

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.

THE ATHEIST.

The fool hath said, "There is no God."
No God! Who lights the morning sun,
And sends him on his heavenly road,
A far and brilliant course to run?
Who, when the radiant day is done,
Hangs forth the moon's nocturnal lamp,
And bids the planets, one by one,
Steal o'er the night vales, dark and damp?

No God! Who gives the evening dew,
The fanning breeze, the fostering shower?
Who warms the spring morn's budding bough,
And plants the summer's noontide flower?
Who spreads in the autumnal bower
The fruit tree's mellow stores around,
And sends the winter's icy power,
To invigorate the exhausted ground?

No God! Who makes the bird to wing
Its flight like arrow through the sky,
And gives the deer its power to spring
From rock to rock triumphantly?
Who formed Behemoth, huge and high,
That at a draught the river drains,
And great Leviathan, to lie,
Like floating isle, on ocean plains?

No God! Who warms the heart to heave
With thousand feelings soft and sweet,
And prompts the aspiring soul to leave
The earth we tread beneath our feet,
And soar away on plumed fleet
Beyond the scenes of mortal strife,
With fair ethereal forms to meet
That tell us of the after life?

No God! Who fixed the solid ground
Of pillars strong that alter not?
Who spread the curtained skies around,
And doth the ocean bounds allot?
Who all things to perfection brought
On earth below, in heaven above?
Go, ask the fool, of impious thought,
Who dares to say, "There is no God!"

—Wm. Knox.

Notes and Comments.

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

A GREAT many think the saints all gather together unto Christ as fast as they cease this life. But Paul says that the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him will not take place until the man of sin has done his blasphemous work. 2 Thess. 2:1-8. At his death this saint knew he had to wait till Christ's appearing for his reward. 2 Tim. 4:6-8. What he meant by "our gathering together unto him" is shown in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17: "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."

HERE is a thought for the observers of the first day of the week to dwell upon: If the Bible sets forth the first day of the week as the Sabbath, then Sunday-keepers are all guilty of violating it, because, as all will admit, according to the Bible mode of reckoning, which is God's mode, the day begins at sunset, and the first day of the week would therefore commence when the sun goes down Saturday night. But Sunday-keepers continue their secular operations, or at least claim the right to do so, until several hours after sunset Saturday night, and thus break the very day they pretend to keep. Then they keep a part of Sunday night, which is a part of the second day of the week. Thus they keep a part of two days, but actually work on every day of the week, and so really keep no day. The only way to avoid the dilemma above set forth is to abandon the first-day Sabbath as a divine institution.

IN commenting on the outlook for the spread of the gospel and the conversion of the world, the *Christian at Work* of Nov. 3, remarks thus:—

"We see plenty to discourage us when we take a glance at the moralities of the nations, and find all Europe armed to the teeth, each ready to do its part in the great struggle of the giants which seem destined to break the world's peace before long."

This is a very frank acknowledgement from a prominent religious journal, and means more than the average reader will discover. It means that with many students of the world's progress and prospects, a remarkable change of opinion is taking place. Men of intelligence and observation all over the world are abandoning the doctrine of the near approach of the temporal millennium; if they still believe that such a consummation is to be realized, they are compelled to defer it indefinitely. Oh that these men might get their eyes open still wider, and be able to comprehend the full significance of the signs of the times!

"THE Sabbath was made for man." It is for the whole human race. It knows nothing of separate nations or classes of men. It existed before any such distinction was known, and will exist when the redeemed of all nations are united in one on the new earth. To call it "Jewish" is to contradict the words of the Lord Jesus before quoted.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS are not alone in proclaiming the rapid spread of error throughout the world. Some time since, the London *Word and Work*, an undenominational journal, edited by a well-known Presbyterian minister, said:—

"Only those who have given some attention to the progress of error during recent years can form any just idea of the rapid strides with which it is now advancing. Under the plea of liberalism, unscriptural doctrines are allowed to pass current in sermons and periodicals, which only a few years ago would have been faithfully resisted unto the death. When any one even mildly protests, preachers and journalists are almost unanimous in drowning the feeble testimony either by sneers or shouts."

2 Thess. 2:11, 12, states that in the last days "strong delusions" should be sent to deceive the people, and the foregoing statement is a remarkable admission from a source that would hardly be expected, that the words of the apostle are being fulfilled.

CONSIDERABLE agitation is going on at present among the Jews relative to the advisability of transferring their day of rest and public worship to Sunday. While very many of them favor such a change on the grounds of convenience, others are greatly opposed to the proposition. In arguing the question at Chicago, recently, Rabbi Joseph Stolz, a man of eminent position and wide influence, said of the Sabbath and the origin of Sunday observance:—

"Jesus and his disciples kept the seventh day, and only that day. It was only after the early Christians were organized into a sect, and gained political assistance from the semi-pagan emperor Constantine, that the heathen Roman day for the worship of the sun was adopted by the Council of Nice as the valid Christian Sabbath day."

This is very significant testimony, and it is in exact accord with the facts in the case.

THE International Sunday-school lesson for Nov. 27, 1887, is upon Matt. 12:4-11, the subject being "Jesus and the Sabbath." In closing its comments upon the lesson, the *Interior* makes this practical suggestion:—

"The fourth commandment was not abrogated, but was cleared of the 'traditions' with which men had overlaid it, by our Lord Jesus Christ."

This is just the position taken by S. D. Adventists. In the light of the foregoing most truthful statement, let us notice one point. The fourth commandment requires the observance of the seventh day of the week. Now, unless it can be shown that this requirement was one of the traditions with which men had overlaid the commandment, then, according to the *Interior's* own admission, it is still binding, and ought to be observed; for certainly, everything pertaining to the commandment that was not cleared away by Christ, remains in force.

Had Christ cleared away the specification of the Sabbath commandment that names the seventh day as the Sabbath, he would have swept the entire institution out of existence. The Sabbath was instituted as a memorial of creation, and the reason for its existence cannot with the least show of logic or sense be applied if any but the seventh day be selected for its celebration. When the reason for the existence of an institution is swept away, the institution itself is no longer of consequence. It would be the height of absurdity to say that because the Declaration of Independence was signed on the 4th day of July, therefore we will celebrate the 5th day of July as a memorial of that act. It is equally absurd to say that because God rested upon the seventh day, and constituted that the memorial of his creative work, therefore we will celebrate the first day of the week as such memorial. It is absolutely impossible to make the reason for the institution and observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, do the same service for the first-day Sabbath; such transfer no person in his right mind will attempt to maintain. It follows that the fourth commandment is of no avail whatever in supporting Sunday as the Sabbath, and those who use it for that purpose are making an unwarranted appropriation. Acts of this nature are expressly forbidden by the eighth commandment.

The only way that we can discover whereby the *Interior* can claim to be consistent with itself is to observe the seventh-day Sabbath, or cease advocating the validity and perpetuity of the fourth commandment.

Doctrinal Articles.

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

GOD'S COVENANTS WITH MEN.

BY U. SMITH.

WE now come to what is called "the new covenant." This is the covenant established by Christ with his people. It was ratified by Christ upon the cross. As Moses said to the Hebrews when he sprinkled the blood of the offerings upon the book and the people at the base of Horeb, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you," so might it have been said to the disciples when the crimson stream issued from the pierced side of the world's Redeemer, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath enjoined unto you." When Christ gave his followers a symbol of it at the last supper, he said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Matt. 26:28.

The same inquiries which have been answered concerning other covenants remain to be considered in relation to this: namely, By whom was it made? with whom was it made? when was it made? why was it made? what was its basis? what were its provisions? what changes did it involve? how does it affect our relation to God? and what objects are to be gained by it?

Some of these questions have been already partially answered. 1. The new covenant was made by the same One who made the old. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant." Jer. 31:31. This, according to the application made by the apostle Paul (Heb. 8), is a prophecy of the covenant which has been confirmed by Christ. 2. The same prophecy points out just as explicitly the parties with whom the new covenant was to be made: "I will make a new covenant with the house of *Israel*, and with the house of *Judah*."

Proper attention to this statement would correct what seems to be a very prevalent, but yet erroneous, idea upon this point. The view which many hold, if we may judge from the assertions they make and the questions they ask, is, that God first called out the descendants of Abraham, the Hebrew people, and made a covenant with them; but that they so often broke the covenant, and proved to be such a stiff-necked, reprobate, intractable race, that God determined to disown them, withdraw from them, cancel all connection with them, and choose a higher, more noble and honorable people with whom to enter into relation; and that, to this end, he cast off the Jews, called the Gentiles to be his people, and entered into a covenant with them.

Following this line of thought, these people seem to think that all the obligations now resting upon them, must arise from some special injunctions given to the Gentiles on account of the peculiar relation which God has taken them into with himself. Born of this idea are the exclamations we so frequently hear when we try to urge upon the people certain neglected gospel duties, "Show us where a Gentile is commanded to do so and so; show us where a Gentile was ever commanded to keep the Sabbath; and we will keep it," etc.

A greater misconception could scarcely be framed. God has never made, and never proposes to make, a covenant with the Gentiles as such. Who are the Gentiles? In Eph. 2:11, 12, the apostle Paul tells us: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

Such are Gentiles—persons without any hope, without Christ, without God, and aliens, foreigners, from the commonwealth of Israel; that is, having no connection with that body whom God recognizes as his people. The Gentiles, as the creatures of God's hand, are amenable to his government, and condemned by his law. The way of life has been opened before them; but before they can share in the provisions of God's mercy, they must renounce their lost estate and cease to be Gentiles; they must cease to be "aliens," "strangers," and "foreigners," and become "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," which they can do only through Jesus Christ. Eph. 2:13-19. Let no one therefore plead as an excuse for rejecting any duty, that it cannot be found specifically enjoined upon Gentiles under that name. When

people in opposition to the Sabbath, ask us where a Gentile is ever commanded to keep it, we might retort by asking where a Gentile is ever commanded not to worship a graven image. When they will answer this question, we will answer that. From their standpoint, both are equally foolish; from our standpoint, both are in reality answered by Exodus 20.

Returning to the prophecy of Jeremiah 31, we find that the new covenant was to be made, not with the Gentiles, but "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." The new covenant was therefore made with the very same people with whom the old was made. In a number of places Paul alludes to this fact. For instance, in Rom. 9:3-5 he says: "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." That the apostle here speaks of the literal seed of Abraham, there can be no question. He proceeds to tell who they are, and what privileges had been conferred upon them by God: "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."

These important and lofty distinctions are worthy of note. That people were Israelites. To them pertained "the adoption." God adopted Abraham as his friend, and adopted his posterity as his children, because when all others had apostatized from him, and relapsed into idolatry, Abraham was found faithful. In proof of this, God himself bore testimony that Abraham had obeyed his voice, kept his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws. Gen. 26:5. He had also, on another occasion, said of him, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Gen. 18:19. For these reasons, that people were set apart to be for the time being the depositaries of God's law, and to preserve the knowledge and worship of the true God in the earth.

To them pertained also "the glory." By this is doubtless meant the manifestation of God's glory among men. As signal instances of such manifestation, the giving of the law amid such a display of glory on the summit of Sinai as this world had never witnessed since its curse by sin, may be referred to; also the glory of Moses' face, which it was necessary to hide with a veil; besides the pillar of cloud and fire, and the glorious Shekinah over the mercy-seat of the Mosaic tabernacle, which continued with them till the captivity.

And to them likewise pertained "the covenants." It will be noticed that Paul here uses the plural number, not the singular. He says "covenants," not "covenant." This takes in both the old and the new, and harmonizes exactly with Jeremiah's prophecy that the new covenant was to be made with the same people with whom the old was made. It would also include the Abrahamic covenant, which, as we have seen, was only the embryonic form of that covenant which was perfected in Christ, and then called the "new." If Paul had said "the covenant," some ground might be claimed for the supposition that he referred to the old covenant, and that that covenant alone pertained to the Israelites, while the new pertained to the Gentiles. But as it is, all possibility of such an inference is cut off. Both covenants were theirs: "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah."

To them pertained, Paul continues (in Rom. 9:4), "the giving of the law." Mark the distinction which the apostle here draws between the law and the covenants, or either one of them. Now, should we admit the claim which some put forth that the law was itself the old covenant, we would be obliged to read the passage thus: "To whom pertaineth . . . the covenants and the giving of the covenant." But this would be nonsense. To them indeed pertained "the giving of the law." It had not been given in this manner to any other people; but this neither proved nor implied that it was not obligatory upon all other people; for Stephen said (Acts 7:38) that they received the "lively oracles," the ten commandments, "to give unto us." For this very purpose they were for the time placed in charge of that people, that they might preserve them, and transmit them into the Christian dispensation; which they did.

The two following clauses read: "And the service of God, and the promises." The service of God, the sublime delineation of the coming work of Christ, as our great high priest, was presented in their sanctuary service. And "the promises." All the promises (and this expression embraces everything that we hope to attain unto and enjoy through Jesus Christ during

everlasting ages) have come to us through the same channel. Christ is the end of the line; and Paul says, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. No promise is made to any one who is not in some sense of the seed of Abraham, and a member of the Israel of God.

And, finally, the apostle adds that our Lord himself, as concerning the flesh, came from that people. When men raise the blind and fanatical cry of "Jewish," to oppose the truth, do they know what they are doing? When respecting the law and the Sabbath they cry, "Old Jewish law" and "Jewish Sabbath," do they think that is a sufficient reason why we should reject them with abhorrence? Why all this enmity against the Jews? Let us see if, despite our prejudices, we are not in some things greatly indebted to them. What would have been the condition of our world to-day had not the Jews acted the part they have in its history? The picture would be fearful to contemplate. They received the lively oracles to commit unto us. By them alone truth was saved from being swallowed up in the great tide of apostasy which had carried away all the other nations of the earth. They were for long ages the only conservators of the knowledge of the true God, and of the true religion in the world. Every line of the New Testament, that priceless treasure, so dear to every Christian heart, was written by a Jew. All the twelve apostles were Jews. Our Lord was a Jew. And he even declared that salvation itself was "of the Jews." John 4:22.

Let the reader pause a moment and ask himself if all these things are to be denounced as Jewish because of this connection with that people. Did that law to which God holds all men amenable become merely a Jewish law because all other nations were disposed to trample it under foot and destroy it, and they alone were found willing to keep it, and worthy to be its guardians and defenders? Was our Lord merely a Jewish Saviour because, as pertaining to the flesh, he sprang from that people? Every pious impulse of the heart will respond to these questions with an emphatic "No!" These were high honors conferred upon that people, the significance of which Christians ought to recognize. Their blindness in rejecting Christ and the new covenant, is to be deplored; their sad condition of oppression and dispersion on account of their rejection of the gospel, is to be commiserated. But this wholesale mad-dog cry of "Jewish" concerning an unwelcome truth, simply because the Jews once had something to do with it, should be abandoned.

As the new covenant was not made with the Gentiles, but with Israel and Judah, the question arises, How are the Gentiles to become partakers of its benefits? To this question the scriptures already referred to (Eph. 2:13-15; Gal. 3:29), and others which might be named, afford a ready answer. It is by uniting with the "commonwealth of Israel," and becoming through Christ a spiritual seed. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. On this point we will speak further in our next.

THE RESURRECTION NOT INCREDIBLE.

I SAY to you to-day, as Paul said to Agrippa: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" The far-up cloud, higher than the hawk flies, higher than the eagle flies, what is it made of?—Drops of water from the Hudson, other drops from the East River, other drops from a stagnant pool out on Newark flats—up yonder, there, embodied in a cloud, and the sun kindles it. If God can make such a lustrous cloud out of water drops, many of them soiled and impure, and brought from miles away, can he not transport the fragments of a human body from the earth, and out of them build a radiant body? Cannot God, who owns all the material out of which bones, and muscle, and flesh are made, set them up again if they have fallen? If a manufacturer of telescopes drops a telescope on the floor and it breaks, can he not mend it again so you can see through it? And if God drops a human eye into the dust, the eye which he originally fashioned, can he not restore it? Aye, if the manufacturer of the telescope, by a change of the glass and a change of focus, can make a better glass than that which was originally constructed, and actually improve it, do you not think the Fashioner of the human eye may improve its sight and multiply the natural eye by the thousand-fold additional forces of the resurrection eye?

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Things all around us suggest it: Out of what grew all these flowers?—Out of mold and the earth. Resurrected! Resurrected! The radiant butterfly, where did it come from?—The loathsome caterpillar. That albatross that smites the tempest with its wing, where did it come from?—A senseless shell. Near Bergerac, France, in a Celtic tomb, under a block, were found flower seed that had been buried 2,000 years. The explorer took the flower seed and planted them, and they came up; they bloomed in bluebell and heliotrope. Two thousand years ago, yet resurrected! A traveler says he found in a mummy-pit, in Egypt, garden peas that had been buried there 3,000 years. He brought them out, and on the 4th of June, 1844, he planted them, and in thirty days they sprang up. Buried 3,000 years, yet resurrected! "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

Where did all this silk come from—the silk that adorns your persons and your homes? In the hollow of a staff, a Greek missionary brought from China to Europe the progenitors of those worms that now supply the silk markets of many nations. The pageantry of bannered host and the luxurious articles of commercial emporium blazing out from the silk worms! And who shall be surprised if out of this insignificant earthly body, this insignificant earthly life, our bodies unfold into something worthy of the coming eternities? Put silver into diluted vitre and it dissolves. Is the silver gone forever?—No. Put in some pieces of copper and the silver re-appears. If one force dissolves, another force organizes.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" The insects flew and the worms crawled last autumn feebler and feebler, and then stopped. They have taken no food, they want none. They lie dormant and insensible; but soon the south wind will blow the resurrection trumpet, and the air and the earth will be full of them. Do you not think God can do as much for our bodies as he does for the wasps and the spiders and the snails? This morning at half-past four o'clock there was a resurrection. Out of the night, the day. In a few months there will be a resurrection in all our gardens. Why not some day a resurrection amid all the graves? . . .

Does not this waking up of insects from winter lifelessness, and this waking up of grains buried three thousand years ago, make it easier for you to believe that your body and mine, after the vacation of the grave, shall rouse and rally, though there be three thousand years between our last breath and the sounding of the archangelic reveille?—*Talmage.*

LUKE 20: 28 is a source of perplexity with many in considering the nature of man, and the state of the dead. The text reads thus: "For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him." The question under discussion is the resurrection, and in the previous verse Christ refers to the statement of Moses, "when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Christ is arguing to prove the resurrection. He indorses the statement made by Moses, and yet Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were already dead when it was made. The evident signification of verse 38 is this: God is not a God of the dead, but of the living; therefore Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must be resurrected, in order that he may be their God. In the purpose of God, they are alive, as are all who have died. Rotherham's translation seems to give a clearer idea of the signification of these passages than the common version: "But that the dead are to be raised, even Moses disclosed at the bush, when he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living; for all to him are alive." That is, to God it is the same as though all were actually alive—so sure is the resurrection. The Emphatic Diaglott gives this note on verse 38: "To him who regards the future resurrection of his people as though it was present." Rom. 4: 17 is pertinent in this connection, where God is spoken of as one who "calleth those things which be not as though they were." With the foregoing interpretation there is no occasion for any difficulty in harmonizing Christ's statement with the unconscious state of the dead. The argument employed by Christ upon this occasion in reality demonstrates the doctrine that the righteous dead are sleeping quietly in their graves, instead of being in heaven, as some suppose. With such a sure prospect of a resurrection, it would seem that death would have no terrors for the child of God.

The Christian Life.

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

SUPERFICIAL REPENTANCE.

It is quite often that people see and acknowledge their faults publicly, and in so doing think that it is an evidence of true humility and repentance; and yet if the individual should be reproved for the very same fault, he would become offended. Such confession and humility are not worth much, and are detrimental to the spiritual life of any church.

Not long since a brother testified that he felt cold and indifferent, spiritually, and some way or other found it very difficult to take any real interest at all in eternal things. He said he knew he ought not to be in this condition, and felt that he ought to arouse, but some way such a spell of lethargy seemed to settle down upon him that every effort proved futile.

What was the trouble with this brother?—Oh, simply he did not feel like putting forth an effort to be saved. Feeling had taken the place of faith, and works were lacking. Such testimonies, to say the least, are painful. With the individual they are regarded as expressive of true humility and repentance. The brother seemed to feel a little sad that it was so with him, yet his sorrow was not sufficient or of the right kind; if it had been, it would have led him to the repentance that needs not to be repented of.

For the sake of encouraging this brother, and perhaps others who may be in the same condition, let us use an illustration: Suppose you were to fall into some miry slough. On either side are steep, rocky banks. You sink down in the mud, and your limbs become chilled. Now, would you settle down perfectly easy, and say, "I acknowledge I am in a bad situation; but the banks are steep and rocky, and some way I do not feel like putting forth the necessary effort to climb them"?—Ah! no, my friend; you would grasp every available means. If this plan failed, or that project proved futile, you would contrive ways of escape as long as you had breath and reason within you. You would cry for help until you became hoarse.

Now, here you are in the "slough of despond" and mire of sin, hemmed in on every side with great temptations. You feel that your spiritual life is being chilled out of you, and yet you seem to think that an acknowledgement is enough, and calmly and unconcernedly settle down to eternally perish. Are you waiting for the Lord or some good brother to help you out? If so, you must show your desire by an effort on your part. Neither the Lord nor any sensible brother will help you, unless you do something besides talk.

My brother, my sister, stop and reason a moment. You believe there is a world to come,—a new earth in which the people of God are to dwell in eternal happiness: you believe that you have that life to gain or lose. Now, is it sensible to say that you believe all this, and then will not put forth as great an effort to save your eternal life as you would to save your natural life? Think of it a moment. You believe you have this eternal life to gain, acknowledge that you are losing it, and yet will not put forth any effort to save yourself, just because you do not *feel* like it. Such work is displeasing to God and disgusting to men. It is Satan's way to blind and stupefy you until too late to secure unending happiness. Now is your time to arouse. Now a simple, earnest petition, directed with faith, accompanied by good works, is all that is needed to enlist the sympathies of Him who gave his life to save you. He longs to help you, and is anxiously waiting to hear that earnest call for his assistance; but you are too stupid, too indifferent to any more than merely acknowledge your condition.

Dear reader, if you are in the state of coldness and indifference described above, remember that your own prayers and efforts will do more to help you than all the prayers of the church combined. When you, by faith, get a good glimpse of the world to come, and experience a little of God's pardoning love, you will not so much long for some one else to feed you. You will then taste for yourself, and see that God is good.

Oh, how many will at last awaken, and wander from sea to sea to hear the word of God, who will only awake in deep anguish of spirit to find that they must perish in the famine! The very fact that you are cold and indifferent ought to be a source of

alarm to you, and be the means of sending you to your closet. A conflict is just before us that will require the strongest exercise of faith. Now is the time for us to have faith to be prepared to endure whatever may come. Cannot you see that the last links in the great prophetic chain are fast being forged? Do you not discern the signs of the times? See you not the last warning message reaching out to every nation, kindred, and people? or are you so absorbed in your farm, your shop, or your store that you are unconscious of the movements in the land, and the progress that the truth is making? Arouse, my brother, and in some way, by voice, pen, or means, help to hasten the long-looked-for day. If you will go to work, your feelings of indifference will soon pass away, your faith will be made manifest by works, and your hope of heaven will be revived.

E. HILLIARD.

"ALWAYS TAKE THE SAFE SIDE IN CASE OF THE LEAST UNCERTAINTY."

This is the most prominent rule given by railroad companies for the guidance of their employees. So important is it, that it generally appears in bold-faced type at the close of the list, that it may surely be remembered. How many fearful accidents have followed a forgetfulness or neglect to follow out its requirements to the letter!

A section foreman ignores its warning, and a few words tell the result: A burning bridge; a splintered mass of wood-work and twisted iron; the pale-faced, blood-stained dead; the low gurgle of the dying; the agouized groans of the maimed!

An engineer forgets its warning, and a train-load of living freight plunges into a chasm, a frightful holocaust, or is iugled in the bubbling river!

The train dispatcher or operator loses sight of its import, and two passenger trains are wrecked, and "the mourners go about the streets."

If such dire results follow a neglect to comply with the requirements of man-made orders, how about those which will follow if we ignore the rules laid down in that more important time-card, the Bible? It is no excuse for the railroad man to say, "I understood that rule to mean differently"; for another rule bids him apply for instruction in case he has any doubts concerning any of them. The violation of an explicit order cannot be atoned for by his expressed love for the *superintendent*. The question is, *Did he obey orders?* The General Manager of the universe never issued an order that was not to be understood. His time-card explains itself. It is all summed up in ten rules, every one of which appears in bold-faced type. The language is simple. There is no chance to plead a misconstruction or misunderstanding. Do you want to understand them? Do you propose to obey them fully, and to the letter?

Disobedience to orders has been observed all the way down the line, with results equally terrible. Examine your time-card, and see when *that* point was passed, when *that* landmark should be reached. The stations are all given. Nearly all have been passed. The great terminal point is just before.

Adam disobeyed positive orders at Edenville, for which cause he was justly removed. Then, again, at Noah's Ferry, as a result of gross disobedience, the train was wrecked, and nearly all were lost in the swollen waters. Only eight passengers and some live stock remained to take the boat for Port Ararat.

Another halt is made at Sinai, where former instructions are approved and fully emphasized, nothing rescinded or added thereto. There you, through varied scenes, through Davidsville and Daaieltown, to the end of the division—Bethlehem. On down the valleys, past Nazareth to Jerusalem; on through darkened Calvary to Ascensionville; on, *with the same instructions!* No change whatever in the orders; nothing taken from or added to them except the warning to keep a good watch at Darkened Sun and Meteorville, and thence on to Messiahville and Zion.

This road originally was laid straight from end to end; angels communicated the orders of the great Dispatcher. But designing men, led on by Satan, have laid diverging lines, which lead to death and ruin. The Devil has *tampered with the switch*. He has issued a spurious time-card. Its most important rule has been changed! Compare time; there is danger of your having been thrown upon the wrong track. Consult your time-card. Are you taking the safe side? Is there the least uncertainty? Are you running under proper orders? May be the Devil has placed the wrong time-card in your hands. Look at Rule No. 4. How does it read? Are you on the right track? By whom are your orders signed? Are they correctly worded? Do they bear the seal of authority? Are you sure you are obeying them to the very letter?

Are you looking for the signals the time-card said should be shown here? Do you heed the faithful watchmen who are pointing out the dangers in the way? If you see none of these things, you are on the wrong road, and the glare of the world has blinded your eyes. It not may be too late to stop. Consult your time-card at once, and see where you are. Do not delay. "The price of safety is eternal vigilance." *Your life may be at stake!* If there is the least danger, I pray you to take the safe side.

M. B. DUFFIE.



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

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., DECEMBER 1, 1887.

CHRIST AS A LAWGIVER.

THE question very naturally arises in the minds of thinking people, If Christ was not a lawgiver, what is the significance of those passages in the New Testament that indicate that he was such? In John 14:15, 21, 23, we read as follows: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Again, in chapter 15:10, 14, are these words: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Here, says one, is the most indisputable evidence that Christ gave commandments, and he proclaims the obligation of his followers to observe those commandments. Was not Christ, then, a law or commandment giver? As still further proof, other passages are cited: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Gal. 6:2. "To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law." 1 Cor. 9:21.

If one office of Christ was to be that of a lawgiver, there must of necessity exist a demand for the enactment of laws by him; there must be a want that needs supplying. This want could occur in only one of two ways: either existing laws must expire by limitation, or new conditions and circumstances must arise, not covered by existing laws. An examination of the situation at that time, reveals the fact that there were two laws then in force; viz., God's moral law of ten commands, and the ceremonial law, comprised in types and shadows. That the former is of perpetual obligation is susceptible of the clearest demonstration. See Matt. 5:17, 18. Christ was to magnify and make honorable his Father's law (Isa. 42:21); consequently, whatever office he might fulfill as a lawgiver, it was not to militate against his Father's law. So far as the scope of this moral law is concerned, no new circumstances or conditions could arise that would not be covered by it. It covers all obligations of the human race. Eccl. 12:13. Christ taught that the moral law takes cognizance of the thoughts of the heart. Matt. 5:27, 28. The breadth of God's law was forcibly illustrated not many years since by John M. Stearns, counselor at law, who wrote of it as follows:—

"The law libraries of the world, with their mixed dialects, and ancient lore, and mammoth tomes, innumerable reports, and multitudinous variety of discussions by men of judicial acumen and giant learning, do not give us one idea of crime or virtue, right or wrong, of the propensities or delinquencies of human life, beyond what is embodied in these sacred tables."

Truthful words! The keeping of God's commandments is stated in 1 John 5:2, 3, as an evidence of love to God, and this epistle was written upwards of thirty years after Christ's ascension. One special characteristic of the people of God just before Christ's second coming, will be the keeping of God's commandments. Rev. 14:12. This will be a necessary condition of entrance into eternal life and paradise. Rev. 22:14.

Thus it is placed beyond the possibility of doubt that so far as the perpetuity and jurisdiction of the moral law is concerned, nothing could arise that would create a demand for the enactment of new laws by Christ.

But did none of Christ's commandments pertain in any manner to this moral law?—They did; and it was very natural that they should, for he was to magnify and make honorable his Father's law. Isa. 42:21. He did this by expounding the law, by explaining in detail its application to the different conditions and circumstances of life, and by showing its true

design and the extent of its jurisdiction. He dwelt upon both tables of the law, but especially upon the precepts defining man's relations to his fellow-man. In no case can any of his instructions or commandments be construed as covering any point that is not covered by the ten commandments, or as inculcating a principle that is not recognized by them. So far as his instructions relate to the moral law, whatever he gives by way of commandments may be said to be a reiteration of some feature or features of that moral law. When he said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another" (John 15:12), it was equivalent to saying, "I command you to obey the last six precepts of my Father's law." In order to show them to what extent they should love one another he added, "As I have loved you." Christ's commandments with regard to the moral law may be said to have been given for the purpose of establishing the standard of obedience to that law.

An examination of the ceremonial system of laws that was in force when Christ came upon the stage of action at his first advent, reveals the fact that they expired by limitation at the time of his crucifixion; and the query naturally arises, Were any other laws to be enacted that should subserve a purpose in this dispensation, similar to the purpose served by those ceremonial laws in the old dispensation? Those ceremonial laws instructed the people of the old dispensation with regard to the outward forms necessary for them to comply with in fulfilling the conditions of the plan of salvation that were incumbent upon them. There are also outward forms incumbent upon the people of this dispensation, but they are memorial in their nature, looking back to Christ, while those of the old dispensation were figurative, and looked forward to Christ. These forms, or ordinances, are baptism, the eucharist, and the ordinance of humility. The precept and example of Christ and his apostles are the authority upon which these ordinances of the church rest.

From the foregoing, it is not difficult to understand the significance of the texts that are quoted at the beginning of this article, or any others of similar import. The "law of Christ," mentioned in Gal. 6:2, is none other than the summing up of the last six precepts of the moral law, as stated by Christ in Matt. 22:39. "Being "under the law of Christ," as mentioned in 1 Cor. 9:21, seems to signify being under the law of God as interpreted by Christ, and under obligation to conform to the gospel ordinances of the new dispensation instead of the old.

Thus it appears that the office of Christ as a lawgiver was to expound, interpret, and make applications of his Father's moral law of ten precepts, and to establish the law of ordinances pertaining to this dispensation. His relation to the moral law, as its expounder, would in no way make it inconsistent for him to act as our Advocate with the Father, when our cases appear in the Judgment. So far as the law of ordinances is concerned, whether in the old or the new dispensation, there is no provision for an advocate in behalf of those who fail to comply with the same. In the very nature of things there could not be. Those laws, together with repentance, faith, prayer, and works, comprise the conditions of the plan of salvation necessary for man to fulfill in each dispensation, respectively, in order to obtain the benefits offered him by that plan. Failure on his part to comply with those conditions, results in irrevocable loss of those benefits. There is absolutely no redress, no provision for a mediator to step in and retrieve that loss.

SAMUEL AND THE WOMAN OF ENDOR.

In all arguments for the continued life and consciousness of the dead, 1 Sam. 28:3-20 usually holds a conspicuous place. In examining this scripture, we will look at (1.) the narrative, (2.) the claim that is based upon it, (3.) the character of the actors in the incident, (4.) the facts to be considered, and (5.) the conclusions to be drawn.

1. *The narrative.*—Samuel was a prophet of God in Israel from 1112 to 1058 before Christ. Saul was king of Israel from 1096 to 1056 before Christ. Samuel anointed Saul to his office as king, and from time to time communicated instruction to him from the Lord, as his counselor and adviser. At the time when the incident recorded in 1 Sam. 28:3-20 occurred, Samuel was dead. There was war between the Israelites and the Philistines. The Philistines pressed hard upon Israel. They gathered their forces together in Shunem, and Saul, assembling all Israel to

oppose them, pitched in Gilboa. Dismayed at the mighty array of the Philistine host, Saul's heart sunk within him, and he was sore afraid. In anxiety and trembling, he cast about him for help. He sought the Lord, but the Lord answered him not. No dream was given; no token by Urim appeared; no prophet had a word from the mouth of the Lord to meet the circumstances of his deep distress. He thought of his old-time friend, the prophet Samuel, to whom he had so often gone, and who had so often directed his steps in times of doubt and danger. But Samuel was dead, and how could he consult him?

There was in the land a class of people who claimed to have power to communicate with the dead. This work, called necromancy (a "pretended communication with the dead."—Webster), had been strictly forbidden by the Lord. Lev. 19:31; 20:27; Deut. 18:9-12, etc. And Saul, in obedience to the command of the Lord (Ex. 22:18), had cut off, so far as they could be found, all persons of that class out of the land. Yet a few, controlled wholly by the Devil, still practiced, with caution and secrecy, their hellish orgies.

Whether Saul had ever believed in the reality of this work or not, we are not informed. But it is certain that in his present extremity, his belief gave way to the pretensions of these necromancers, and the evil thought took possession of him that he could consult in this way with the prophet Samuel. So he inquired for a woman that had a familiar spirit, and was told of one at Endor.

Disguising himself, in order that the woman, knowing Saul's decree against witchcraft, might not fear to communicate for him, and going secretly by night, he sought the woman. The woman being assured that no evil was intended and no punishment should happen to her, asked whom she should bring up. Saul answered, Bring me up Samuel. And when she saw the object which her conjuration had evoked, she cried out with fear, and said to her royal guest, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. He told her to fear not, but tell what she saw. She answered, An old man, covered with a mantle. "And Saul perceived," says the narrative, "that it was Samuel."

Samuel asked Saul why he had disquieted him to bring him up; and Saul answered, that he might make known what he should do; for the Philistines made war upon him, and God was departed from him, and he was sore distressed. Samuel then asked him why he came to him, since God had departed from him, and had become his enemy. Then he proceeded to tell him that the kingdom was rent out of his hand because he had failed to obey the Lord; that the Philistines should triumph in the battle, and that on the morrow he and his sons should die. This was the finishing stroke to the already breaking heart of Saul, and, utterly overwhelmed with his calamities, he fell senseless to the earth.

Such are the essential facts brought to view in the narrative. Let us now look at what is claimed from them.

2. *The claim.*—This can be expressed in few words. It is claimed that Samuel actually appeared on this occasion, and that therefore the dead are conscious, or that there is a spirit in man that lives on in consciousness when the body dies; and, therefore again, the soul is immortal.

The validity of this claim rests very much on the question whether the transaction here recorded was wrought by the power of God or by the Devil. If by God, then the representation was a true one; if by the Devil, we may look for deception; for he commenced his work by becoming the father of all the lies in the world, and continues it by assiduously circulating them. We will therefore consider—

3. *The character of the actors.*—These actors were, first, the woman that had a familiar spirit; and familiar spirits are spirits of devils. Compare Num. 25:1-3; Ps. 106:28; and 1 Cor. 10:20. This work of dealing with familiar spirits, God had declared to be an abomination to him; he had expressly forbidden it, and sentenced to death all who practiced it.

The other chief actor in this scene was Saul. And what was his condition at this time?—He had so long lived in violation of divine instruction that God had departed from him, and answered him no more by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets, which were the ways he had himself appointed to communicate with his people. Query: Would the Lord refuse to communicate with him in ways of his own appointing, and then come to him by means the use of which he had expressly forbidden? We see, then, that neither of the actors in this scene were persons through

whom, or for whom, we should expect the Lord to work. We will therefore notice further—

4. *The facts to be considered.*

a. The wonders wrought on this occasion were all accomplished by the familiar spirit with whom this woman consorted. There were two things for this spirit to do: (1.) Either to bring up in reality the dead person that was called for, or (2.) to counterfeit the dead man so perfectly that those who were conversing with the familiar spirit would believe that they were conversing with their dead friend.

b. That it was not Samuel, but the familiar spirit personating Samuel, that appeared, is evident from the fact that this supposed Samuel, before holding any communication with Saul, put the woman on her guard, telling her that her guest was none other than Saul himself. This is shown by the fact that the woman, as soon as she saw him, cried out with fear, not because Samuel really appeared contrary to her expectations, as some have supposed; for she did not cry out, "Samuel has come, indeed!" but because of what the appearance told her; for she immediately turned to Saul, and said, "Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul." This would not be the work of the real Samuel, to put the woman on her guard, to aid her in her unholy work of incantation.

c. According to the claim based on this transaction, it was Samuel's immortal soul that appeared on this occasion; but its appearance was, according to the description of the woman, an old man covered with a mantle. Do immortal souls go about in this way, in the form of old men covered with mantles? This renders it still more evident that it was the familiar spirit, imitating Samuel as he appeared while here upon earth.

d. Saul did not see Samuel at all. But does it not read that "Saul perceived that it was Samuel"?—Yes; but perceived how?—Not by the sight of the eyes, but from the woman's description. The words "saw," as applied to the woman, verse 12, and "perceive," as applied to Saul, verse 14, are from two words in the Hebrew. The first is רָאָה (*raah*), which signifies "to look, see, view"; the second is from יָדָע (*yada*) which means "to become informed, to be made aware of." The Septuagint maintains the same distinction. The woman actually saw the appearance before her; and here the word εἶδω (*eido*) is used, which signifies, according to Liddell and Scott, "to see, behold, look at"; but when it is said that Saul "perceived," the word is γινώσκω (*ginosko*), which signifies, according to the same authority, "to know, perceive, gain knowledge of, observe, mark, be aware of, see into, understand," by an operation of the mind. In harmony with this view, is Saul's language to the woman, "What sawest thou?" and "What form is he of?" If any should say that Saul might have seen all that the woman saw if he had not been prostrate upon the ground, it is sufficient to reply that it was not till after he asked these questions that he "stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself." Verse 14. If Samuel had actually been present, Saul could have seen him as well as the woman. How completely had Saul now fallen into the snare! He was willing this abandoned woman should be for him both eyes and ears in matters of the greatest moment.

e. The appearance which the woman saw came up out of the earth. Was that Samuel's immortal soul? Are these souls in the earth? We supposed—that is, are we not told?—that they are in the heavenly glories of the world above.

f. Is it said that, as the form came up out of the earth, Samuel had a resurrection? Then the conscious-soul theory is abandoned. But if this was a resurrection of Samuel, how could he come up out of the ground here at Endor, near the sea of Galilee, when he was buried in distant Ramah (verse 8), near Jerusalem? And if the old man was raised from the dead, what became of him? Did he go through the pains of a second dissolution, and enter the grave again? If so, well might he complain to Saul for disquieting him to bring him up.

g. This pretended Samuel told Saul that he and his sons would be with him the following day. Verse 19. If he was an immortal spirit in glory, how could Saul, whom God had rejected for his sins, go to be with him there?

h. Another sacred writer mentions this event in Saul's life, and assigns it as one of the two reasons why he was given up by the Lord to die. 1 Chron. 10:13.

5. *Conclusions.*—What conclusions are inevitable from the foregoing facts? It is first of all evident

that Samuel was not present on that occasion, either as an immortal spirit from the third heaven, or as one resurrected from the dead. For—

a. It is not consistent to suppose that God, having refused to answer Saul's petitions in any legitimate way, would have respect to them when presented through this forbidden channel.

b. It is not consistent to suppose that an immortal soul from glory would come up out of the earth, as did the form which the woman evoked with her hellish incantations.

c. It is inconsistent to suppose that Samuel was resurrected bodily here in Endor, when he was buried in Ramah.

d. If he was raised, it must have been by God or the Devil. But the Devil cannot raise the dead, and it is evident that God would not, at least in answer to these agencies, the use of which he had forbidden under pain of death. God would not thus raise up his servant to talk with Saul on the Devil's own ground.

e. It is incredible that such a man as Samuel, who held witchcraft as such a heinous sin (1 Sam. 15:23), should first hold friendly converse with this abandoned woman in the midst of her incantations, and put her on her guard, before delivering his message to Saul.

f. It is the boldest assumption to suppose that any one, through this agency of the Devil, would have power to summon at will any immortal soul from glory, or to raise any one from the dead, or that this woman, through her diabolical incantations, would have power to behold the holy Samuel, while Saul could see nothing:

But is it not said that the woman saw Samuel?—Yes; and here is the only seeming difficulty in all the narrative. We find these four expressions: "The woman saw Samuel," verse 12; "And Samuel said to Saul," verse 15; "Then said Samuel," verse 16; and, "because of the words of Samuel," verse 20. And how could it be so written, it is asked, if Samuel was not there, and the woman did not see him, and he did not say the things here recorded?

Answer: This is easily explained by a very common law of language. Consider the circumstances. The woman stood ready to bring up any one that might be called for. She believed, of course, that they actually came, just as mediums nowadays believe the forms they see are those of their departed friends. Samuel was called for, and this mantled old man appeared. She supposed it was Samuel; and Saul supposed it was Samuel; and then, according to the general law of the language of appearance, the narrative proceeds according to their supposition. When it says "Samuel," it only means that form that appeared which they supposed to be Samuel.

Secondly, the conclusion is apparent that this was only a manifestation of ancient necromancy, sorcery, witchcraft, or spiritualism; a wholesale deception palmed off upon his dupes by the Devil in disguise. Between the ancient and modern manifestations there is this difference: Then the Devil had to pretend to bring up the dead from the ground; for the people then believed that the dead were in the lower regions of the earth; now he brings them down from the upper spheres; for the prevailing belief now is that those regions are populous with the conscious spirits of the departed.

Let no one, then, appeal to the workings of the witch of Endor to prove the immortality of the soul, unless he is prepared to claim openly that the Bible is a fiction, that ancient necromancy was a divine practice, and that modern Spiritualism, with all its godless blasphemies and its reeking corruptions, is the only reliable oracle of truth and purity. U. S.

"BY WHICH ALSO YE ARE SAVED, IF.—"
1 COR. 15:2.

MANY at the present day believe in what they are pleased to call a *present salvation*. This is well enough if salvation is not considered as absolutely completed, and the person does not think himself beyond the reach of danger of being liable to fall, or that no new duties may present themselves that demand obedience. It is not uncommon nowadays to hear people say, "I am a sinner saved by grace," "Christ has saved me," "I am fully saved," etc., meaning far more than any Bible phrase will warrant. Such persons generally have no use for the *if* of the text above.

Do not let it be understood that the use of the terms noticed are wrong in themselves considered; for all sinners are saved by grace, but only absolutely

when they have "endured to the end." The assurance of final salvation till that time is in a conscious obedience to the divine will, and a ready mind to yield to new obligations, or step out upon increasing light. Christ has saved sinners as the children of Israel were saved out of Egypt, yet *their* carcasses fell in the wilderness, and the doom of *saved* sinners will be just as fearful *if* they do not continue "rooted and grounded in the faith," and hold fast the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end.

There is no belief so destructive in its consequences as that which places less value upon the word of God than upon the raptures of the mind; it is a deception that will cause the severest anguish of soul in the day of God. Too many think that because the Lord has once granted them pardon and peace, henceforth they are privileged persons, forgetting that the same course that brought so priceless a boon is the only means by which it can be retained.

A son may merit, and receive, the approbation of his father, yet how inconsiderate would it be for that son, at any future time, to presume upon his father's good will and transgress his plain commandment! How foolish for him to say that, having once had the evidence of his father's love, nothing he could henceforth do would displease him! How much better to say, "I will endeavor now to even anticipate his desires!"

When the law of God is presented in some of its claims, a deceived heart will sometimes answer, "The Lord Jesus has saved me. He saved me five or ten years ago; he saved me as I *am*, and I am saved *now*." The word of God has no weight; the simple statement, accredited as fact, although a delusive falsehood, admits of no argument, and the soul that is completely filled with a counterfeit glory cannot be touched by precept.

A flight of feeling is not religion, not even an evidence of it, nor yet a necessary concomitant; for the souls of the best of men have, in all past time, been bowed down with a weight of woe, of care, and of tears. Instead of letting feeling decide whether one has religion, let the word declare *if* the feeling is inspired by the Spirit of God. Thousands upon thousands, to this day, are carried away with an infatuation, the seductive snare of feeling. Then let us not say, My feelings shall be my guide, but, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." If it be so, now and forever the *if* is virtually removed, and then only.

D. H. LAMSON.

WHY WE EMPHASIZE THE SABBATH.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS are accused of regarding every precept of the decalogue, and all the instructions of God's word, as second in importance (to put it mildly) to the fourth commandment; in short, of making a hobby of the Sabbath. We acknowledge that there is some foundation for the accusation. We do make the Sabbath prominent. We take our position in the court-room with certain protests to plead guilty, and then we claim what is the recognized right of every one brought to the bar, a hearing from the court.

Suppose a teacher is called to prepare scholars for a position requiring a combined knowledge of the sciences and languages; and, finding their preference for Greek and Latin has been indulged to the exclusion of mathematics, he devotes his attention mainly to a thorough drill in that neglected branch; is it just to accuse him of ignoring or underestimating the value and importance of the classics?

Again: a building contractor is called to complete an unfinished work. His experienced eye soon detects that his predecessor has reared a lofty edifice upon a very untrustworthy foundation, and he employs his whole working force to repair this dangerous oversight. Is it right or wise to assume that he has no appreciation of, or interest in, the necessary adornment and finish of the structure? We believe the Christian church was built not only upon the foundation, but according to the instructions, of the great Master Builder; and we understand that he, together with John the Baptist and the apostles, furnishes the precedents for methods of religious teaching through all time.

The forerunner of Christ was direct and straightforward in exposing sin wherever he found it, in kings' courts or peasants' hovels. He attacked King Herod just where he was violating the law: "It is not lawful for thee to have" thy brother's wife. Though his faithfulness cost him his life, he was true to the order, "Diminish not a word." When the peo-

ple inquired, "What shall we do, then?" his reply was calculated to reveal to them their selfish covetousness. Luke 8 : 11. The publicans propounded the same inquiry. Verse 12. They, as tax-gatherers, were extortionate and oppressive, and his answer to them was equally to the point: "Exact no more than that which is appointed you." The soldiers' awakened convictions were subject to the same searching test. They were quarrelsome and grasping, and his instructions were adapted to these conditions: "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." He did not make his teachings so broad as to cover the whole category of sins, nor his application so general as to include the whole race of sinners. He aimed at a mark, and hit it every time. "Sin is the transgression of the law." "Thou art the man."

But it is asked, Did Christ make the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath an important part of his teachings?—No. Why?—His mission was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and they were great sticklers for the outward forms of obedience. His work was to instruct where they were ignorant, to correct wherein they were deficient, to reprove where error existed, to call attention to neglected doctrines and precepts, and to expose their lives of hypocritical pretension. Their magnificent temple, dedicated to Sabbath worship, their gorgeous robes, calculated to exalt themselves and awe the people on that day, their imposing and elaborate service, proclaimed alike to Jew and Gentile their estimate of the Sabbath. Christ had no occasion to instruct in that part of the doctrine which says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" for that was not then forgotten, nor was that which declares, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;" for all so understood it. But he had occasion to refer to the mistaken manner of its observance, in meaningless forms and burdensome traditions of their own, which he improved by declaring, "It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day." The controversy was not over the day, but how the day should be observed. This Jesus forever settled by the declaration above, together with his example of instructing the unlearned, of ministering to the needy, and of relieving the sick. Instead of teaching them how to break the Sabbath, he taught them how to keep it.

But it is urged that this matter cannot be very important, or Paul and the other apostles would have given some attention to it. But the Sabbath question was no more agitated in Paul's day than in Christ's. This invention of man to overthrow the work of God had not then been "sought out." That in their innocence they were satisfied with the Sabbath as brought to view in the fourth commandment, is evident from the statement that Paul's "manner was" to reason out of the Scriptures, with both Jews and Gentiles, in the synagogues and at the river side, "every Sabbath." Acts 17 : 2 ; 18 : 4 ; 16 : 13 ; 13 : 42.

Hitherto, as a Pharisee, Paul had magnified the letter of the ceremonial law. Henceforth, as a Christian, he preached a crucified and risen Saviour, and distinguished between the "handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us," which was taken away and nailed to the cross, and the commandment of God, which is "holy, just, and good." Paul bore powerful and direct testimony to the sins and dangers of his day. He did not shun to declare unto them all the counsel of God, and to warn them night and day with tears. As a faithful under-shepherd, he fed the flock with meat convenient for them. The sound of Paul's trumpet was too certain, his reverence for God's law too clearly defined, for us to doubt that were he now proclaiming the everlasting gospel, we should have more than an echo of the thunders of Sinai, hurled with all his eloquence at the first-day theory, the no-law theory, the seventh-part-of-time theory, and all other man-made theories.

We are dealing with the Sabbath, not only as God's rest day, or because it was committed to man in his holy state in Eden (Gen. 2 : 2, 3 ; Heb. 4 : 4), or presented to God's ancient people after the Egyptian bondage to "prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no" (Ex. 16 : 4), or proclaimed from Sinai with God's voice, amid fearful manifestations of his power; but also as an ancient landmark, thrown down by an apostate power, and lost sight of through the ages, but restored in these last days as a standard around which God's people may rally, and hekl up as a test by which to decide who is on the Lord's side in the closing conflict with the powers of darkness.

The command of God to his prophet anciently was,

"Show my people their transgression." This instruction, our examination shows, was followed to the letter by the early religious teachers of this age. This we understand to be the need at the present time quite as much as at any other period of the world. There is, at least, a nominal obedience to the other commandments that God wrote with his own finger on tables of stone; but the one that says, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work," is ruthlessly disregarded. James 2 : 10 assures us that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

Now in view of these facts, can we be loyal subjects of the great Lawgiver, and faithful followers of our great Example, and not have our influence and efforts on the side of reform, just where reform is needed to raise up God's standard where the enemy has torn it down, and to make up the hedge just where the gap is? We submit the case to any just judge and reasonable jury, and entreat that those who render the verdict, and he who pronounces the sentence in this "court of common pleas," may weigh the evidence, and examine the statute-book as they who must give an account at a higher tribunal.—*Helen L. Morse.*

HISTORICAL READING ON SUNDAY-KEEPING.--2.

BY ISAAC MORRISON.

Why did the early Christians hold meetings in heathen temples on Sunday, instead of on the Sabbath of the Lord?

"Sunday being the day on which the Gentiles solemnly adored that planet [the sun], and called it Sunday, partly from its influence on that day especially, and partly in respect to its divine body (as they conceived it), the Christians thought fit to keep the same day and the same name of it, that they might not appear causelessly peevish, and by that means hinder the conversion of the Gentiles, and bring a greater prejudice than might be otherwise taken against the gospel."—*Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, by Morer, a learned clergyman of the Church of England, pp. 22, 23, London, 1701.

Did the Fathers of the early Christian church finally quit keeping the pagan Sunday, when many of the heathen were converted, and keep only the day that God had sanctified, the same as they did in the time of Christ and the apostles?

"It is not to be denied but we borrow the name of this day from the ancient Greeks and Romans, and we allow that the old Egyptians worshiped the sun, and as a standing memorial of their veneration, dedicated this day to him. We find by the influence of their examples, other nations, and among them the Jews, doing him homage; yet these abuses did not hinder the Fathers of the Christian Church simply to repeal, or altogether lay by, the day or its name, but only to sanctify and improve both, as they did also the pagan temples polluted before with idolatrous services."—*Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, pp. 22, 23.

Why did they not quit keeping Sunday and other forms of pagan worship?

"A pagan flood flowing into the church carried with it its customs, practices, and idols. . . . The church was then too weak to resist the abuses brought in by the inundation of paganism; further, it was no longer the upright and severe church of Christ; becoming vain of having many millions of adherents, it did not closely examine their faith."—*Gavazzi's Lectures*, p. 290.

"What wonder if the most holy bishops have granted that the ancient customs of Gentiles should be introduced into the worship of the true God, from which it seemed impossible to take off many, though converted to Christianity."—*Baronius*, called the great champion of popery.

Do Sunday-keeping and other compromises with the names and forms of heathenish worship still exist in many of the Christian churches of to-day?

"We still call the Lord's day *Sunday*, and name the highest Christian festival of his resurrection *from a pagan goddess*, and some astonishment might be raised by citing all the examples of existing compromises with the names and forms of heathenism."—*Smith's Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 237, 238. Note.

Did these early Christians work on the Sabbath when they first held meetings on Sunday, or did they keep the Sabbath holy when it came?

"The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the day in devotion and sermons, and it is not to be doubted but that they derived this practice from the apostles themselves."—*Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, p. 189.

"The Sabbath was religiously observed in the East church three hundred years and more after our Saviour's passion."—*Learned Treatise of the Sabbath*, by Prof. E. Brerewood, of Gresham College, London, p. 77.

"From the apostles' time until the Council of Laodicea, which was about the year 364, the holy observance of the Jews' Sabbath continued, as may be proved out of many authors; yea, notwithstanding the decree of that Council against it."—*Sunday a Sabbath*, by John Ley, an English author, p. 163.

Did they keep Sunday as the Sabbath, or did they simply hold meetings on that day, and then go about their work again when the meetings were over?

Morer, calling Sunday by the name of Lord's day, and speaking of the first three centuries, says: "The Lord's day had no divine command that it should be sanctified, but it was left to God's people to pitch on this or that day for the public worship. And being taken up and made a day of meeting for religious exercises, yet for three hundred years there was no law to bind them to it, and for want of such a law, the day was not wholly kept in abstaining from common business; nor did they any longer rest from their ordinary affairs (such was the necessity of those times) than during divine service."—*Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, p. 233.

Dr. John Kitto, referring to what is said of Sunday-keeping by the writers of the first four centuries, says:—

"Nor do these writers in any instance pretend to allege any divine command, or even apostolic practice in support of it. . . . Chrysostom (A. D. 360) concludes one of his homilies by dismissing his audience to their respective ordinary occupations."—*Cyclopedia Biblical Literature*, art. Lord's Day.

Heylyn says of St. Chrysostom, that he "confessed it to be lawful for a man to look unto his worldly business on the Lord's day, after the congregation was dismissed."—*Hist. Sab.*, part 2, chap. 3, sec. 9.

St. Jerome, at the beginning of the fifth century, in commending Lady Paula, shows his opinion of Sunday labor. He says: "Paula, with the women, as soon as they returned home on the Lord's day, they sat down severally to their work, and made clothes for themselves and others."—*Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, p. 234.

"In St. Jerome's days, and in the very place where he was residing, the devout Christians did ordinary work upon the Lord's day, when the service of the church was ended."—*Treatise of the Sabbath*, by Dr. Francis White, Bishop of Ely, p. 210, A. D. 1635.

"Labor in the country [on Sunday] was not prohibited till the Council of Orleans, A. D. 538. It was thus an institution of the church, as Dr. Paley remarked. The earlier Christians met in the morning of that day for prayer and singing hymns in commemoration of Christ's resurrection, and then went about their usual duties."—*Dictionary of Chronology*, art. Sunday.

"In the Augsburg Confession which was drawn up by Melancthon [and approved by Luther], to the question, 'What ought we to think of the Lord's day?' it is answered that the Lord's day, Easter, Whitsuntide, and other such holy days, ought to be kept because they are appointed by the church, that all things may be done in order; but that the observance of them is not to be thought necessary to salvation, nor the violation of them, if it be done without offense to others, to be regarded as a sin."—*Cox's Sabbath Laws*, etc., p. 287.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor says: "The primitive Christians did all manner of work upon the Lord's day, even in the times of persecution, when they are the strictest observers of all divine commandments, but in this they knew there was none."—*Duct. Dubitant*, part 1, book 2, chap. 2, sec. 59.

"Tertullian tells us that they did devote the Sunday partly to mirth and recreation, not to devotion altogether, when in a hundred years after Tertullian's time there was no law or constitution to restrain men from labor on this day in the Christian church."—*History of the Sabbath*, by Dr. Peter Heylyn, of the Church of England, part 2, chap. 8, sec. 13.

"Centuries of the Christian era passed away before the Sunday was observed as a Sabbath."—*Examination of the Six Texts*, by Sir Wm. Domville, of the Church of England, p. 291.

Temperance Outlook.

—Chicago has so-called "high-license," and eight-een miles of saloon frontage.—*National Christian Advocate*.

The Prohibition candidate for mayor of Newark, N. J., two years ago polled only 335 votes. At the recent election he received 3,523 votes.

—The offenses committed by the teetotal soldiers in the Indian army, as compared with those of the non-abstainers, are declared to be as one to forty.

—It is generally admitted now that the Crown Prince of Germany is afflicted with tobacco cancer, as was the case with Gen. Grant, and that it will shortly prove fatal.

—Absolute prohibition is the enduring course [in South America]. To seek to regulate coffee drinking by state sanction is like legalizing murder under conditions.—*The London Times*.

—The Woman's Christian Temperance Union conventions of Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, one after another, have pledged themselves either directly or indirectly to the support of the Prohibition party.

—A township canvass recently showed that in Trenton township, Delaware county, Ohio, every young man in the township with training enough to enable him to pass an examination to teach a common school, is in the Prohibition party.

—A correspondent inquires, "Are our people hell bound?" He said this in view of the fact that so many of our people, even those professedly Christian, are favorable to the licensing of the liquor traffic. The question is not without its significance. Let Christian men think about it.—*Lever*.

—Under all forms of license the people have every facility to get drunk, and the young every temptation to drink. License is practically "free rum." Prohibition unenforced could be no worse. But it properly defines the business and keeps our hands clear of the price of blood.—*Dr. J. M. Buckley, in the Christian Advocate*.

—The editor of a Kansas local paper says: "Before we had prohibition there were twenty-one saloons in Parsons, and I had from one fourth of a column to a column of police items every day. Now I cannot get together more than half a column once in three months. We have no city debt, and have a public library building, paid for, which cost \$40,000."

—The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has decided that the keeper of a saloon or hotel is responsible for any harm or mischief that may come to any one in his place through assault or malicious mischief by an employee or any other person. The case is one in which a man while intoxicated set fire to the clothes of another man intoxicated. The saloon-keeper must pay damages.

—A Bangor lawyer has made an analysis of internal revenue statistics, which shows that, while these taxes amounted last year to an average of \$1.76 per capita of the population of the United States, the sum collected in Maine, \$28,856, was only four cents per capita of the population of the State. This is another illustration of the way in which prohibition is a "failure" in Maine!

—The Supreme Court of Iowa has recently decided that the statute of that State prohibiting the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors, even for exportation, unless manufactured within the State for mechanical, medicinal, culinary, or sacramental purposes, and prohibiting also the sale of imported, foreign, intoxicating liquor, unless in its original packages, is constitutional, and therefore valid law.

—Temperance circles in Cincinnati are greatly stirred over the discovery that chapters have been added to the text-books in use in the high schools of the city, affirming that the daily drinking of alcohol is harmless, and stating that a person weighing one hundred and fifty pounds can safely use a pint of wine or two pints of beer every day. The liquor interest could have devised no more insidious and certain way of corrupting the youth of this country than to give such instruction in the public schools.

—The Vernon horror, by which every passenger and all but one of the crew of a lake steamer perished, is proved by testimony before the coroner's jury, to be another whisky massacre. The captain was a confirmed drunkard—notoriously so; had had delirium tremens on former trips. What the company were thinking about, intrusting such a man with the control of a vessel, we cannot imagine. The lone survivor testified: "The captain was drunk most of the time, and he was very drunk when we left Cheboygan last week. Friday night, the night the steamer was lost, he was as drunk as I ever saw him, and kept taking a drink every little while from a bottle that he carried in his coat pocket. If the captain had been sober, I do not believe the vessel would have been lost, for any sober man would have turned back when he saw how badly she acted in the big sea."

The whole world is aroused, and justly, by the

Haymarket massacre, yet here is a massacre by which not seven lives only, but seventy, are sacrificed, and because "whisky did it" its lesson makes no more lasting mark than do the waves which closed over the poor victims.—*Union Signal*.

—The Prohibition candidate for President in 1888 will certainly receive as many as a million votes. Our ranks number now 500,000 and there are 500,000 more ready to fall into line. You who live in the midst of the darkness of Newark and Jersey City, surrounded by this atmosphere of rum, cannot imagine what is going on out in the West among the States growing rapidly in population. In the East it is the same. I attended a meeting in Boston recently, and actually there does not seem to be room to hold the vast number of people joining our ranks. I believe that the same candidates that ran last time will try it again: Blaine, Cleveland, and St. John.

I am not a candidate. People do not seem to believe I will not run, and it is useless in me to keep on saying that I will not accept the nomination. I am not a politician, and cannot think of heading the ticket.—*Gen. Clinton B. Fisk*.

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:—

VIRGINIA.—Meetings are in progress at Mt. Gilead, with encouraging prospects.

TEXAS.—Meetings with the church at Egypt result in several accessions to the same.

INDIANA.—New church edifice just completed at Indianapolis; the church at that place has recently received several accessions.

PENNSYLVANIA.—Seventeen persons embrace the faith at Williamsport, where a Sabbath-school of thirty members has been organized.

NORTH CAROLINA.—A general State meeting was recently held at Lenoir, and broad plans laid for the prosecution of the work the coming year.

KENTUCKY.—The State Conference held at Elizabethtown, was well attended, and resulted in plans for materially enlarging the work the coming year.

NEBRASKA.—The city mission recently started at Grand Island has been very successful in its work; twenty-one believers are now reported at that place.

CALIFORNIA.—The General Conference of S. D. Adventists has been in session for the past two weeks at Oakland, and is proving an occasion of great interest.

MINNESOTA.—A Scandinavian church of fifteen members has recently been organized at St. Paul; the Scandinavian church at Minneapolis is about to erect a new house of worship.

COLORADO.—Many items of interest are reported from the work in Colorado; a company of fourteen believers has recently been organized at Sequache, also a flourishing Sabbath-school.

OHIO.—An interesting and profitable series of meetings was recently held at Grape Grove, where a Sabbath-school of eighteen members, and a tract and missionary society was organized.

NEW YORK.—J. E. Swift reports the organization of tract and missionary societies at Batavia and Buffalo; two converts baptized at Constableville; church at Watertown receives three accessions.

VERMONT.—The church at Burlington has recently received three new members; the city mission at that place is accomplishing much good; Eld. D. T. Bourdeau reports many features of interest and encouragement among the churches that he has visited recently.

KANSAS.—R. F. Barton reports that twenty-two converts have signed the covenant at Huron; a company of twelve believers (colored) reported at Emporia; meetings at Dennis result in sixteen converts, and the organization of a Sabbath-school of thirty-five members; ten converts baptized at Wichita.

IOWA.—A series of meetings at Moreland's school-house, in Wayne county, is being largely attended, and many are becoming interested in the truths preached; special and profitable meetings were recently held with the churches at Ruthven, Council Bluffs, Weston, and Elk Horn; a series of meetings at Albia resulted in a company of twenty believers, and the organization of a Sabbath-school of thirty members; three converts baptized at Confidence, and a church of nineteen members organized; three additional converts baptized at Bethlehem, making thirty believers at that place, where a new church is being built; the church at Eddyville receives two new members.

The Theological World.

... There are two thousand Protestant girls in convent schools in the Canadian Province of Ontario.

... The Presbyterian and Congregational churches in Japan have agreed upon a plan of union by which they become one church.

... Fifty-nine male and three female convicts were "confirmed" in the State prison of New Jersey, at Trenton, on a recent Sunday.

... The twelfth general convention of the Church of the Disciples was opened in Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 18. Five hundred delegates were present from eighteen States.

... The pulpit of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, made vacant by the death of Henry Ward Beecher, will be temporarily filled by Dr. Lyman Abbott, editor of the *Christian Union*.

... It is asserted that the Roman Catholic Church has forty-five Indian schools scattered over the country from Florida to Alaska. Dakota, which has the largest number, has fourteen.

... The Presbyterian synod closed its session at Keokuk, Iowa, the 24th ult. Resolutions were adopted condemning the Sunday mail service, Sunday railway traffic, and Sunday newspapers.

... Eight hundred and seventy thousand adult converts from the heathen world, it is said, are at this time in full communion with the church of Christ, as the result of Protestant missionary labor.

... State conventions of Christian Endeavor Societies are soon to be held in most of the principal States of the Union, and the work of organizing these societies has spread to England and Scotland.

... A detachment of the Salvation Army now in Augusta, Me., has brought twenty-seven suits against the city for false imprisonment. The arrests were made on the ground of creating a public disturbance.

... A recent dispatch received from Constantinople states that the Mormons have applied to the Porte for permission to establish a community in Turkey, and it is expected that the request will be granted. Polygamy would certainly not be an obnoxious feature in that country.

... The demented pastor of Unity church (Unitarian), at Hartford, Conn., preached a sermon on a recent Sunday, in which he compared the Chicago anarchists to Christ. Petitions are now being circulated among the members of his congregation, asking for his resignation.

... The case of Prof. Egbert C. Smyth, the apostle of future probation, has worried along until it has found its way into the Massachusetts Supreme Court. He appeals from the decision of the Board of Visitors of Andover, which removed him from the professorship in Andover seminary.

... On a recent Monday morning Dr. McGlynn spoke before the ministers' meeting of the Methodist ministers of New York, on the subject of the George land theories. He was voted a resolution of thanks, with a clause which reserved individual opinion as to the virtue of the views he advocated.

... At the Sabbath convention which was held recently at Elgin, Ill., resolutions were passed presenting the sacred claims of the "Lord's day" upon this country, and condemning its non-observance by professing Christians. A permanent organization was formed, to be known as the "Sabbath Association of Illinois."

... Dr. Joseph Parker, of London, England, speaking of the withdrawal of Mr. Spurgeon from the Baptist Union, said his action would have little influence on the body, and that "Spurgeonism" would have little power in the future. He said further, that theology in England was tending toward liberalism. All of which we presume is only too true.

... It is rather strange that in this age of the world a church of one of the popular denominations should be arraigned for holding the doctrine of instantaneous sanctification, but such a thing is said to have befallen the Main Street church at Woodstock, New Hampshire. It belonged to the New Hampshire Baptist Association, and was expelled from that body for holding the above view.

... The *Boston Herald*, speaking of the fact that the Rev. Dr. Bradley, a Unitarian, was invited to participate in the dedication of a new Presbyterian church in Boston recently, says: "The frequency with which denominational bars and barriers are being knocked down by practical Christians, is one of the most noteworthy and encouraging signs of the times in religious matters."

... The ardent literary turn of mind which Catholicism gives to its adherents is well shown by the fact, which is now admitted by a Catholic authority in New York, that the Catholics of this country have so little taste for reading that they cannot be induced to read even the life of the pope, though dictated by the infallible pontiff himself. Consequently the new "Life of Leo XII.," which it was predicted would have a wonderful sale in this country, is having a comparatively limited circulation.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., December 1, 1887.

Our readers will find this issue unusually replete with considerations of important subjects. Especially do we commend a careful perusal of the articles entitled "God's Covenants with Men," "Christ as a Lawgiver," and "Samuel and the Witch of Endor."

Promised articles on the signification of "the Sabbath was made for man," and the time when redemption is to be completed, are necessarily deferred until our next issue. Meanwhile we assure our readers that they may look for some interesting articles on those subjects.

LEARNING FROM ROME.

The *Christian Union* of Nov. 3, 1887, contains one remark that is especially significant as indicating a growing sentiment among Protestant denominations generally to pattern after the Roman Catholic Church. In commenting on the late action of the Episcopal Church in forming an association within its own membership for the advancement of the interests of labor, the *Union* says: "We have a great deal to learn from our Roman Catholic brethren in the direction of open churches, free churches, and churches in constant use."

Such words of encouragement as these, uttered by so prominent and influential a journal as the *Christian Union*, will have great weight throughout the country, and do much toward bringing Protestant bodies into closer union and sympathy with the Catholic Church. This is only one of many instances that are continually occurring, indicative of the sentiment we have mentioned. In every case the concessions are made by Protestants; for "Rome never changes." Meanwhile Rome looks on with satisfaction, content to bide her time, seeing the gradual elevation of herself to a more commanding position in the world. The blindness of Protestants who are thus seeking closer relations with Catholicism is unaccountable.

PURGATORY TAUGHT BY SPIRITUALISM.

The *Banner of Light*, organ of the Spiritualists, contains the following "revelation" touching the experience of a certain class of spirits during the first period of their alleged existence in the "spirit world":—

"Sometimes a spirit on passing to the other world, having lived a long life of willful wrong-doing, having ministered only to his personal necessities and desires, independent of or at the expense of the rights of others,—such a spirit will not perhaps, gaze upon the form and features that he most desires to see when he passes into the other world. During the last few weeks and hours of his waning physical existence, he may regret his misspent life, and feel a yearning desire to meet and hear the familiar voices of those from whom he has turned; but his brief and tardy recognition may not attract them, and he will have to pass through a long vital discipline before he will be able to gaze upon the faces of those whom he wronged, in thought, if not in deed. He has not only to repent of all his past errors, but to atone for them by personal efforts and deeds."

What is this but the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory in a little more ethical and refined shape than Rome teaches it? One teaches that the spirit is purified by a certain period of existence in fire; the other, that it experiences "a long vital discipline," whatever that may be, before it can enjoy the full privileges of the "spirit world." The leading idea—that of a purifying stage of existence for the spirit between this world and the highest state of blessedness in the next—is the same in each, and is sufficient to establish for them a common authorship.

A TREMENDOUS JUMP.

We do not refer to the tragic event that gave the name to that notable spot called "The Lover's Leap," nor to the vaulting of one Mr. Samuel Patch over Niagara or Genesee Falls. We refer to a more wonderful jump than either of these; and that is, the jump some people make to reach a conclusion.

We had an illustration of this at a camp-meeting

we once attended. There was a Universalist upon the ground: and one of the methods of argument by which he sought to sustain his belief was this: Said he, "Does it not read that God is kind to the unthankful as well as to the thankful, and that he sends his rain upon the unjust as well as the just? and is he not the same yesterday, to-day, and forever? I think," said he, "that if God is kind to all men here in this life, he will be kind to them hereafter."

What a conclusion to draw from such premises! This is a period of mercy, long-suffering, and probation. God waits for men to repent, telling them meanwhile what they must meet if they do not. Sentence is out against every evil work, but is not immediately executed; and because it is not, some are ready to conclude that it never will be. And now, because God is kind and merciful to all during this period, shall we conclude that he will deny himself, and turn from the penalty he has threatened against sin, though he bears long with it?

In this the reasoner endeavors to vault clear over the dark and fathomless abyss that was made between earth and heaven when this world fell into revolt from the government of God. To reach heaven and life and happiness hereafter we must in some way pass this yawning chasm. Christ by his intervention in our behalf has bridged it over; and on him alone can any man safely pass to the other side. All who attempt in wild recklessness to leap it, will find themselves swallowed up therein. There is none other name under heaven through which salvation is to be found. A living, personal interest in him, manifested by the public and outward acts of faith, is our only passport to the proffered boon of life. Christ is the only ladder from earth to heaven. Let us shun the fatal step of trying to leap the gulf and gain heaven without him.

"MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM."

In his delineation of the scenes and incidents of the last days, Christ said that among other features this should occur: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:26. In the previous verse he also states that "distress of nations, with perplexity," should prevail. It is quite customary for us to discover in other nations evidences of the fulfillment of these words of Christ; but we do not hear much said with regard to the existence of such evidences in our own country. In the October (1887) number of that very popular magazine, *The Chautauquan*—a periodical having a circulation of 65,000 copies per issue, and patronized by the most intelligent people of our country—are some utterances that border somewhat upon "perplexity," to say nothing of fear for what may come upon the earth.

In an able article, contributed by F. A. P. Barnard, LL. D., entitled "Republican Government under the American Constitution," the writer discusses the original purpose in the formation of our fundamental law, the extent to which that purpose has been realized, and the prospects of the future. To show the general tenor of the article, we give herewith a few extracts:—

"It [this Government] purports to be a Government 'of the people, for the people, and by the people.' . . . The experiment has been made. It has been on trial for a century. In many respects it has succeeded. . . . But in spite of these proofs of undeniable success, there have appeared evidences, constantly increasing, that the wise and admirable theory of the Constitution has been largely thwarted in practice by the operation of the machinery designed for its application. It has given us a very effectual Government of the people, but not a Government by the people, nor a Government for the people. We are governed, in fact, by an oligarchy, not always the same oligarchy, but an oligarchy of one faction or another, according as, in partisan struggles, power from time to time changes hands. And we are governed for the benefit of this oligarchy, which employs the dignities and emoluments of political place for its own private advantage, or to reward the servants of its henchmen."

That these words are most emphatically true, all candid, observing people will assent. Mr. Barnard continues:—

"Practically, therefore, our presumably democratic system of government has, thus far, proved a failure. The question then arises,—and it is one of profound gravity,—Can it possibly be redeemed, and made what its framers designed it to be? If such a possibility exists, it can be found only in awakening the people to a just sense of the magnitude of the existing evil. For it is an unfortunate fact, but a fact nevertheless, that the mass of the people are quite

unconscious of the degree to which their own Government has been practically stolen from them. . . .

"The political evils under which our country is now suffering must in some manner be abated, or the time is not far distant when even the forms of republican government, which still continue to be practiced among us, will cease to be observed altogether. The history of the memorable struggle of 1876, with its disgraceful disclosure of the efforts on both sides to buy returning boards and electoral colleges, and to falsify electoral counts, illustrates how easily a determined faction may at any time sweep away all this electoral rubbish, and substitute bayonets instead of ballots for the capture of the presidency."

Mr. Barnard is not in any sense an alarmist, but a man who fully comprehends the situation, and sees the dangers that threaten our Republic. His statements are a marked fulfillment of the prophecy of our Saviour quoted at the beginning of this article. There are other dangers, fully as serious as that mentioned by Mr. Barnard, that menace our country, and evidences are not wanting to show that men's hearts are failing them for fear because of these things.

INFIDELITY IN THE PULPIT.

So long as the gospel is maintained in its purity, and its defenders stand true to their trust, so long, as declared by the Saviour, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. But when those to whom the people look for knowledge continue their work as teachers, but exchange the truth for error, and deal out the latter in place of the former, when the keepers of the citadel themselves turn traitors, no one can fail to see what the inevitable result must be.

For this very cause Mr. Spurgeon, of England, utters a cry of alarm concerning the future religious outlook in that country. He declares that as Germany became skeptical and infidel, through the influence of her preachers, so England is fast lapsing into infidelity from the same cause. Infidelity in the pulpit will bring forth a speedy and wide-spread harvest of infidelity in the pews; and infidelity in the pews will lead directly to the disuse of religious forms and religious worship.

And here is where Mr. Spurgeon finds support for his statements; for he shows by statistics that attendance on religious worship has so far declined that large churches, which used to be filled, now contain but a handful of indifferent attendants, and that the old and hopeful reverence for sacred things is rapidly passing away. It is, he asserts, the undiluted skepticism which has been scattered from the pulpit which has produced this fruit among the people. In attempting to preach a new theology, the professedly religious teachers have wrought a work of evil which they can never undo.

And are not some American pulpits struck with the same contagion? Is there no new theology this side the water which is doing its work of mischief? Protestantism has ceased to be aggressive. On the upward plane of reform, it long since came to a standstill. To stagnate is to die and become retrogressive. And so it has come to pass that nothing will stir its enmity and opposition like some advance truth. This is why many professedly Protestant bodies are even now tottering to a relapse into the army of popery.

To lift them out of the state of lethargy into which they were sinking, a ringing message was sent forth into the world years ago, announcing the coming of the glorious epoch of the second advent of Jesus Christ. Rejecting this, they became worse than before. They have been retrograding ever since. A glance over Christendom, comparing its spiritual condition with the divine standards, is sufficient to convince any one that the announcement of the second message of Revelation 14 is one of the great truths of this generation.

When people have resolved to shut their eyes, or to look only on one side, it is of little consequence how good their eyes may be.—*Archbishop Whately.*

A CONTEMPLATIVE life has more the appearance of a life of piety than any other; but it is the divine plan to bring faith into activity and exercise.—*Cecil.*

THE GOSPEL SICKLE,

AN EIGHT-PAGE SEMI-MONTHLY JOURNAL,

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