

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.

WORK.

Up! there's no time for rest to-day,
There's stubborn work to do
For every willing heart and hand
The blessed daylight through.
Nor must we loiter, slack, or sleep,
Save in the friendly night,
Which hides beneath its grateful shades
The labors of the light!

Up! there's no chance for rest to-day;
Brothers of human kind
In many a dark and sterile spot
Are groping, halt and blind.
And there are burdens to be borne,
And fetters to be broke,
And trees of evil to hew down
With many a toilsome stroke!

Up! for the world is full of strife,
The earth is sown with sin,
Quick springing, like the noxious tares,
A noble field within.
And though at first but tiny blades,
Of shower and sunshine born,
The laborer needs but rest, and straight
They overtop his corn!

Then up! nor dream of rest to-day,
The foes are all around;
And some concealed in ambush lie,
And some dispute the ground.
Thee let us gird the armor on
To wrestle or to toil.
The laborer reaps the golden grain,
The conquerer wins the spoil!

—Independent.

Notes and Comments.

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WICKEDNESS is not immortal; it will have an end. The following prayer will surely be answered, because it was indited by the Holy Spirit, and is therefore prophetic of that which shall be: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just." Ps. 7:9.

A SPECIAL blessing is pronounced upon those that read and hear the words of the prophecy contained in the book of Revelation. Rev. 1:3. What blessing can come from reading or hearing that which we cannot possibly understand? But there is still another condition on which the blessing is promised, and that is that we "keep those things which are written therein." The book is chiefly made up of symbolic prophecy; and besides the admonitions to several of the seven churches to repent, the only things in the book to be kept are summarily expressed as follows: "Here are they that keep the

commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Chap. 14:12. And the promised blessing is reiterated in the last chapter as follows: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

THE wickedness of the wicked shall come to an end because the wicked themselves shall cease to be. The prophetic prayer, "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more" (Ps. 104:35) is sure to be fulfilled. "Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be." Ps. 37:10. In anticipation of a universe thus cleansed from sin and the curse, the psalmist exclaims, "Bless thou the Lord, O my soul! Praise ye the Lord!"

REPENTANCE may be illustrated by a person setting out to travel in a certain direction, and, changing his mind, turning about to return. He may be sorry he started, and yet travel on. Sorrow alone is not repentance. Repentance does not take place until he comes to the point where he turns square about, and goes in the opposite direction. The sinner may be sorry, and yet not turn from his sins. "Sin is the transgression of the law." When one truly repents, he turns from the transgression of the law to the obedience of the same. The first command of the gospel to the convicted sinner is, "Repent." Acts 2:38. Therefore the first requirement of the gospel is obedience to the law. The gospel which abolishes the law is a spurious gospel.

IN view of the nearness of death, Job says, "Are not my days few? Cease, then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death." On the supposition that the good man expected to go immediately to heaven at death, his language is not a little surprising; as if he should say, "O my friends, let me alone, that I may take a little comfort before I go to heaven!"

"ENOCH was translated that he should not see death; and was not found because God had translated him." A like destiny awaited Elijah the prophet, and there is reason to believe that God had revealed this design to him; but when Jezebel threatened to take his life, he fled into the wilderness, and sat down under a juniper tree, and requested for himself that he might die. Said he, "It is enough. Now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers." His fathers had died; and why should he be honored above them by translation, since he was no better than they? Had he believed that death would take him directly to heaven, would not his language have contrasted most pointedly with this? Would he not have said, "Let me die, and go to heaven, as my fathers have done. Am I not as good as they?"

"MY little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1. In this text there are three interested parties brought to view; viz., the Father, the Advocate, and subjects who are liable to commit sin. In the third chapter, fourth verse, it

is stated that "sin is the transgression of the law." As stated in the first-quoted text, the occasion for an advocate being needed with the Father is the possible commission of sin; that is, the violation of law. It stands to reason that a law, the transgression of which requires an advocate with the Father (God), must be the Father's law. The province of an advocate is to stand between the offender and the offended lawgiver. Here, then, as late as A. D. 69, and some say as late as A. D. 80 (for it is generally accepted that the apostle wrote his first epistle not earlier than the first named date), we find the law of God directly and explicitly recognized. In view of this indisputable evidence, how can any one say that the law of God, the ten commandments, was abolished at the cross, and that since then the law of Christ alone has been binding? To maintain such a position is to make the words quoted at the beginning of this item the height of foolishness. If the law of the Father was not binding at that time, of what avail would it be to have an advocate with him for the violation of a law issued by some other authority? It is not possible for one law-making power to have authority with regard to the enforcement of the statutes of another law-making power, nor to remit punishment in case of their violation, unless such authority has been delegated to it. But we cannot conceive that Christ would enact a law, and delegate to the Father its enforcement, and then he become an advocate in behalf of the violator of his own law. And yet this is the absurd conclusion that one must reach who claims the abolition of God's law, and the enactment by Christ of another law, under which we now are.

THE positions taken by those who oppose the Sabbath of the Bible and advocate the observance of the first day of the week, are so various and contradictory that we can find among them the admission of every point we claim as to the early origin, the definiteness as to the particular day, the universal obligation, and the perpetuity of the Sabbath. Does not the confusion and discord which exists among them, and the unity existing among the advocates of the original Sabbath, show conclusively where the truth is?

A REVELATION is something revealed; and that which is revealed can be understood. Those who hold the book of Revelation to be a sealed book, containing mysteries not to be understood, do in effect change its title so as to read: *The Mystery of Jesus Christ*, which God gave unto him, to conceal from his servants things which must shortly come to pass. But the original heading is still preferred by some: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

MAN'S better judgment dictates that things that are only transitory in their nature are not as worthy of his labor and care as are the more substantial and abiding considerations. In 1 Cor. 13:13 we read these words: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity." These, then, are abiding graces; they will remain, and continue, ever to prove a blessing to the possessor. How reasonable that we should endeavor to secure to the fullest possible extent these valuable and abiding riches!

Doctrinal Articles.

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

IS THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST SPIRITUAL?

BY U. SMITH.

IN our article on this subject in the last SICKLE, we referred to the testimony of the angels to the disciples who witnessed the ascent of their Lord, when he was taken up from the Mount of Olives. These angels testified that the very same Jesus would return again in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven. There was to be identity as to the individual that ascended. Christ did not ascend as an influence, or a calamity, but as a real, literal, tangible being, the same that had lived, moved, taught, healed the sick, died, and rose again, here upon the earth. The second coming of Christ is to be accomplished in the same person; and there is to be identity of manner between his going away and his coming again.

This testimony would seem to be sufficiently explicit. It matters not that no others, so far as we are informed, except the disciples saw him ascend. They saw him; and there is no intimation that they were in any other than their normal condition. But in relation to his second coming we have the positive assurance that every eye shall see him, not only the saints, but "they also that pierced him;" and tribes and nations will behold him, who will be so unprepared to meet him that they will wail because of him, and endeavor to hide from his holy presence. It is not therefore owing to any special spiritual condition of the disciples, either first or last, that they beheld him when he ascended, or will behold him when he returns.

But to men of the world this is not a pleasing picture; nor is it, we are surprised and grieved to say, to very many who profess to be the followers of the Lord, ministers no less than laymen. They seem to be far too ready to try to console themselves with the idea that the second coming of Christ is not an event to burst upon the outward world with a splendor tenfold that of the noonday sun, to startle mankind from their dreams of peace and safety, to reveal to them that the insulted Lamb's great day of wrath is come, and to excite, too late for them, the sad inquiry, "Who shall be able to stand?" They prefer to look upon that coming as some sudden manifestation of judgment, some silent, and perhaps hidden, operation of divine power, or the cutting short of some earthly career by death. He comes to them in the secret chamber, or has erected his ensign in the far distant desert.

But which of these theories is attested by divine authority? We can anchor our faith upon nothing less than this: to the law and to the testimony. Whatever is not in accordance with this, is darkness and not light. Doctors of divinity may therefore tell us as often as they please, when some sudden calamity has put an end to the life of a fellow-being, that we are hereby taught that "in such an hour as we think not the Son of man cometh;" they may tell us when a dying man expires in the silent chamber, that to him the Son of man has come; or that a soul in the joys of regeneration has met the second coming of Christ;—we pass these declarations by for just what they are worth, which is nothing at all, and inquire, "What saith the Scripture?"

Christ once intimated to his disciples that one of their number might remain till his coming. "If I will," said he, "that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" John 21:22. Did the disciples understand him to mean, If I will that he tarry, or live, till he dies? So far from that, the saying went immediately abroad among them that that disciple should not die at all. And would not they be as likely to have a correct view of the matter as could be gathered from the warped and molded and twisted and mystified theology of the present day?

Another representative text upon this subject is found in 1 Thess. 4:15-17: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, That we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The task of harmonizing this scripture with the figurative view of the second coming of Christ is not one which we would like to undertake to perform. Some of the difficulties which would beset the

attempt will appear if we read the text, substituting a figurative coming for the real one expressed in the text. For instance, if death is the second coming of Christ, we can legitimately read the text with this idea, thus: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, That we which are alive and remain until we die, shall not prevent them which are asleep; for death shall take place with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to die in the air; so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Can any rational man for a moment entertain a view which transforms the word of God into such jargon? The sober reader will pardon us for thus carrying out this theory to its legitimate results. The intense absurdity of the view we would refute, is our apology.

The coming of the Lord is the Christian's blessed hope. That day is to him a day of triumph, redemption, and joy. He is to desire it, and fervently pray for its approach. Titus 2:13; Matt. 6:9, 10; Rev. 22:20. But death is an evil, the penalty of sin, an enemy. 1 Cor. 15:26. How would it sound to read Rom. 6:23 thus: "For the wages of sin is the coming of the Lord; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord;" or 1 Cor. 15:26 thus: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is the coming of the Lord"?

And spiritism, that vilest and most brazen-faced development of satanic delusion, may teach by its peeping and muttering that He is in the secret chamber; that He has come in the manifestation of spirits; and that every good man is himself Christ. But what saith the Scripture? It says this: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not." Matt. 24:26.

The human heart is prone to unbelief. Men seem very ready to adopt almost any negative form of belief. Will they not be ready, then, to go with the Bible in this respect, and not believe what it expressly tells them they should not believe? Alas! how the perversity of fallen human nature here comes forth! Willingly influenced by him who is the father and promulgator of all lies, multitudes are ready to believe just what the Bible expressly tells them they should not believe, and to disbelieve that which it just as expressly tells them they should believe. So they are seeking for the second coming of Christ in the secret chambers, in the filthy and blasphemous work of the spirits, or in the distant desert. A few, we rejoice to know, will follow the unerring chart, and believe not these false cries of error.

Is any further reason needed why we should not accept the doctrine of the spiritual and invisible coming of Christ? why we should not believe that he is in the secret chamber, or go forth to meet him in the desert? If so, we have it in the language of the Son of God himself, in Matt. 24:27: "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." Yes, as visible as is the vivid lightning to all eyes, so visible, open, and apparent will be the coming of the Son of man. No man will need to apprise his neighbor that the Lord has come; for all will know it, many far too well for their own peace of mind or hope of heaven.

We know of but two passages in which Christ is spoken of as coming in a figurative manner. These are verses 5 and 16 of Rev. 2. But in these messages to the churches Christ himself is represented in a figure; hence the coming spoken of in connection must be of the same nature, and be understood in a figurative sense. There is surely no excuse for confounding these with that coming which is to be in the clouds of heaven (Matt. 26:64), when every eye shall see him (Rev. 1:7); when all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him (Matt. 24:30); when kings and the great men and the rich men of the earth shall call to the rocks and to the mountains to hide them from his presence (Rev. 4:15, 16); when the man of sin shall be consumed by the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed by the brightness with which His coming is attended (2 Thess. 2:8); and when all those who know not God, and obey not the gospel, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from his presence and the glory of his power. 2 Thess. 1:9.

With such declarations in his hand, the man who can err on this momentous question must be one of those whom Peter calls "willingly ignorant." Be sure, reader, that such a coming of Christ as is set forth in the foregoing scriptures is before the world; and for such a coming as this, we now do well to prepare; for it is even at the door.

ATTITUDE OF THE REFORMERS TOWARD SUNDAY.

BY G. I. BUTLER.

IN the last number of the SICKLE, quotations were given from several leading reformers on the topic under consideration. We now pursue the subject still farther.

Carlstadt, the German reformer, kept the seventh-day Sabbath. He was a leading reformer, one who went farther in opposition to the Roman Church than Luther and many others. His position was in some respects more consistent than Luther's. He insisted on rejecting everything in the Catholic Church not authorized by the Scriptures, while Luther was determined to retain everything not expressly forbidden. Had Carlstadt's position been taken, the Protestant Church would have come much nearer the truth of the Bible on the Sabbath question than it has.

Many will doubtless be surprised at these evidences of the low regard these early reformers had for the Sunday Sabbath, admitting as they did that it was wholly an institution of the church, and not required in the Scriptures. It is well known that this is not now the general position of many of the Protestant churches. They consider Sunday the Sabbath by divine appointment, and would highly resent such sentiments as history records concerning the opinions of the leading reformers. Some may doubt the truthfulness of these statements. But we assure such that there are no facts better attested, and that we could present much evidence on this point substantiating what we have already said. The real facts are these: In the great controversy in England between the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, as the latter rejected the authority of the church and the most of its festivals, while the Episcopalians required men to observe all the festivals of the church, it was clearly seen that in order to maintain the authority of Sunday, which the Presbyterians kept, they must find some other arguments in its behalf than those which had sustained it for so many ages. They had therefore either to give up Sunday, or try to find arguments for it in the Bible. They chose the latter course.

Lyman Coleman, a first-day historian, thus states the promulgation of the modern opinion: "The true doctrine of the Christian Sabbath was first promulgated by an English dissenter, the Rev. Nicholas Bound, D. D., of Norton, in the county of Suffolk. About the year 1595, he published a famous book, entitled 'Sabbatum Veteris et Novi Testamenti,' or the True Doctrine of the Sabbath. In this book he maintained 'that the seventh part of our time ought to be devoted to God; that Christians are bound to rest on the Lord's day as much as the Jews were on the Mosaic Sabbath, the commandment about rest being moral and perpetual; and that it was not lawful for persons to follow their studies or worldly business on that day, nor to use such pleasures and recreations as are permitted on other days.' This book spread with wonderful rapidity. The doctrine which it propounded called forth from many hearts a ready response, and the result was a most pleasing reformation in many parts of the kingdom. 'It is almost incredible,' says Fuller, 'how taking this doctrine was, partly because of its own purity, and partly for the eminent piety of such persons as maintained it; so that the Lord's day, especially in corporations, began to be precisely kept; people becoming a law unto themselves, forbearing such sports as yet by statutes permitted; yea, many rejoicing at their own restraint therein.'—*Coleman's Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, chap. 26, sec. 2.

This new doctrine in 1595 spread with wonderful rapidity, and has been substantially adopted by many of the Protestant churches, but not by all. It is now the popular doctrine of the change of the Sabbath which is generally held. Scattered hints of this doctrine in parts had been held before by a few; but it never had been put forth as a whole in the form of a system. During some fourteen centuries of first-day Sabbath agitation, such a doctrine had never been promulgated. The Christian Fathers, to whom Sunday elevation is remotely traced, never heard of such a doctrine. The change they wrought was entirely a different position. It was founded upon "custom," "tradition," "voluntary choice," but never upon any Bible authority, never upon the fourth commandment.

Of all the arrogant, preposterous claims—and they have been many—put forth in behalf of the "venerable day of the sun," the most preposterous is reserved for the last,—that of claiming for it the

authority of the fourth commandment. It took some fourteen centuries to invent this claim, so contrary to the Bible record. If it is not "stealing the livery of heaven" for the first day of the week to shield itself under, and clothe itself with, the commandment of God,—for men to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God,"—then we know not what would be. The command requiring us to observe the day of Jehovah's rest, which he blessed and set apart for a sacred use at the creation of the world, for man to keep ever holy, is now sanctimoniously appropriated to bolster up another day entirely, the one on which he commenced his work of creation. We do not know how mortal man could go farther in despite to the rest of the great God.

Here is where first-day observers have entrenched themselves for some two hundred years past. Here is where we find them to-day. The great heathen "memorial" of idolatry entrenched in the sacred temple of the memorial of the Creator! The first day of the week claiming as its fundamental authority the commandment of God which was given to enforce the observance of the seventh day, an entirely different day!

Well does J. N. Andrews say concerning this last step taken to save Sunday: "Such was the origin of the seventh-part-of-time theory, by which the seventh day is dropped out of the fourth commandment, and one day in seven slipped into its place,—a doctrine most opportunely framed at the very period when nothing else could save the venerable day of the sun. With the aid of this theory, the Sunday of 'pope and pagan' was able coolly to wrap itself in the fourth commandment, and then, in the character of a divine institution, to challenge obedience from all Bible Christians. It could now cast away the frauds on which its very existence had depended, and support its authority by this one alone. In the time of Constantine it had ascended the throne of the Roman Empire, and during the whole period of the Dark Ages it maintained its supremacy from the chair of St. Peter; but now it had ascended the throne of the Most High. And thus a day which God 'commanded not nor spake it, neither came it into' his 'mind,' was enjoined upon mankind with all the authority of his holy law."—*Andrews's History of the Sabbath*, pp. 479, 480.

GOD OR MAN: WHOM SHALL WE TRUST?

BY E. LANPHEAR.

God says: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Ex. 20:10.

Man says: "Sunday, or the first day, is the Sabbath."

Christ says: "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Luke 6:5. Again: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27, 28.

The church, especially the Roman, says that it is lord of the Sabbath, and assumes "to change times and laws." Dan. 7:25.

Christ says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matt. 5:17.

Man says: "Man has an immortal soul, or natural immortality in his creation."

Paul, in speaking of the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords," says, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto," etc. 1 Tim 6:16. He also confirms the same idea in chap. 1:17.

Paul says to the Corinthians: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15:53. For proof that immortality is something to be sought for, and, if obtained, to be put on at the resurrection and the final victory over death, see Rom. 2:7.

Let the reader read the conclusion of this matter: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14); and now the closing testimony, found in verses 18, 19: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Paul says also to the Romans: "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith

of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." Rom. 3:3, 4.

And yet the majority of the church and mankind are teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Who shall stand in the great day of accounts? "Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

The Christian Life.

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

GOD'S THOUGHTS NOT OUR THOUGHTS.

God's thoughts are not as our thoughts; we look on,
Dreading to climb some mountain far away,
Counting the sharp stones on its hideous way.
He cares for our small troubles, day by day
Smoothing them down.

We keep our patience for our greater cares,
And murmur, unrepenting, o'er the less,
Thinking to show our strength in our distress;
His patience with our hourly fretfulness
Still gently bears.

God's ways are not as our ways; we lay down
Schemes for his glory, temples for our King,
Wherein tribes yet unborn may worship him;
Meanwhile, upon some humble, secret thing
He sets his crown.

We travel far to find him, seeking still,
Often in weariness, to reach his shrine,
Ready our choicest treasures to resign!
He, in our daily homes, lays down the line,—
"Do here my will." —J. E. A. Brown.

FINISHING OUR ALLOTTED WORK.

WHEN our Lord came to the end of his life, he looked back upon his course and found that he had fulfilled his mission and finished his allotted life-work. Not one duty had been left unperformed. There had been nothing neglected, nothing forgotten, nothing half done. Death did not come upon him, as it does upon so many, in the midst of unfinished tasks. There was no wild feverish haste in his last hours to get ready to go. Everything was accomplished. His was a completed life, without a defect.

No fallen man can live such a life as Christ lived. The best of us, at our best, will leave many things undone that we ought to have done, and will do many things that we ought not to have done. The most complete life-work is but a fragment at the end, with a blotted record. Yet every one of us should faithfully endeavor to make our life-work as complete as possible. It may be worth while for us to look over the story of Christ's life, to see how he lived so as to leave a completed work.

In the first place, all through his life he had one desire only—to do his Father's will. At the early age of twelve we hear him say, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" These words give the tenor of his whole life. Moment by moment he took his work from his Father's hand. He made no plans of his own; he knew there was a part in the great plan for him, and he wished only to accomplish that.

If we would finish the work which God has given us to do, we must do God's will day by day. Our ambition should be, not to do some great thing to bring fame, but simply to learn what our part is in God's plan, and to do it. We have a definite work allotted to us, and we can learn what it is only by ever looking up into our Master's face and asking, "What shall I do now?" How simple this would make all life; no feverish struggling, no fierce ambitions, no wild endeavors; just the quiet, faithful, unquestioning doing of God's will hour by hour! Yet this is the only way to make sure that our allotted work will be done. Any disobedience of God's commands will cause a blemish. Any allotted duty not taken up will leave a break. Any choosing of our own way rather than his, any failure to do faithfully the work of the day, will mar the completeness of our life-work.

For another thing, Christ counted nothing small which his Father gave him to do. For thirty years, with divinity stirring in his breast, with his mighty powers ready for any task, he stayed quietly in his native home, subject to his parents, a dutiful child, an active youth, a faithful artisan. That was the Father's will those years, so he thought of nothing else. All through his life he showed the same attention to the smallest thing as to the greatest. The greatest thing we can do any hour, is God's will. No matter how small the task given for the moment, the greatest deed possible would not be half so great. If your duty is to care for or comfort a little child, and instead of that you go and preach to five thousand people in words as eloquent as Chrysostom's, you have simply exchanged a truly great thing for one very small.

Some persons chafe because in their circumstances they cannot do much for God. A mother, occupied with her little children, laments that she has no time

nor leisure for God's work. Does she not know that caring well for her children is God's work? For her, for the time at least, there is nothing in the world so great. Organizing missionary meetings, speaking at conventions, attending Dorcas societies, writing books, painting pictures,—these are all beautiful things when God gives them; but if the mother neglects her children to run after these, she has simply put out of her hands the largest things to take up those that are small. In other words, what the Master gives is always the grandest work any one can do.

There are some who can finish the work given them to do, not by busy, active ministries, but by patient waiting and submission. By reason of physical illness or weakness, they are unable to take their place among those who strive and toil in the vineyard. God never assigns impossible service to any one. It is the mission of such to live out in sweet beauty of soul, in holy trust, in uncomplaining resignation, in cheerful patience, the will of God. The temptation in lives of this kind is to fret over their seeming uselessness, and to long for strength to be active in work for Christ. But we must remember that it is *what God gives us to do* that we are to do. In broken health and physical feebleness, his will is not toil, but joyful submission and glad trust. One of these sufferers has written:—

"I know not how this languid life
May life's vast ends fulfill;
He knows, and that life is not lost
That answers best his will.

"No service in itself is small,
None great, though earth it fill;
But that is small that seeks its own,
And great that seeks God's will."

Another rule in Christ's life was always to do each day's work in its own day; that is, he simply and quietly finished his work as he went along. Never at the close of any day was there anything of that day's work left undone. Here is a great secret of true and complete living. Duties come to us one by one, something for each moment. If we do them at all, we must do them just as they come. We cannot go back to-day to do what we failed to do yesterday. Each duty must be done in its own time, else it can never be done at all. Omissions or failures in any day's particular work, must remain omissions or failures forever. Life is a web, and duties are the threads. If you miss a thread to-day, the loom goes on, and the web rolls by; but the place of the missed thread remains unfilled, and there is a blemish that can never be removed. Would you have the web perfect at the last? Then miss no single thread as it rolls by; never throw an empty shuttle; do each duty in its moment.

It was thus that Christ finished his work. Each setting sun saw that day's work done. Then when the last day came, he had nothing to do but that one day's work. There was no rushing back to finish a thousand unfinished tasks. There was no lament over wasted hours and neglected opportunities. There was no passionate cry for another hour of time to finish the work. There was no wild endeavor to do a life-work in a few feverish days. Calmly he came toward the end, saying, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do."

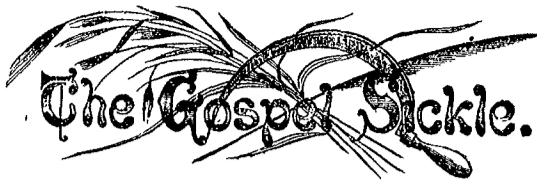
It is a solemn fact that we have just time enough given to us in which to complete our allotted work by employing every minute in faithful duty. A day lost anywhere will leave an unfinished work at the end; and when death finds us with our work unfinished, it must remain forever incomplete.

In the Spanish gallery of the Louvre in Paris, there is a great picture which represents a monk seated at a table busily writing. The legend is this: This man had been indolent and careless in the composition of his own biography, and while it was incomplete he suddenly died. Years after, this book was discovered, and it was demanded of Death that the writer might come back just to finish a few pages. The petition was granted; and there at his strange work the artist has given us his profile. He is not a live man, nor yet a dead man, but a corpse raised into a sort of passionate haste of life. No alreurement can draw his pen from his paper; his eye glares, his hand quivers with feeling, as he dashes down the sentences line after line.

The picture is most wierd and strange, but never true. No one can ever return to do the work he neglected to do in his allotted years. If we are to have everything finished when our day closes, we must begin early, and fill each hour. We cannot squander half our life, and then hope to have a completed work in the end. We must let no day pass with its duties neglected. We must, from childhood till death, do the things that please God; then we shall have nothing to do in the last hour but sweetly and peacefully to fold our hands upon our breast, and breathe out our spirit into God's hands.—*The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*.

Hope for nothing from this world, and your soul will enjoy rest.

God makes the glow-worm as certainly as he made the star; the light in both is divine. If mine be an earth-star to gladden the wayside, I must cultivate humbly and rejoicingly its green earth-glow, and not seek to blanch it to the whiteness of the stars that lie in the fields of blue.



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

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., MAY 15, 1887.

AN INAPPROPRIATE FIGURE.

IN the Brooklyn Tabernacle, April 10, T. De Witt Talmage preached an Easter sermon. The subject, of course, was the resurrection. But Mr. Talmage and his people hold a doctrine which completely nullifies that of the resurrection, making it extremely difficult to find any place for the latter, or to use any appropriate figures to illustrate it. That doctrine is the view that the soul is immortal, that the dead are conscious, that at death people enter upon their rewards or punishments in heaven or hell, in an enlarged state of being, freed from any material physical clogs or fetters. If this is so, why should the soul ever come back to cumber itself again with its bodily impediment? This is the difficult question they have to answer; but they must answer it some way, for the Bible doctrine of the resurrection is too plain to be ignored; hence the immortal-soul theory must either be abandoned, or in some way be made to harmonize with it. The latter feat Mr. T. undertakes to accomplish, and this is the figure he uses to illustrate it:—

"We shall have no more to do with death than we have with the cloak-room at a governor's or president's levee. We stop at such cloak-room and leave in charge of a servant our overcoat, our overshoes, our outward apparel, that we may not be impeded in the brilliant round of the drawing-room. Well, my friends, when we go out of this world, we are going to a King's banquet and to a reception of Monarchs, and at the door of the tomb we leave the cloak of flesh and the wrappings with which we meet the storms of this world. At the close of an earthly reception, under the brush and broom of the porter, the coat or hat may be handed to us better than when we resigned it, and the cloak of humanity will finally be returned to us improved and brightened and purified and glorified."

This sounds very nicely, and the figure works quite well for awhile; but on a little thought some considerations arise which seem to interfere somewhat with its consistency. The drawing-room signifies heaven; the overcoat, overshoes, and outward apparel signify this body, which we leave at the grave as, in our disembodied state, we enter heaven. But—we wear our overcoat, overshoes, etc., only because, in going to the reception, or the levee, we are exposed to unfavorable condition of ground or weather, and to protect ourselves therefrom. And we assume these outer garments again only when we are again going out to be exposed once more to these unfavorable elements.

Now according to Mr. T.'s view, when we assume again our bodies in the resurrection, which we laid off at death to go to the King's banquet, is it to come into a condition of being again as unfavorable as that which we now occupy?—Oh, no! we never come into this condition of being again, but after getting our bodies go right back again into heaven, to remain there forever. Then we ask in all seriousness, Why come back for our bodies at all? Why do we need them there in the drawing-room any more after the resurrection than we needed them for the years we were there before the resurrection?

To make the figure consistent, he should be able to show that after the guests have been for awhile in the drawing-room at the governor's or president's levee, —long enough for the servants to brush up the garments left with them, then they should return and re-array themselves in those garments, and again appear in the drawing-room, bundled up, prepared to face the chilling wind or driving storm, and then go on with the brilliant rounds of the drawing-room for a much longer time than before, in this cumbered condition. Who ever heard of a reception managed in this way? And applying this figure to the future state and the heavenly world, we ask again, What possible need of the resurrection body, according to the popular view? After the body is once well disposed of, and we enter disencumbered into the heavenly drawing-room, prepared to go through all its brilliant rounds and appreciate all its beauty and blessedness, and that is to be our abode forever, why trouble ourselves about our old bodies any more?

What need of overcoats and overshoes then? Does the condition of that reception-room deteriorate, the fires go out, the windows blow in, the floors become damp, so that we need these things to make us comfortable?

Again, Mr. T. seems to get somewhat confused as to the intelligence of the different parts of which man is composed. We are usually taught that the body is only the material instrument which the soul uses while in the present state, but that the soul alone is the real conscious, intelligent being. But Mr. T. has them both equally conscious, intelligent, and sensible of their wants; for he says:—

"And so when the world's last Easter morning shall come, the soul will descend, crying, 'Where is my body?' and the body will ascend, saying, 'Where is my soul?'"

So, according to this, the body knows when the soul is gone, and cries out for it, and the soul knows the body is lacking, and cries out for that, and yet is perfectly happy in the spirit world without it. Which, then, is the intelligent man? or have we two together? Then it seems the man must know more and be in a more perfect condition when they are united than when separated.

The fact is, popular theology is wholly out of joint with the Scriptures on this subject. It is involved in radical and irreconcilable error. Paul says he did not desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon; not to remain in this mortal state, nor to be unclothed, that is, unconscious in the grave, but to be clothed upon,—to have that immortality which ushers us into the next state of being. He knew of but two bodies: the natural, which we possess now, and the spiritual, which is given us in the resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:44. Hence there are but these two states of being.

With this view all is harmony; but with what has been and still is to some extent the popular view, as represented in the sermon here referred to, logic is continually running off the track, and metaphors constantly getting mixed.

U. S.

GOD'S WAYS ARE PERFECT.

THE plan which God devised for human redemption is perfect; and his work, in carrying out that plan, is perfect. He does nothing in vain. He does not drop one line of work, and take up another plan of operation. He does not pull down what he has built to build greater, or on a different foundation. His work moves right onward; the past is a foundation for that which is to follow.

The Old Testament is a foundation for the New; the New is built upon the Old. "The foundation of apostles and prophets" is the same. Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone of both Testaments—of all revelation. The voice of God in both is in perfect harmony. The New Testament records the fulfillment, in part, of the prophecies of the Old. Still God's work is progressive. There are promises in both Testaments yet to be fulfilled; and God still lives, and is fulfilling his word of promise. He has not promised evermore to be silent, but is still at liberty to give the inspiration in the fulfillment of his promises to the end. But whatever words or works he inspires will be in harmony with all he has said or done in the past. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

In both Testaments God has promised a warning to the world of the near approaching of the coming day of wrath. Joel 2:1; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 14:6-12. The work of God in fulfillment of the promised warning began more than forty years ago, and is going forward to-day. The work of the final message of warning (Rev. 14:9-12) is spreading abroad and encircling the earth. Yet there are multitudes, who are called Adventists, who ignore the fulfillment of these divinely promised and Heaven-inspired messages. They profess to be looking for the soon-coming advent of the Lord, and yet take no notice of the fulfillment of these promised warnings, now being heralded in several languages in almost every quarter of the earth. They reject, or at least ignore, the past facts of the history of our own times, which are the foundation of all true and scriptural Adventism for this time, and are building in the air without a foundation. All who are following the plan of the work which God devised and revealed, have a use for all the past history of the work. None are now scripturally Adventists who have no use for the work done in the proclamation of the doctrine from 1840 to 1844.

The 2800 days of Dan. 8:14 furnished a fundamental argument in the proclamation of the advent

at hand up to 1844, when they ended. Now there are plenty of what are called pre-millennial Adventists, who have no use for that prophetic period whatever. That it is certainly now ended, no one can dispute with any show of argument. Yet this firm pillar of the advent faith in 1840 is utterly ignored. Perhaps the reader may reply to this as a certain minister once did to the writer, when referred to the evidence that those days were ended. Said he, "What if they are ended?"

Well, my friend, if they are ended, something of momentous importance to you and all the world is transpiring—the Sanctuary of the new covenant is being cleansed as promised in the text. Would God foretell a work to be done in the future, and appoint a time for its commencement more than two thousand three hundred years beforehand, and yet that work be one of trivial importance? The cleansing of the Sanctuary is no less a work than the consummation of the atonement, the blotting out of the sins of all the saved, from first to last, involving the work of the Investigative Judgment, which takes place before the Ancient of days in heaven, before the advent to earth. Dan. 7:9. Therefore when the period did end in 1844, a message was heard in all the earth,—"Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his Judgment is come." Rev. 14:7. This voice we heard, for "the sound went into all the earth." Is it so soon forgotten? Here began the fulfillment of the final warnings, which are now being proclaimed in almost every quarter of the earth.

Is it not strange that people professing to be students of prophecy, and looking for the coming of Christ, should ignore these plain predictions and their evident fulfillment, which must lie at the very foundation of all scriptural warning of the near approach of that all-important event? God's word being true, these prophetic warnings must be preached just before the day of wrath and the coming of Christ; and it is evident from the nature of things that these solemn warnings will constitute the leading theme of all who shall be intrusted with the closing work of the gospel. Christ will not come until these messages have been proclaimed with a "loud voice." But we can see the third and last message rapidly rising to that point. Soon the work will be closed, and then the fiat will go forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

R. F. C.

THE SATANIC ORIGIN OF SPIRITUALISM.

IN our last issue we gave a few facts regarding Spiritualism as predicted by prophecy, and relating to its origin, and also to its deceptive work in the earth. We have shown that its power is manifested through various agencies, through those of high or low degree; often through little children who cannot read or write; through simple-minded youths, or persons of less than ordinary intelligence, until brought under the influence of this remarkable power. Then an intelligence is manifested which cannot be accounted for by any known laws of mental phenomena. This would surely come under the head of a new kind of "jugglery."

But there is another phase of this subject which we wish to notice as special evidence of its satanic origin, and which distinguishes it from every other manifestation of trickery known to men. We refer to the system of doctrines it puts forth to the world. Mere trickery for the purpose of deception always gives evidence of its earthly origin. It does its work for money-making purposes, for present notoriety, and for merely the gratification of the senses.

While these reasons may be connected with Spiritualism, and no doubt are often seen, yet there is a deep design manifested in connection with it to subvert the great principles of morality and religion, and to break down all fear of God, and destroy true piety from the earth. This removes it a long way from any mere sleight-of-hand trickery. This shows it to be a grand system of error and satanic cunning intended to undermine and destroy the religion of the Bible. Let us notice a few declarations of its principles by its prominent advocates:—

"When spirits begin to speak with man, he must beware that we believe nothing that they say; for nearly everything they say is fabricated by them, and they lie—they will tell so many lies that a man

would be astonished."—*Svedenborg, in Banner of Light, March 20, 1869.*

When Pres. Mahan took a Spiritualist book to the *Spiritual Telegraph* office, and asked Mr. Brittan and Dr. Underhill concerning it, they said: "We are not responsible for the sentiments, only for its origin. We do not take the testimony of spirits as reliable. We would not rely upon the responses of any medium."

Said the *Crucible*, April 23, 1871: "We have learned that, do the best we can, it is impossible to find a medium that can always be made to speak the truth. We can often make them talk eloquently, and sometimes logically; but no one can be always made to talk truthfully." Thus we see that they are all lying spirits by their own confession.

It is notorious that Spiritualists almost universally deny the Bible. Says A. J. Davis, Nature is "the true and only Bible;" and Dr. Hare, "The notions derived from the gospel are vague, disgusting, inaccurate, and difficult to believe."—*Spiritualism Scientifically Demonstrated*, p. 209. Says a spirit claiming to be Rev. John Moore, "I cannot believe one word of it is the word of God."

They deny Christ. "The miraculous conception of Christ is merely a fabulous tale."—*Spiritual Telegraph*, No. 372. "Do you hold that Jesus Christ was superior to any other man that ever lived?—Ah no; I certainly do not."—*Banner of Light*, Feb. 5, 1870.

They deny God. W. F. Jamieson says, "I do not believe in a personal God. No great First Cause, no Creator. Space and the worlds, or the matter composing them, never were created, never needed a First Cause." Said the *Crucible*, April 22, 1871, "A personal God would be a monstrosity. There is not and cannot be a Supreme Spirit even."

They deny all distinction of right and wrong. Says A. B. Child, "The divine use of the ten commandments is in their violation, not in their observance." A. J. Davis says, "Unto God there is no error; all is comparative good." "Sin, in the common acceptation of that term, does not really exist."—*Nat. Div. Rev.*, pp. 5, 21. J. S. Loveland, once a Methodist minister, says, "With God there is no crime; with man there is. Crime does not displease God, but it does man. God is in the darkest crime as in the highest possible holiness. He is equally pleased in either case." No wonder Dr. P. B. Randolph, who had been a medium for eight years, said he believed Spiritualism "to be the most tremendous enemy of God, morals, and religion, that ever found foothold on the earth." We could easily multiply such quotations a thousand-fold.

But let no one suppose such statements are put forth at once when trying to make converts. These are the doctrines of those who have become most deeply imbued with it. They talk very eloquently upon first getting converts, and present everything that looks attractive, till one comes fully under the influence of these "lying spirits." Then the real animus of this system of error is shown.

Who can suppose for a moment that such a gigantic system of error as this has shown itself to be, deeply affecting society at large, reaching thousands of those in the higher walks of life, reaching ministers of the gospel, and breaking down their faith in the Bible and all they had held dear, believed in by men of great mental powers, and working its way everywhere among the great men of the earth, was originated by a few sleight-of-hand performers? It is no doubt true that multitudes who have become believers, as well as those who have merely become interested in it, do not realize the atheistic tendency of this monster delusion. This tendency is kept in the background, and will be till the masses are beyond the reach of God's Spirit. And any one who cares to investigate the matter can easily perceive the effect of this doctrine.

Who can fail to see here a gigantic scheme on the part of Satan to ruin the human family? Its teachings are most cunningly contrived to lull the conscience to sleep, flatter the poor victim that he is in no danger of retribution if he sins ever so wickedly, and gives full run to unlawful desire till probation is forever past. How great is the danger, then, of those who think this is merely a matter of jugglery! Such need to examine this matter more thoroughly. Here is a sign of the last days already largely developed, and about ready to do its great work of ruin. Let us read and understand the sure word of prophecy, and be prepared for what is coming on the earth.

G. I. B.

SIN AND ITS PENALTY.

WHAT is the penalty for sin? In the teachings of the Bible there is no uncertainty in this matter. They plainly inform us that "the wages of sin is death;" and that "Christ died for our sins." Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3. As sin is the transgression of the law, death, the wages of sin, is its penalty; and as Christ died for our sins, the penalty was laid upon him for our sake. Now that "Christ died" is not only plainly declared in the Scriptures, but it is a fundamental truth in the gospel system; for it is easy to show that, if Christ did not die, there can be no atonement and no redemption. It appears evident, then, that those who assert that Christ did not suffer the penalty of the law, do not so assert because the fact is not revealed in the Bible; but as before intimated, because of certain difficulties supposed to lie in the way of that fact. These difficulties are concerning the nature of the penalty—death.

It is assumed that death, the penalty of transgression, is threefold in its nature, consisting of temporal, spiritual, and eternal death. If this assumption were true, I should at once give up the atonement as a thing impossible. Yet it has been advanced by men of eminence, and incorporated into works recognized as standard. Let us examine it.

1. The death of man is temporal only by reason of a resurrection. But the resurrection belongs to the work of Christ, and as his work was not necessary or a subject of promise till after the transgression, it cannot have any place in the announcement of the penalty. When death was threatened to Adam, it was not said that he should die temporally, spiritually, and eternally; nor that he should die a first or second death; nor the death that never dies; but that he should *surely die*. It was death—simply death. Had not a promise been given afterward, of "the seed" to bruise the serpent's head, it would necessarily have been eternal death. But Christ, introducing a resurrection for Adam and his race, causes it to be temporal. But since this time, this death, temporal, has not been the penalty for personal transgression. This is evident for two reasons: (1.) Infants die who never have transgressed; and (2.) in the Judgment, we stand to answer for our deeds, and the second death is inflicted for personal sin. But on those who are holy "the second death hath no power;" the penalty does not reach them. So it appears the death we now die is occasioned by Adam's transgression, and is rendered temporal by the second Adam, and comes indiscriminately upon all classes and ages, thus precluding the idea that it is now a penalty, except as connected with that first transgression, in which we are involved only by representation.

2. Spiritual death cannot be a penalty at all. A penalty is an *infliction* to meet the ends of justice. But spiritual death is a state of sin, or absence of holiness; and to say that God *inflicts unholiness* upon man is not only absurd, but monstrous. That is confounding the crime with its punishment. God does not make man wicked or sinful as an infliction; but man makes himself wicked by his own actions, and God punishes him with death for his wickedness.

Again, there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Now if the penalty upon Adam included spiritual death, the resurrection through the second Adam would be to spiritual life, or holiness; and if all were restored to spiritual life through Christ, there would be none to fall under the second death; for it falls not on the "blessed and holy."

3. The wages of sin is death; and as the death of Adam became temporal by reason of a resurrection, so we may say that the infliction for personal sins, the second death, is eternal, because no resurrection will succeed it. Thus it appears plain that from the beginning death was the penalty of the law of God, circumstances determining the *duration* of it. This view, which is in strict harmony with the Bible, really removes all difficulty in regard to Christ's having suffered the penalty due to sin.

But another difficulty is presented to us by giving an extraordinary definition to death; it is said to mean *eternal misery*. But on examination of this, the difficulty will be entirely on the side of those who present it. Though I am free to confess that if the definition is correct, there is an insurmountable difficulty, involving the whole doctrine of the atonement, and making it utterly impossible for God to be just, and also the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

First, I say, then, that if the signification of death is "eternal misery," Christ never died at all; and then all the Scriptures that say *he died* are untrue; and thus the atonement would be proved impossible, and further consideration of it would be useless. But admitting the Scripture testimony, that the wages of sin *is* death, and that Christ *died* for sin, we have *the Scriptural view of the term death*, utterly forbidding such an unnatural and forced construction of a plain declaration.

Secondly, if the correct definition of death is eternal misery, the relative terms, first and second, as applied to death before and after the resurrection, are used absurdly. For how can there be a first and second eternal misery? Sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and death passed upon all men. But the very fact that man may be resurrected, released from death, as the Scriptures teach, clearly proves that the Scripture use of the term "death" is entirely different from the "theological use," as given above.

And, thirdly, if death means eternal misery, then that is the penalty of the law: but as Christ did not suffer it, and the redeemed will not suffer it, so it follows that justice is never vindicated by the infliction of the penalty, either upon them or a substitute; and thus justice is *suspended*, not satisfied; and Christ's death (if it could with any reason be called so) is not truly vicarious. As I have before considered, justice demands the infliction of the penalty of a just law; and as God is unchangeable and infinitely just, the penalty will surely be inflicted upon the transgressor or his substitute. But the above view makes it impossible. According to that, mercy does not harmonize with justice, but supersedes it; and God's justice is not manifest in justifying the believer. The sum of the matter is this: that if the penalty be eternal misery, then all that have sinned must suffer it, and be eternally miserable, or else the demands of the law are never honored. But the first would result in universal damnation, and the other would degrade the government of God, and contradict both reason and Scripture.

This definition of death has been adopted of necessity to conform to the popular idea of the inherent immortality of man; yet it involves a contradiction in those who hold it. For it is claimed that the wicked are immortal and cannot cease to exist, and therefore the death threatened in the Scriptures is something besides cessation of existence, namely, misery. But immortality signifies exemption from death; and if the Scriptural meaning of death is misery, and the wicked are immortal, or exempt from death, they are, of course, exempt from misery! The advocates of this theory do not mean to be Universalists, but their position necessarily leads to that result.

It was well said by that great Christian philosopher, John Locke, that "it seems a strange way of understanding law which requires the plainest and most direct terms, that by death should be meant eternal life in misery." Life and death are opposites; the first is promised to the justified, the second is threatened and inflicted upon the unjust. But life and misery are not opposites; misery is a condition of life. In everything but "theology" such a perversion of language would not be tolerated, as to make eternal misery and death, or even misery and death, synonymous. Were I to report that a man was dead because I knew him to be suffering in much misery, it would be looked upon as trifling—solemn mockery. With a cessation of life every condition of life must cease.—*J. II. Waggoner.*

"WE THINK" VS. "WE KNOW."

THE following question and answer are found in the *Christian Commonwealth* of December 9, 1886, and we quote them as illustrating many of the answers to religious questions by present-day religious teachers, unlike many of the answers found in our esteemed contemporaries:—

Ques.—"Can you inform me if departed spirits know anything of their friends on earth? Or have they any knowledge of what is being transacted on it?"

Ans.—"We think there can be no doubt about this matter. There are many passages of Scripture that clearly suggest it, while the case of the rich man and Lazarus makes it almost certain."

The editor says, "We think there can be no doubt about this matter." Passages of Scripture suggest it,

and "the case of the rich man and Lazarus makes it almost certain" ! Hardly worth while building on such a foundation,—a "suggestion" and an "almost." No sound system of interpretation would make a parable or apologue the foundation of a doctrine. The same rule of interpretation would, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, make heaven in sight of hell, the righteous beholding the torments of the damned, and the latter praying for an immaterial (!) spirit (for there are no others in heaven according to the common orthodox view) to dip his finger (!) in water (is it also immaterial ?) and cool his tongue tormented in flame ! A literal interpretation of Luke 16:19-21 makes nonsense of the word of God. Personifying the dead and making them utter what their final destiny will be when all shall be judged and rewarded (2 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 22:12; Matt. 16:27), makes the parable a consistent one, and a forcible lesson to the proud, covetous Jews.

Passages "suggest" that departed spirits know aught of their friends in the same way that the sixth commandment suggests murder, or that life suggests death, or righteousness suggests sin. The editor says "we think," may not we say we know the opposite, that departed spirits do not know anything about their friends on earth ? The man healed by our Saviour could say, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners." How did he know ?—God had revealed it in his holy Scriptures. See Ps. 18:41; 66:18, *et al.* So we may know as regards this question because God has revealed it in his word. What say the Scriptures ?

"The dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Eccl. 9:5, 6. Says the psalmist, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. 146:4. And Job declares of the dead, "His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them." Job 14:21.

Such teaching as is found in the above-quoted answer from the *Commonwealth* is the very foundation of modern Spiritualism, and the Romish doctrines of purgatory and invocation of saints, with many others equally false, equally pernicious. If our dead friends know all about us, why can they not converse with us ? It is only a step to such a conclusion, and such a conclusion is full-fledged Spiritualism. And demons, taking advantage of this belief, come in the garb of supposed departed spirits, and deceive those who are not grounded in the truth of God.

God has warned us of these things. 1 Tim. 3; 2 Thess. 2:9, 10; Rev. 13:18, 14; and 16:13, 14. He has also made known to us our true condition in death as revealed in the foregoing quotations from the Holy Scriptures. He has not left the "mourner" comfortless, but has revealed to him something better than an "almost" or "we think." 1 Thess. 4:13-18: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.* Those who have a well-grounded hope in the Lord Jesus Christ will God bring with Christ from the prison house of the dead. Heb. 13:20. "We know" is better than "we think." —*Present Truth.*

MEDITATE upon the promises of God. The promises are flowers, growing in the paradise of Scripture; meditation, like the bee, sucks out the sweetness of them. The promises are of no use or comfort to us till they are meditated upon. For as the roses hanging in the garden may give a fragrant perfume, yet their sweet water is distilled only by the fire; so the promises are sweet in reading over, but the water of these roses—the spirit and quintessence of the promises—is distilled into the soul only by meditation.

INCENSE smells sweetest when it is pounded and beaten.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

The first day of the week is commonly called the "Christian Sabbath." What are its claims to the title of Sabbath, or holy day ? God's word alone is able to enlighten us; as Dr. Adam Clarke, in his "Clavis Biblica," p. 64, observes: "From this word all doctrines must be derived and proved; and from it every man must learn his duty to God, to his neighbor, and to himself." To this Book we appeal in the following propositions:—

1. There are only eight texts in the New Testament which mention "the first day of the week."

PROOF: Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2.

2. The first six texts refer to the same first day, the one on which Christ rose from the dead. It was a day in which labor was performed which the disciples would not do on the Sabbath.

PROOF: "And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them [that they might anoint him. Mark 16:1.] Luke 23:56 and 24:1. "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about three-score furlongs." Luke 24:13-35.

3. The meeting of the disciples on that day was only a family gathering, at their common lodging-house.

PROOF: "And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James." Acts 1:13.

4. They were met together with closed doors for fear of the Jews, and not to honor the day.

PROOF: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." John 20:19.

5. They did not meet to honor the day of Christ's resurrection; for they did not believe he had risen. They were frightened when they saw him, and he chided them for their unbelief.

PROOF: "And they were terrified and affrighted and supposed that they had seen a spirit." Luke 24:36, 37. "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." Mark 16:14.

NOTE.—Thus we gather from the texts quoted and cited above that the first day is not by any term indicated as holy; that the disciples, instead of meeting together to honor the day on which Christ rose from the dead, did not believe he had risen. They had met together at their common abode, and were eating their evening meal.

6. The next meeting was on Monday or Tuesday; for it was "after eight days" from the first day.

PROOF: "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." John 20:26.

NOTE.—It will be seen by comparing 1 Chron. 9:26 with 2 Kings 11:5 that "after seven days" was just a week; according to the same rule "after eight days" would be one day more than a week, which would bring the second gathering on Monday. "After six days" (Matt. 16:28 and 17:1) means "about an eight days after." Luke 9:27, 28. Therefore the second meeting was not on the first day of the week.

7. The third meeting was on a fishing occasion.

PROOF: "After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias." "This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead." See John 21:1-14.

8. The only religious meeting recorded in the New Testament as having occurred on the first day of the week, was held Sunday evening answering to our Saturday night, according to the Bible rule of beginning the day at evening. The light part of that Sunday the apostle Paul spent in walking to Assos, twenty miles from Troas, while Luke and his companions took the boat around the promontory, about twice as far.

PROOF: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." "And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul; for so he had appointed, minding himself to go afoot." See Acts 20:6-14.

NOTE.—Paul could not have regarded the day as sacred, using it as he did for the laborious hill-journey to Assos. Neither did Luke and his companions, who labored that day in sailing round the promontory to Assos. First-day sacredness was therefore unknown to the apostles. Eminent Bible scholars like William Prynne, Kitto, Dean Alford, Calvin, Conybeare and Howson, agree in this.

9. The remaining text, instead of proving Sunday sacredness, proves the opposite; the money was to be laid by at home.

PROOF: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay BY HIM in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." 1 Cor. 16:2.

NOTE.—Greenfield in his lexicon translates the Greek *par heauto*, "by one's self," *i. e.*, "at home." The Comprehensive Commentary, Albert Barnes, Matthew Henry, Bloomfield, Olshausen, Robinson's lexicon, and all the translations examined, give the same meaning. This is the only command in the New Testament concerning the first day of the week, and this command enjoins secular labor.

10. Paul declared that he kept back nothing that was profitable, and had not shunned to declare all the counsel of God.

PROOF: "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Acts 20:20, 21, 27.

NOTE.—The above is the testimony of the great apostle to the Gentiles; yet in all his writings he says not one word concerning a first-day Sabbath, or first-day sacredness. On the other hand, he did testify that repentance was necessary. Repentance is such sorrow for sin as will lead one to turn away from sin (Matt. 3:8, margin); "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4; Rom. 7:7); and the law is not made void but established through faith (Rom. 3:31).

11. The Sabbath is mentioned fifty-nine times in the New Testament, always as an existing institution, never once called Jewish Sabbath, or by any term which would indicate that its dignity was lessened in any way. It was also used as a day for preaching and religious meetings by the apostles.

PROOF: See Acts 13:42, 49; Acts 15:21; Acts 16:13; and other scriptures.

12. It was Paul's custom to preach on the Sabbath.

PROOF: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbaths days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." Acts 17:2.

"He worked at his trade through the "six working-days" (Eze. 46:1), and taught seventy-eight Sabbaths successively in the Macedonian city of Corinth.

PROOF: Acts 18:1-11. The first verse states that he first found a Jew, an observer of the seventh day; "and because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought; for by occupation they were tent-makers." "And he reasoned in the synagogues every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Verses 3, 4. "And he continued there a year and six months [78 Sabbaths], teaching the word of God among them." Verse 11.

14. Jesus, our example, kept his Father's commandments; hence the seventh-day Sabbath.

PROOF: "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." John 15:10. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4); but Christ "did no sin." 1 Pet. 2:22.

15. God created the world through Christ.

PROOF: "By whom also he made the worlds." Heb. 1:2. See also John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16, 17; 1 Cor. 8:6.

16. Therefore Christ made the Sabbath; and the Sabbath is his day.

PROOF: "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27.

NOTE.—Then the seventh day is not only the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, but the Sabbath of Christ as well. It is the day of which Christ is Lord; therefore it is "the Lord's day." Rev. 1:10. And yet it is not a "Christian" Sabbath, but one obligatory upon all the race, the same as all other moral laws,—laws which those who profess to be the children of Christ and God are under double obligation to keep. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. Jesus says, "Blessed are they that do his [the Father's] commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14.

M. C. WILCOX.

Temperance Outlook.

THE DRUNKARD'S SIN.

In the ancient castle of Nuremberg
Is a relic of despots' sway,
Invented by tyrants of olden times
As a punishment for terrible crimes
Unknown at the present day.

In the chamber of torture underground
Stands an image with covered face,
With an iron cloak and an iron hood,
And woe to the man or woman who stood
A moment in its embrace;

For the garments are lined with sharpened spikes
That swiftly and silently fold,
Till the points press into the temple veins,
The eyeballs are pierced with a thousand pains;
The agony is untold.

Still closer and closer the clasp becomes,
Still deeper and deeper the woe,
Till the shrieks die out into stifled moans,
And a horrible mass of flesh and bones
Drops into the pit below.

I have thought this image of Nuremberg
Was a type of the drunkard's sin,—
The fetters of habit that round him close,
The piercing of conscience in unrepose,
The dying of hope within.

Still closer and closer this death embrace
Enwraps the poor victim in woe,
And he who invited the demon's clasp
Is only released from his iron grasp
To sink in the pit below.

I was wrong to say there is no release,
No help for this evil. Ah! then
Christ were but an unmeaning sound to thee.
It were better, far better, for you and me
Our being had never been.

—Mary Brainard.

WINE AND THE BIBLE.—6.

BY J. H. KELLOGG, M. D.

THOSE TEXTS WHICH DISCOUNTENANCE THE
USE OF WINE AND FERMENTED LIQUORS.

As already remarked, having shown that two kinds of wine are recognized in the Bible, one of which was wholesome and the other harmful (though often re-

ferred to by the same terms), it is most reasonable to suppose that when wine is spoken of in terms of commendation, that which was wholesome is referred to; and when the opposite terms are employed, the contrary kind of wine is meant. This principle should be borne in mind in considering the following scriptures, which are a few of those which condemn the use of wine and strong drink:—

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Prov. 20: 1.

No language could better describe the real character of wine and strong drink than the words of the wise man. "Wine is a mocker," or in other words, a deceiver. It deludes the drinker with the fancy that it does him good, while it is all the time sapping his life and leading him to certain ruin.

"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!" Isa. 5: 11.

There is no solace here for the drunkard. In addition to the immediate ills which he brings upon himself by his revelings, the Almighty has pronounced a woe upon him.

"For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Prov. 23: 21.

Every one has seen the truth of this scripture repeatedly exemplified in the downward career of the drinker, who sinks from bad to worse, squanders his property, and not infrequently dies at last in the poor-house or on the public highway.

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath habbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?—They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to drink mixed wine." Prov. 23: 29, 30.

The truthful picture which Inspiration has here drawn of the real experience of the drunkard is in strong contrast with the glowing descriptions of delightful exhilaration and pleasurable sensations which the tempter gives as the effects of alcohol. No one who has carefully observed the effects of wine, will dispute the accuracy of the inspired word.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Prov. 23: 31, 32.

Solomon here gives a very precise description of fermented wine, and then admonishes us that we should not even look upon it, much less taste it. Surely, this is countenancing the most rigid total abstinence. How can moderate drinkers who believe in the divine origin of the Bible, continue to indulge in even the mildest fermented liquor, in the face of this admonition?

"But judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Rom. 14: 13.

This text does not mention wine, but it is a very powerful rebuke to those moderate drinkers who maintain that it is only the excess of wine that is injurious, and that so long as they indulge moderately, no one has the right to question the propriety of their course. Some persons may possess sufficient will-power to enable them to continue a course of moderate tipping for many years; but their example in using wine will lead to perdition many less resolute persons who have likewise begun as moderate drinkers, but, lacking power to control the appetite for drink, end their career in drunkards' graves. The Bible makes the moderate drinker in a great degree responsible for the sins and excesses of his weaker brother who fell through attempting to follow an example which he lacked the power to fully imitate.

Here are the qualities of good and bad wine contrasted:—

BAD WINE.	GOOD WINE.
Fermented.	Unfermented.
Contains alcohol.	Contains no alcohol.
Poisonous.	Wholesome.
Intoxicating.	Unintoxicating.
Produced by decay.	Produced by natural growth.
A symbol of wrath.	A symbol of blessing.
"Wine is a mocker."	"Cheereth God and man."
"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red."	"Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake."
"Strong drink is raging."	"Maketh the heart glad."
"Poison of dragons."	"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it."
"Cruel venom of asps."	
"Biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."	
"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him."	

FARMERS AND PROHIBITION.

The *New Era* publishes the following extract from an address on "Agriculture as a Profession," delivered at the Delaware County Institute, Jan. 15, 1887, by T. R. Smith:—

"Do we fully realize how intimately the liquor question is connected with our success? that the saloon is as certainly robbing us of our profits as the thief who enters our cribs or smoke houses? The most plausible theory of the deposits of gold and silver in our mountains is, that, being held in solution,

they were carried into the crevices of the rocks by streams of water, and deposited by currents of electricity passing through the water.

"In a certain Eastern city, a manufacturer who employs a large number of men, paid out to his employees on Saturday night \$1,299, and took the pains to put his private mark on every bill. On Monday evening following, \$700 of this money had been deposited in the banks by the saloon-keepers. If this \$700 had been spent for beef, pork, flour, groceries, clothing, and books, can you not see that business would improve, and your products would be in better demand and bring better prices? If our wage-workers were strictly temperate men, do you not see that the gold and silver which they are digging in the mines or earning in the mills would be deposited by that wondrous electrical current—love of wife and children and home,—in all the legitimate avenues of trade, causing a business boom unprecedented in our history?"

"We dread strikes and lock-outs, but if we could unite with Trade Unions, Knights of Labor, and Prohibitionists, and organize a strike against the American saloon, we would find results better than a foreign war upon our products, and the wage-workers would find it better than an increase of wages or decrease of hours of labor. We are responsible in a very important sense for the fact that this enemy of our morals, this corrupter of our youth, this debaucher of our politics, this robber of our incomes, is permitted to live and flourish, and wave his defiant banner in our faces."

Notes from the Field.

"The field is the world."

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

DAKOTA.—Church of ten members organized at Huron.

INDIANA.—B. F. Purdham reports a profitable series of meetings at Hartford City.

WISCONSIN.—Protracted meetings held at Mauston result in awakening considerable interest and reclaiming several backsliders.

COLORADO.—A company of five believers reported at Maher, where also a Sabbath-school of thirteen members has been organized.

ILLINOIS.—Several new members added to the church at Rockford; a very encouraging report is received from the church at Belvidere.

ARKANSAS.—Five new converts baptized at Springdale; the general meeting held at that place recently was of unusual interest and encouragement.

SOUTH AMERICA.—T. H. Gibbs gives an interesting report of his visit to Spanish and British Honduras, where he found some believers and others interested.

NEW YORK.—Encouraging reports are received from the missions at Albany, Utica, Syracuse, Buffalo, and Watertown; a new church is being completed at Watertown.

IOWA.—C. A. Washburn reports profitable meetings held with the churches at Davis City and Kellerton; a church of twelve members was recently organized by him at Delphos.

NEBRASKA.—Church at Silver Creek receives sixteen new members; meetings at Eudell result in nine believers; one family accept the truth at Battlehend, also one at Merna.

VERMONT.—Twelve new converts at Rochester as a result of mission work in that city; encouraging reports received from meetings held at Williamstown, Corinth, Northfield, etc.

NEW ZEALAND.—A. G. Daniels reports the interest as increasing at Auckland, some twenty-five or thirty persons having recently embraced the faith as a result of the protracted meetings held there by him.

OHIO.—At the general State meeting held at Columbus plans were laid for carrying on the work in that State the coming summer, which give promise of a successful season; J. S. Hes and H. H. Burkholder ordained to the work of the ministry.

KANSAS.—Two new members added to the church at Oswego; six new converts reported at Yates Center; baptism administered to seven converts at Buffalo; church at Topeka has recently enjoyed a prosperous season; special meetings being held at Moline.

TENNESSEE.—Eld. J. M. Rees reports meetings at Jeffers, which were accompanied by bitter opposition and even persecution, himself and two of his converts being subjected to many cruel indignities, notwithstanding which, however, the meetings resulted in several converts.

MICHIGAN.—Four new converts reported at Mason; one family of believers reported at Escanaba, and two at De Loughary; meetings held at Greenwood result in two new converts, and at Hatton in five believers; six persons embrace the faith near Clare; two con-

verts receive baptism at Bloomingdale; a new church is about to be built at Decatur; H. M. Kenyon reports a very encouraging state of matters in the churches in his district; church at Monterey received three new members a few weeks since; three converts at Cedar Dale; nineteen believers baptized at Carlton Center.

The Theological World.

... The pope has suggested to the Prussian bishops the advisability of establishing a nunciature at Berlin for Prussia.

... The Mormons have adopted the plan of having women missionaries, and twenty-five are at work in East Tennessee.

... The New York State Legislature has passed the Saturday-half-holiday bill, and the same is now a law and in force in that State.

... The growing practice among Methodist ministers of reading manuscript essays instead of preaching extemporaneous sermons, is the subject of considerable adverse criticism.

... Rabbi Rabinowitz, the Russian Jew whose conversion to Christianity has led a large number of his co-religionists in Bessarabia to follow him, is now in Great Britain, exciting an interest in this wonderful movement.

... The people in Formosa, instructed by the missionary of the Presbyterian Church of England, are now giving practical proof of the value they put upon religion, by making arrangements to establish a mission of their own in the Pescadore Islands.

... The question of putting crucifixes in all the courts of law in Quebec is agitating that province, though this is not the first time the question has been raised. The bill is at present before the Legislature, and the Protestant ministers have entered a formal protest against it.

... A committee of Baltimore clergymen have petitioned President Cleveland to consider the propriety of a change in the army regulations that will secure to United States soldiers the privilege of a better observance of Sunday, and protect them against excessive duties on that day.

... The "Paulist Fathers" (Roman Catholic) have introduced a new feature into their worship—congregational singing. A hymn book has been provided for the people. Some of the hymns are those commonly used in Protestant churches, but altered when necessary to meet Catholic requirements.

... The King of Popo, Dahomey, has written to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, thanking them for sending to his country the gospel of Christ, which he and the sons of his people have joyfully accepted, and saying he has granted land to the Wesleyan Mission, on which he intends to build a church.

... Friday, April 15, was the day for the general conference of the Mormon Church, at Provo, Utah. Communications touching the situation caused by the Edmunds-Tucker bill were read from Presidents Taylor, Cannon, and Smith, who from their hiding places exhorted the "Saints" to stand firm in the faith. The epistles, however, were silent upon the subjects of polygamy and celestial marriages.

... A remarkable funeral took place at Nagasaki, Japan, in December. The wife of the governor of the province died, and though the governor is not a Christian, and the services were to be held in a Buddhist temple, he earnestly requested an American missionary to make an address in English. The missionary consented, and for the first time in a Buddhist temple, in the midst of Buddhist funeral ceremonies, a Christian address was given and a Christian prayer offered.

... We clip the following significant item from the *N. Y. Independent*: "There was a time when Good Friday and Easter were recognized as church days by only the Roman Catholics, the Greeks, the Lutherans, and Episcopalians. But now Easter, at least, is celebrated in most of the Protestant churches by special services of song and unusual offerings of flowers. In Brooklyn, several Presbyterian and Congregational churches joined last year for the first time in a communion service on the eve of Good Friday."

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THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., May 15, 1887.

That greatest of all popular delusions—Spiritualism—is given further consideration by Eld. Butler in this issue.

The history of a remarkable feature connected with the Sabbath question, is dwelt upon in this issue by Eld. Butler; viz., the origin and purpose of the seventh-part-of-time theory.

The current article from Eld. Smith on the second coming of Christ will be found especially interesting, since it touches upon several quite prevalent theories on that subject. Read and ponder carefully.

In attempting to evade the claims of the seventh-day Sabbath, some otherwise well-meaning persons bring forward the fact that as one circumnavigates the globe he must drop or add a day to his reckoning, as the case may be, in order to be in harmony with the rest of the world when he gets back to his starting-point. It is very strange that these same persons cannot see that all that is said about this question of longitude and the length of days applies to Sunday as well as to the Sabbath,—to all days alike. If there be any reason in the order of nature why the Sabbath cannot be observed, that reason applies with equal force to Sunday and every day. Any claim of this kind charges God with folly in appointing any day to be observed. The objection that some attempt to sustain on this point is unworthy any intelligent, conscientious individual.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION NOT INFALLIBILITY.

The Scriptures represent it as possible for man to be perfect. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." Ps. 37:37. "Hast thou considered my servant Job, . . . a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Job 1:8. "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Luke 1:6. These are divine testimonials to human perfection. This perfection is not only possible, but it is required. Said Jesus, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

But this perfection is not infallibility. It is not to be taken, when spoken of men, in an absolute sense, as when attributed to God. All men are fallible. God only is infallible. Men of the best and purest motives may err in judgment. It is not so with God. He is perfect in motive and infallible in judgment. If we look for men in this mortal state that are beyond the possibility of mistakes and errors, we shall look in vain.

The perfect man of the land of Uz, after his severe trial, said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The perfect man had a new conversion, and was probably a better man than before.

Human perfection may be illustrated by earthly things in a state of progress. The blade of corn, when it first appears above the ground, may be perfect in the sense that it is just what it was designed to be at that stage of development, while it is not the perfect corn fully ripe. So the perfect man is in a state of trial and progression, while in this mortal life. "Now we see through a glass, darkly"—"we know in part;" "but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." "I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." 1 Cor. 13.

BIBLE TERMS FOR BIBLE DOCTRINES.

The doctrines of the Scriptures are best expressed in Scripture language; and a doctrine that necessitates the use of other terms, is not to be accepted as a Bible doctrine. Such terms as *trinity*, *transubstantiation*, *indulgence*, *penance*, and *purgatory* are not necessary to express any Bible doctrine. We can believe all that the Scriptures say of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and yet not believe the strange and contradictory ideas which men wish to convey by the term *trine* God. We can believe that the Son of

God was with the Father before the world was; that by him the Father made the worlds; that he made him equal with himself; calls him God, saying, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever;" that Christ is the "everlasting Father" of all his children, the redeemed; and that he and his Father are one in creation, redemption, and all their work; and yet not believe that the two are only one person. The Son is an object of worship, because the Father has made him such. "Let all the angels of God worship him." Therefore, in worshiping and honoring the Son, we worship and honor the Father.

But I took my pen to object to the use of the term "annihilation" to express the scriptural doctrine of the destruction of the wicked. The terms of the Scriptures, "to die," "to perish," "to be lost," "to be destroyed," "to be consumed," "to be burned up, root and branch," "to be as though they had not been," "to be punished with everlasting destruction," etc., are just the very terms that express our belief. We want no stronger. The extreme significance of annihilation, as held by our opponents, is more than we claim; therefore, they always characterize our doctrine as annihilation, and then exhibit their skill in striving to annihilate it, asserting that nothing can be annihilated; a thing which may not be possible with men, though it may be with God.

A man of my acquaintance, some fifty years ago, was cited to answer to the church to which he belonged, on a charge of holding the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. In reply to the charge he told them he would state his belief on that point by quoting three texts of Scripture. He read those texts which say that the wicked shall be burned up, root and branch, that they shall be punished with everlasting destruction; and that they shall utterly perish in their own corruption, and said that he simply believed what those texts say. The committee, after consultation, decided that "it amounted to annihilation," and so he was expelled.

THE TWO EVENINGS.

That the Bible recognizes two evenings is clearly shown from two or three passages. In the margin of Ex. 12:6 we read the following language: "Between the two evenings." The passover was to be slain during this time. How could this be if the Bible recognized only one evening, as some affirm.

But the most striking example is found in Matt. 14:15-23. In verse 15 we read: "And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place; . . . send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals." We then learn that Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes which they had with them, and divided them among the people, and they all ate and were filled. He then sent the multitude away, and in verse 23 we read: "And when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come [of the same day], he was there alone." Here, two evenings are plainly recognized, and it is also plain that one began much later than the other; hence, we conclude that this last evening must have been the true evening, which ever began at sunset and marked the beginning of the next day. See Gen. 1; Lev. 23:32; 22:6, 7; Josh. 8:29; Mark 1:32.

In regard to the first evening the Bible does not tell us just when it began; but according to history it commenced about three o'clock. See Bible Dictionary, art. Evening.—Selected.

BIBLE JUSTICE VINDICATED.

In a Spiritualist paper we find the following quotation from Pascal:—

"Nothing appears so revolting to reason as to say that the first man should impart guilt to those who, from their extreme distance from the source of evil, seem incapable of such a participation. This transmission seems to us not only unnatural, but unjust. For what can be more repugnant to the rules of our despicable justice than to condemn eternally an infant, yet irresponsible, for an offense in which he appears to have so little share, that was committed 6,000 years before he came into existence?"

Doubtless many besides Spiritualists will adopt that language as their own, and will fancy that in so doing they are bringing an unanswerable argument against the doctrines of Christianity. But everybody who has read the Bible to any purpose knows full well that it does not teach that either infants or adults are con-

demned for an offense committed either 6,000 years or half as many minutes before they were born. Neither is one person condemned for the offense of another, no matter when that offense is committed. The Bible plainly declares,—

"The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Eze. 18:20. And the same thing was taught to the Jews in their earliest history. Thus: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin." Deut. 24:16.

The Bible nowhere countenances the idea that one person shall suffer for the offense of another. But it does recognize the fact that a stream cannot rise higher than its source. If Adam had retained his purity, he would have begotten children with tendencies to right-doing; but having fallen, his posterity must necessarily be born with tendencies to evil. This evil nature with which all men are born, is strengthened by evil practices, so that although "by one man sin entered into the world," death justly passed upon all men, "for that all have sinned." To those who charge the Bible with partiality and injustice it may always be said: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures."—*Signs of the Times.*

BEAUTIES OF BIBLE LANGUAGE.

If we need a higher illustration, not only of the power of natural objects to adorn language and gratify taste, but proof that here we find the highest conceivable beauty, we would appeal at once to the Bible. Those most opposed to its teachings have acknowledged the beauty of its language, and this is mainly due to the exquisite use of natural objects for illustration. It does, indeed, draw from every field. But when the emotional nature is to be appealed to, reference is at once made to natural objects; and throughout all its books, stars and flowers and gems are prominent as illustrations of the beauties of religion and the glories of the church.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

"The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree."

The power and beauty of the same objects appear in the Saviour's teachings. The fig and the olive, the sparrow and the lily of the field, give peculiar force and beauty to the great truths they were used to illustrate.

The Bible throughout is remarkable in this respect. It is a collection of books written by authors far removed from each other in time, and place, and mental culture, but throughout the whole, nature is exalted as a revelation of God. Its beauty and sublimity are appealed to, to arouse the emotions, to reach the moral and religious nature. This element of unity runs through all the books where reference to nature can be made.

One of the adaptations of the Bible to the nature of man is found in the sublime and perfect representation of the natural world, by which nature is ever made to proclaim the character and perfection of God. No language can be written that so perfectly sets forth the grand and terrible in nature and its forces, as that we hear when God answered Job out of the whirlwind. No higher appreciation of the beautiful, and of God as the author of beauty, was ever expressed than when our Saviour said of the lilies of the field, "I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these;" and then adds, "If God so clothe the grass of the field,"—ascribing the element of beauty in every leaf and opening bud to the Creator's skill and power.—*Prof. Chadbourne.*

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

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