

The cause of reformation was crippled, and has been held in check by the establishment of State religion; and those who would advance in the work of reform have been oppressed by these establishments, and have been groaning these centuries for deliverance. The discovery of America opened a way for the oppressed to flee from cruel persecution, by taking their chances in a vast wilderness, exposed to dangers from savages and beasts of prey, that they might be free to worship God according to the dictates of his word and their own consciences; and the result has been the formation of the freest government which has ever existed since the days of Nimrod, the mighty hunter. But what do we see in this latter part of the enlightened nineteenth century?—A party arises in this free republic, the fundamental law of which forbids the making of any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, and boldly demands "a religious amendment to the Constitution" that will give power to enforce certain "laws and usages" which they are pleased to characterize as Christian, by this fundamental law of the government. Should their wishes in this respect be attained, religious persecution is as sure to follow as the night is to follow the day. Any person of intelligence and ordinary discernment can readily see this.

Prominent among the "Christian laws and usages" which the amendment party desire to enforce by law, is the keeping of the first day of the week as the "Christian Sabbath." The leaders of the party, and the best informed among them, know that there is not a word between the lids of the Bible which requires the observance of the first day, or Sunday, as the Sabbath of the Lord. They know, too, that there are thousands in our country who conscientiously observe the only weekly Sabbath of the Bible, the seventh day of the week—Sabbath.

Now do they intend to create an engine of persecution? Do they desire to force those who through conscience toward God keep the day which he has commanded, to keep also the day which they are pleased to call the "Christian Sabbath"? If they do not know that the laws they seek would certainly open the way to religious persecution, they are marvelously ignorant of human nature, as exemplified in all the history of the past. Do they design to force their religious creed upon others?

Now the question is, Will the people of this enlightened land, with all the lessons of sad experience of past ages in view, repeat the errors that have always been so disastrous to religious liberty? Will they clothe any body of men with power to enforce their religious dogmas? Apart from the indications found in prophecy (Rev. 13: 11-18). I could not believe that they would. But those who believe the Bible to be the word of God, cannot do better than to be prepared to meet the sure result, by keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. See Rev.

14: 9-12. It is better to obey God, though it cause us to pass through the furnace. Faith and obedience will insure the final victory.

R. F. C.

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

The doctrine of the second coming of Christ has not received the attention for years that it is receiving at the present time. An interest in this great theme is springing up on all sides. Ever since the world-wide stir upon the subject in 1844, there have still been scores and hundreds of earnest men proclaiming the nearness of the end and the solemn importance of making special preparation to meet the Son of man. Some have scoffed, and derided; others have sought to refute with sophistry and argument; while many have received the tidings with gladness, and have united their voices with others in sounding the note of warning.

Already every continent has heard the cry. Consecrated feet have traversed sea and land to carry the news, while the proclamation has been multiplied ten thousand-fold through the agency of the press. Publications have been sent forth by the ton to the various nations and tongues, heralding the glad message of Jesus' return.

But recently a more general agitation upon this theme has been manifested. Stagnant orthodoxy seems almost awaking from her lukewarmness and dreams of security, as many of her representative men assemble to discuss this thrilling and momentous event of Christ's return. The utterances of these earnest Bible scholars, who met a few days since in the Chicago Prophetic Conference, have created much comment from both pulpit and press. The public agitation awakened by this Conference is an omen of good; for while many will sneer, and the popular press, perhaps, treat the matter with unconcern, a few, with honest hearts and inquiring minds, will be led to investigate the truths of Scripture upon this point.

The whole world moves in a feverish turmoil of apprehension and unrest; crime and high-handed villainy of every hellish hue stalk shamelessly through every Christian land, and Nature herself, in storm and flood and cyclone and tempest and earthquake, groans for final deliverance; yet a slumbering world dreams on in self-deceived security, sleeping on the verge of awful retribution and an eternal doom. Eating and drinking, bnying and building, scheming and carousing, money-grasping and pleasure-pursuing, are the order of the day. A more perfect likeness of our times to those of Noah could not be conceived. There is little doubt, if the question of the flood had been submitted to a popular vote of Noah's fellow-citizens, that the vote would have stood overwhelmingly unanimous in favor of indefinite postponement.

The following editorial from the *Chicago Times*, accurately reflects the sentiment of the great mass of the world, both within and outside the church, and shows the present age to be the exact counterpart of that just preceding the flood:—

"The busy world will watch with a great deal of curiosity the proceedings of the gathering in this city, whose purpose is a discussion of the immediate second coming of Christ. It will strike many as something very mysterious, this discussion of the possible advent of the Nazarene. The millionaire pork-packer, the many millionaire dry-goods dealers, the opulent merchant, the coal nabob, and a great many others, will hear, at least, with surprise, the announcement that Christ is coming.

"What! Christ coming, and this railway only begun; this building only up to the foundations; this real-estate scheme but just started; this fortune only built up to the dimensions of one million; this church, with its mortgage yet unpaid; these securities not yet at par; this home not yet paid for; these grand enterprises yet in embryo; this work not yet finished? . . . The packing interests, the board of trade, the stock jobbers, the speculators, the real estate dealers, are not prepared for any such announcement, and still less for such a condition as these statements presage. Such vaticinations are liable to produce a panic in stocks; they are calculated to unsettle values; they disturb the equilibrium of the money market; they provoke discord. Capital is so sensitive! If any such occurrence should take place, timid capital would begin to hoard, and a universal stringency would take possession of the monetary centers.

"It cannot be. Chicago is not ready for any such advent. There is not a capitalist, a politician, a lawyer, an editor, nor possibly a preacher, that is prepared to welcome any such change. All citizens if applied to, would cordially give it as their emphatic opinion that this is not just the time to introduce a radical disturbance of the kind; that it would be more opportune some other century. Just now, they claim, they all have very important engagements on hand. . . . Almost any other time will do except to-day.

"Why do these preachers come here to interfere with the equanimity of Chicago? Contemplate the business outlook! Everything is in motion; the furnaces of the iron-workers are roaring; the wheels, pulleys, and shafts of the manufactories are humming; the smoke and stench of the rendering establishments are in active motion; the knives of the pig-stickers are as rapid as the flashes of lightning;—must all these be stopped? Must the gorgeous millinery shops be closed? Must the throngs of female shoppers be dispersed, the theaters abandoned, and all the activities of Vanity Fair be interrupted? Shall there be no more parties, matinees, conversaziones, club receptions, Browning societies, or operatic performances? "Do go away, good gentlemen preachers, with your second-advent theories. See how you distress Chicago, and how you disturb its serenity, interfere with its provision trade, overturn its social engagements, and introduce everywhere disorder. Come again some other day, when there will be a more convenient season. You derange the affairs of this wonderful, this growing, this enterprising city. Go away!"

The foregoing comments on the situation are very appropriate, and fitly portray the prevailing sentiment with the majority of the world. People are prone to believe what they want to, and in thus saying so emphatically by their actions, "My Lord delayeth his coming," the desire of the heart that is back of all is clearly shown. While these things are lamentably true, the sincere child of Christ should be saying by word and act, "Come, Lord Jesus," "come quickly."

W. C. WALES.

A GLOOMY PROSPECT.

In a recent issue of the *Chicago Interior* is an editorial that contains some very suggestive remarks. The opening paragraph reads as follows:—

"A comparison of the moral condition of this country thirty years ago and in this year of grace, is, in many of its aspects, somewhat discouraging. This much must certainly be conceded for, while the wealth of the nation has nearly trebled in those years, and while that of evangelical Protestantism, as an aggregated body, has nearly, or quite, kept pace with that of the country at large, it remains unquestionably true that there has been a decline of national morality alarming to those who have wisdom enough to try to 'discern the signs of the times,' and sense enough to succeed in the effort."

The editor then proceeds to argue that the most prominent feature of this decline in morality is noticeable in the matter of Sabbath observance, and very naturally concludes that in order to get back to where we were thirty years ago, the reform must be chiefly in that respect. On this point the writer further remarks thus:—

"Is a reform in this matter of Sabbath observance, or rather of non-observance, possible? and can we retrace our steps to the higher moral position and the purer moral atmosphere which we occupied, and in which we lived, thirty years ago?—Certainly. The work is easy enough for a people determined upon its accomplishment, because the efficient agencies for that accomplishment are at hand. Those agencies are the State as a civil power, and the church as a moral power."

And thus does the *Interior* make a demand for the union of church and State. It then goes on to show how the church and State can work in harmony in this matter. Its suggestion is for the church to take the responsibility of deciding upon moral questions, of making the demand for Sabbath (Sunday) observance, and then for the State to enforce those demands.

Who cannot see that when such a consummation is brought about, religious liberty will be practically at an end in this country? We shall then have virtually such a union of church and State as existed during the Dark Ages, when the true people of God were bitterly persecuted. It is unaccountably strange how any person of any ordinary intelligence can be so blind as not to see that with the accomplishment of the plans advocated by the *Interior*, there will of necessity come a revival, to a certain extent, of persecution.

The *Interior* wants to see the church and State unite in compelling people to observe the first day of the week. When it is remembered that there are probably fifty thousand conscientious, God-fearing Christians in this country who firmly believe that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath by divine appointment, and who practice that belief, it needs no further proof to demonstrate the partiality and unfairness of that for which the *Interior* is laboring.

The very fact that the adherents of the Sunday Sabbath are thus led to appeal to human enactments in behalf of that institution, is conclusive evidence that they are doubtful, at least, with regard to the support given it by the word of God; and well they may be, for no support of that nature exists.

Temperance Outlook.

EXTENT OF THE WORK.

A BIRD'S eye view of the extent of operations in connection with temperance work, indicates a field as long as from the cradle to the grave, as wide as are the instincts, desires, demands, incidents, circumstances, and prospects of humanity. Plans for the successful prosecution of temperance labor should take into consideration the food, clothing, and care of infants; the kinds and quality of food and drink placed upon our tables; the associates and influences of children; the school life and its surroundings; home attractions and influences; religious training and church relations; society customs and practices; business relations, aims and vocations; public gatherings and entertainments; municipal, State, and Governmental legislation. These, with all their varied and numerous ramifications, require judicious consideration and action if the temperance cause would meet with the highest possible success. The idea that temperance work has to do and deal only with liquor-making and liquor-drinking is a mistaken one. Efforts directed exclusively to those two points will fail of accomplishing permanent results as surely as one would fail in dipping a river dry while all the springs, creeks, and rivulets that feed it are open and flowing.

There must exist some adequate reasons why the use of intoxicants has reached such alarming proportions; and may not some of them be found by searching in the directions before indicated? Is it not more than probable that some very potent influences have been overlooked? May it not be true that a failure to comprehend the extent of the field furnishes a prominent reason for the limited success attained?

One line of work contemplated by this paper is to search every nook and corner of the field, and where anything is found to do, that may have a bearing upon the results desired, to do it in as thorough and judicious a manner as possible.

WHY WE ARE PROHIBITIONISTS.

IN our views pertaining to the manufacture, sale, and use of spirituous, vinous, malt, or fermented liquors, we are prohibitionists, and the Bible is the basis of our principles. In the first commandment of the decalogue, God says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." To worship or have in esteem any god in preference to the Creator of the universe is the greatest of sins in this particular. A prohibition of the greatest evil in any given class includes all lesser evils of the same class. Facts and observations familiar to all will demonstrate that intemperance (which in this connection we consider as meaning the use of intoxicating liquors) is a god that is worshiped by its devotees in preference to any other. True, there exist different degrees of devotion with different individuals; and persons devoted to his service, vary in the completeness of the homage given; but instances are of very frequent occurrence where every faculty of the mind, every power of the body, every consideration of life, is sacrificed to this great Moloch. Hence, we claim the first word of God's law as our starting point, and as defining the duty of man to his Maker in this particular.

In considering man's relation to his fellow-man, we also find the law of God prohibiting the use of intoxicants. The command is explicit: "Thou shalt not kill." Applying the same rule, that the greater includes the less, it is admissible that this command is equally prohibitory of anything that tends to shorten the duration of life, and the volume of argument to demonstrate the effect of intoxicants upon human life is overwhelming as proving its destructiveness.

On these two commandments we base the doctrine of prohibition, and as we proceed to investigate the subject in the light of the word of God, it will be found that a structure can be reared on this foundation that shall be massive, strong, and of comely proportions. It will be found that definite instructions of a prohibitory character exist all the way from Genesis to Revelation—instruction that applies to every detail and circumstance of life.

By placing the question on this basis, the only true line of work in relation thereto is indicated; it becomes

an important branch of gospel labor, and the only permanent and abiding results to be had will be obtained in this way.

CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY.

THE continued existence of evils which all good men decry, is often a cause of perplexity, and leads to much speculation as to where lies the responsibility. This is particularly true of the great curse of intemperance. Its blighting effects are visible on every hand. Desolation and ruin follow in its track, and crimes of every hue are its inevitable results. Nor is it, like some other great evils, confined to any one locality or peculiar to any class of people. It flourishes in every soil, and thrives in all climates. Its victims are among old and young, high and low, rich and poor. It invades alike the hovel and the palace, and infests the rural hamlet as well as the bustling city. It even pollutes the house of God with its baleful presence, and sometimes invades the sacred desk.

Yet with its terrible corruptions in full view of all who are not blind, it grows and increases, even in communities professedly Christian, while multitudes, whose connection with the church should lead them to vigorously resist the encroachments of this evil, are apathetic concerning it, and are utterly silent where unsparing condemnation would seem to be their smallest duty in connection with the subject.

This strange anomaly has led many into denunciation of church members, and some have gone so far as to declare that the church is the bulwark of the rum traffic, just as the abolitionists denounced it as the stronghold of slavery. Undoubtedly this charge is too sweeping, and yet it is a matter greatly to be regretted that it has a semblance of truth. Indeed, in a certain sense, it is the truth. It is to be presumed that no one will deny that if the entire membership of the professed church of Christ were to unite as one man in a vigorous crusade against the rum traffic, it might be wiped out of existence. Does not, therefore, the failure of the church to do what is manifestly in its power to do, and which is its bounden duty to accomplish, lay at its door a fearful responsibility?

The prophet was commanded to bitterly curse the inhabitants of Meroz, not for some great sin they had committed, but because "they came not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Does not the curse of Meroz rest upon many of the professed followers of Christ to-day? Think of it, Christian reader, and see if you are doing your whole duty in regard to this great evil.

CUT OFF THE SUPPLY.

BEFORE we can hope to see substantial progress made in drying up the great ocean of intemperance, the sources of supply must be cut off. It is not enough to cut off the more prominent feeders, but all the rivulets and creeks that supply these larger streams must also be made to cease. Indeed, it is the first causes that should be first attended to. It is a comparatively easy matter to change the course of a small rivulet, but the further we go down stream the more difficult becomes the task, and he who would change the course of a mighty river has a prodigious job on his hands, however laudable it may be.

While we are emphatic in denouncing the larger sources of the evil of intemperance, we believe there are many smaller sources, the little creeks and rivulets, that are neglected or overlooked, and that must be attended to before success can crown the efforts of the noble army of temperance workers.

The sources of these smaller streams will be found in the homes of our country; in society customs and practices, and, we are much afraid, in the professed Christian churches. And these very fields of labor are the ones that we propose to enter to see if there is not important work that is being neglected. Not that we shall refrain from attacking the more powerful bulwarks of the giant evil, but we recall a scriptural injunction to the effect that the day of small things should not be despised. We seek to promote the happiness and welfare of the homes of our country, and by taking up subjects that are most intimately connected with home life, it is hoped that this will be a welcome visitor to thousands of firesides. It is proposed to make this paper, not only an observer of what is going on, but to raise the note of warning against impending danger, and suggest means of averting that danger.

The Theological World.

... The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions has a debt of \$150,000, on which it is paying interest.

... The greatest sale of any book per annum in Italy is said to be that of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment.

... According to the last Israelitish annual, the number of Jews in the world at present is but 6,800,000, of whom 5,400,000 are in Europe.

... The St. Louis Presbytery, in the trial of the Converse brothers, editors of the *Christian Observer*, has decided that a belief in evolution is not heretical.

... A mandate from Cardinal Taschereau, read in Catholic churches at Quebec, Sunday, prohibits Catholics from attending meetings of the Salvation Army. Tracts and hymn-books distributed by the Salvationists must be thrown in the fire.

... The tithe war in Wales has so impoverished some of the clergy that they have been compelled to ask for aid. Their appeal has been responded to by the Duke of Westminster, who sent them \$2,500, and by four Welsh bishops, who each sent \$500.

... Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia, has announced that under the decrees of the Baltimore Plenary Council, balls for charitable purposes are prohibited. This will give certain so-called Protestant denominations a monopoly of the ball business as a "means of grace."

... November 23, the semi-annual conference of the Jewish Rabbis, after a lengthy discussion, appointed a special committee to draw up a petition to be presented to the fiftieth Congress, urging upon that body the necessity of the establishment of a national marriage law.

... People with rusty knee-hinges must keep out of Roman Catholic churches in Canada. A new trial has just been granted to a man who was fined for kneeling on only one knee. He said he could n't bend the other. The spirit was willing, but the flesh weak.

... Prince Bismarck is reported as saying that "the church and the empire need each other, and will stand or fall together. Therefore a cordial intent with the Vatican is our policy. Catholics alone are imperial and subjects of authority. All other sects are more or less tainted with Republican notions; and the time has come for conservatives to cling to each other."

... Professor Elliot Whipple, of New Mexico, says, in a recent letter to the *Cynosure*; "Sante Fe is evidently regarded by the Catholics as a strategic point, and here they are massing their forces with full purpose to hold in perpetuity their present ascendancy in the affairs of the Territory. The public schools of New Mexico, outside of Albuquerque and possibly a few other places, are under priestly control and of little practical value."

... Speaking of the condition of Japan, the *Advance* says: "The whole population is seething in the ferment of a new intellectual life. . . . More than three hundred newspapers, many of them pictorial, are eagerly conned by hundreds of thousands of readers. But they are, in the main, unutterably, almost inconceivably, vile. A chaos of skepticism, a pandemonium of iniquity, is the future into which Japan is rushing unless saved by our gospel."

... A telegram from St. Catherines, Ont., November 22, said: "This city is considerably agitated over a Sunday work meeting held recently, at which it was decided to petition the Government against opening the Welland Canal on Sunday." The same day, summonses were issued for the arrest of twenty lock-tenders employed on the canal for working and passing vessels through on Sunday.

... In an address before the late Prophetic Conference at Chicago, Rev. Dr. Frost, of Sacramento, Cal., said: "There are more unconverted persons in the world to-day than ever before. So long as sinners increase far more rapidly than saints, will some one tell how long it will take to convert the world? At the rate of advancement for the last eighteen hundred years, the endless cycles of eternity would not be sufficient to furnish the requisite ages for the conversion of the world."

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THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., January 1, 1887.

Several changes will be noticed in the make-up and arrangement of the SICKLE, all of which we trust will be regarded as improvements.

One who has looked into the matter, says that on an average, one verse in every twenty-seven in the New Testament speaks of the second coming of Christ.

A slight delay has occurred in issuing this number of the SICKLE, which we trust will be overlooked by our readers, and we will endeavor to be out on time hereafter.

The articles on "The Judgment," from the pen of Eld. Smith, will be continued through several more numbers of the SICKLE. The subject is one of great importance, and requires extended consideration to bring out all that is involved therein. It is a subject that very many people do not thoroughly comprehend.

It is said that Christ met with his disciples on several first days after his resurrection; some say he met with them *invariably* on that day; thus distinguishing it from other days of the week. Where do they get the information? Every time the day is mentioned in the four Gospels, it refers to a single day, the day of Christ's resurrection, no other. It is not certain that "after eight days" from Sunday night, means the next Sunday morning; it might be a day or two later, as all know. Where, then, is the evidence that he met with them more than one first day, from his resurrection to his ascension? I will tell you my friend. It is recorded that he showed himself alive to his apostles after his passion, "being seen of them forty days," every day from his resurrection to his ascension. Here you have the proof that he met with them more than the one first day; but it proves too much for your purpose; it proves that the first day was *not* distinguished from the other days by his meeting with them; for he met with them on each of the forty days as well.

CONSCIENCE VS. PROFESSION.

"At that time, Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him." Matt. 14:1. Herod had previously caused John the Baptist to be beheaded, and now he declared that he had risen from the dead. But Herod was a Sadducee, and the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead. This is, therefore, a notable instance in which the stings of conscience, or the goadings of fear proved stronger than a man's outward profession. Death-beds of infidels often bear witness to the same fact.

A TIMELY SUGGESTION.

An esteemed contemporary remarks as follows: "If we are not to have outbreaks of religious hatred in this country, it must be understood by all religionists that there is no room here for any of these political religions." And yet who cannot see that the work of the National Reform party is calculated to establish political religion? It tends directly to that and to nothing else; and those who espouse the cause of that party and labor to effect such an amendment to the Constitution of the United States as is sought for, will one day wake up to see what of evil has been wrought. The warning uttered in the above quotation is timely, and we would that it might be heeded by all the honest in heart, and they be saved from doing that which will afterward cause them the deepest regret.

ALREADY BEGUN.

It is one thing to look forward into an indefinite future for the beginning of the fulfillment of important events foretold in the word of prophecy; it is quite another thing to be able to point to events transpiring around us, and behold in them the very movements

which the prophet's eye foresaw. That we are now able to do this on many important subjects we confidently believe; and as a case in point, we instance a movement now in progress in behalf of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

The Scriptures plainly bring to view a Sabbath reform to be accomplished in the last days. It is a matter of prophecy that, in the time of the end, the professedly Christian world generally would be trampling the Sabbath under their feet, so that it would be a part of the special work of the true ministers of Christ in these last days, to call upon men "to turn away their feet from the Sabbath;" and as a marked characteristic of those who receive the truth, it could be said, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God." Isa. 58:13, 14; Rev. 14:12.

A comparison of the creeds of Christendom with the word of God, shows readily enough the Sabbath reform that is needed. The seventh day has been torn from its position in the decalogue, and another day has been made to usurp its place. All this must be reversed; and the work is already well underway. Over a quarter of a century ago it was begun by a few earnest souls upon whom the light of the prophecy had dawned, and accessions have continually swelled the ranks. The strength of the Scripture testimony and the clearness of the argument for the true Sabbath have more and more plainly appeared, and the utter lack of foundation for the Sunday institution—scriptural, historical, logical, and even inferential—has become equally conspicuous.

Some thirty thousand persons are now standing boldly forth as the defenders of the true against the claims of the false. Most of these were formerly in the Sunday-keeping ranks, but from the clearness of the light, have changed sides. And there are "more to follow." What can the advocates of Sunday do? In the Scriptures they find no support for their institution, and even history is against them. Their defenses prove worthless, their guns are spiked. They, too, could join those who accept the truth, but they will not. There is left them only that to which error is ever fain to resort, after all else fails,—human legislation. The present call for a religious amendment to the Constitution and for stricter Sunday laws is in the line of this kind of logic. U. S.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

"It is proposed to form a World's Day of Rest League, and a convention of representative Jews is advocated, which will endeavor to secure the transfer of the Jewish Sabbath to the first day of the week. It is urged that this uniformity would add greatly to the influence of the principle and practice of resting one day in seven. We believe that the practice is not only scriptural and beneficial, but essential to the highest moral and physical welfare of mankind."—*New York Observer*.

The foregoing is significant as indicating the progress of the cause of Sunday observance, and the growing sentiment among the Jews in favor of falling in with the popular demand for such a regard of that day. May God save the honest in heart from being engulfed in the fatal error of thus helping to establish a pagan institution in opposition to the Sabbath of the Lord. It matters not how powerful may appear to be human agencies in defense of an institution; if it be not in accordance with God's eternal truth, it will stand only for a time.

"SABBATH DESECRATION."

UNDER the above caption the *New York Observer*, in a recent issue, spoke as follows:—

"Every week some one lifts up a voice of warning in regard to our Lord's day. It appears to be going out of our American life, and with it the most precious influences which keep that life pure and powerful. Thousands of devout people in New England were scandalized by the example of the President in traveling on Sunday in order to reach Boston in time for the Harvard Anniversary. But religious people are themselves to blame for this disregard of the day as sacred. During the past year we have observed numerous instances of honored clergymen using the railway on Sunday without any special pressure from necessary engagements. Members of the churches do not respect the day as holy, as set apart for holy things, as a precious opportunity for spiritual help and works of mercy. It is useless for us to find fault with the world while the church is herself out of joint. We cannot expect to lead others higher than we are willing to go ourselves. We are sorry that the President travels on Sunday, but we fear that there were on the same train men of even a higher calling, who had far less pressure from official duties."

If the editor of the *Observer* would look into the matter a little closer, he would find that one very prominent cause of the wide-spread and growing disregard of this Sunday-Sabbath which he champions so zealously, is that men are finding out that no divine authority exists for the observance of that day. It is coming more and more to be recognized that the Sunday rests only upon human authority, and the more this is understood to be the case, the greater becomes the demand for legal enactments in its behalf. How much better would it be if men would abandon this child of papacy as soon as they become aware of its true character, and, like truly loyal citizens, declare their allegiance to the Sabbath of the Lord.

IT NEEDS NO PROPS.

SOME people read history, etc., to see if they can find evidence enough to establish the truthfulness of the Bible record. If they can get all the proof they want in this way, they will believe; if otherwise, they will not believe. Profitable as it is to read history, this can hardly be the proper view to take of the matter; for it would be receiving the witness of men as greater than the witness of God. It is simply saying, We will believe God if men can prove that he is not a liar. The language of faith is, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." If at the foot of one of the lofty Rockies you find a man bracing a twenty-foot pole against its base, you would ask him his object; and if he should tell you it was to keep the mountain from tipping over, you would be astonished. The Bible needs human props about as much as the eternal hills need propping, or about as much as the ark of God needed Uzzah's hand to stay it. F. D. STARR.

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