



"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 CALL.

She sat in the quiet home nook, Reading softly the Master's command, "Go ye, with my word of blessing, To the lost in every land." "Go?"—Shadows stole over the fair face. "From home, love, and ease,—this for me? For the empty, the lone, for strong hearts And wise ones, this message must be." But leaning again o'er the pages, She read, as in letters of light, "Go ye, in your strength and your gladness, Bearing hope to souls sitting in night." From cold northern shores to the South-land, In forest and plains of the West, On far sunny slopes of the Orient, They wait to believe and be blest. Dear hearts, in your ease and home love, They call you by needs yet untold, In prisons of sin and of sorrow; In nakedness, hunger, and cold. Go ye in the name of the Master, Remembering the word that he spake: "He studdeth his life, and forever, Who loseth it here for Love's sake." —Mrs. Luther Keane, in S. S. Times.

Notes and Comments.

"THE sting of death is sin." 1 Cor. 15:56. Death is here personified as a venomous serpent or scorpion, stinging its victim with fatal effect. Adam, the progenitor of our race, was thus stung to death (Gen. 2:17), and the virus flows in the veins of all his posterity. See 1 Cor. 15:22, first clause. The victory gained by the people of God is by the provisions of the atonement (1 Cor. 15:57), and will be complete only at the first resurrection. See 1 Cor. 15:51-55. The ungodly gain no victory after death. Though Christ will raise them from the first or natural death, they will be just as corrupt and as subject to death as before, and their life will go out a second time in the lake of fire, never again to be restored. See Rev. 20:15.

CONYBEARE and Howson speak of the religion of the Jews in this way:—

"But not only was a holy religion the characteristic of the civilization of the Jews, but their religious feelings were directed to something in the future, and all the circumstances of their national life tended to fix their thoughts on One that was to come. By types and by promises, their eyes were continually turned toward a Messiah. Their history was a continued prophecy. All the great stages of their national existence were accompanied by effusions of prophetic light. . . . Thus the pious Hebrew was always, as it were, in the attitude of expectation."

Why should not the Christian world at the present time be in the "attitude of expectation"? Why should not our eyes be "continually turned toward a Messiah" to come? Have we no promises of a Messiah to come?—of the return of that same Jesus who came to the Jews in fulfillment of the promises of their prophets? Why should not the

whole Christian world have their feelings "directed to something in the future," instead of having their eyes fixed on death and the grave? Why should not our history be "a continued prophecy"? and why should we not have advancing prophetic light as we near the consummation of the blessed hope, as the Jews had in the prophecies of Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:25-38), and in the ministry of John the Baptist? Should we not expect that the last stages of our earthly history would be "accompanied by effusions of prophetic light"?

ON page 204, "Alexander Campbell's Debate with Bishop Purcell," Mr. C.'s position on the perpetuity of the law of God is defined in the following words: "I was sorry to hear the gentleman defending white lies and little sins. When I think of the nature of sin, and the holy and immutable laws of God, against whom it is committed, I see no difference between one sin and another. There may be great and little sins, as to their temporal relation and consequences; but when He against whom every sin is committed, and that divine and holy law which is violated in the least offense, is considered, we must say with the apostle James, 'He that offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.' It may be the veriest peccadillo on earth; but in heaven's account, one sin would ruin a world, as it has done; for he that keeps the whole law and yet offends in one point, is guilty of all. He that said not a jot or tittle of his law shall fall to the ground; he that magnified his law and made it honorable, will suffer no person to subtract from, to change or violate, a single point with impunity." Mr. Campbell was the leader and founder of the Disciple Church; but we do not find that denomination at the present time maintaining the jurisdiction and perpetuity of God's law, as does Mr. C. in the paragraph above quoted.

THERE is a passage of Scripture in Rom. 14:5, 6, that perplexes some good people in their endeavors to reach a decision regarding the Sabbath. It reads thus: "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." These verses do not refer to the Sabbath day at all, else we are left without either a first-day or a seventh-day Sabbath, or, in fact, without any Sabbath whatever, since they teach that it is a matter of indifference whether the day under consideration is kept at all. The reference, unquestionably, is to the Jewish ceremonial feast-days of the Mosaic law. In proof of this, it is only necessary to refer to the connection. In verses 1 to 4 inclusive, the apostle is talking about the eating of herbs, etc. He declares that he that eateth should not despise him that eateth not. In verse 4 he prohibits the judging of one another in these matters. In verse 5 he connects this eating and drinking with the observance of days; but the only law which in any way attempts to regulate eating and drinking, is the law of Moses. In speaking of its services, the apostle says, in Heb. 9:10, that they consisted in "meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." In that same law also was found a class of ceremonial Sabbaths which were abolished along with

the meat and drink ceremonies at the cross. Col. 2:14-17. As was very natural, however, some of the Jewish Christians were inclined to hold on to these days and ceremonies, and, as a consequence, a dispute arose between them and those who discarded them altogether. To allay this dispute, the apostle, in the chapter in question, inculcates the lesson of forbearance, and declares it to be a matter of indifference whether a man keeps one of those ceremonial days or eats meat, provided only he is actuated by the fear of God, either in eating and observing the days in question, or in refraining from eating or observing the same.

WHY should any one object to the doctrine of the coming of the Lord? The word of God promises unspeakable good to be accomplished when the Lord appears. Are there any who do not want to see this good established? The trouble is, there is something else which engrosses their attention, and shuts all other things from view. For he comes to reward every man according as his works shall be, and long-delayed judgments against evil works shall then also be faithfully executed. So when his coming is spoken of, they read first of all in their own consciences a sentence of condemnation against themselves, as Belshazzar was conscious of his guilt, when his knees smote together as he saw the handwriting on the wall, though he could not read, and before he had learned, a word of the inscription. May it not, then, fairly be inferred that those who dislike to hear about the coming of the Lord, whether ministers or laymen, owe this feeling to a consciousness that they are not prepared to meet him, while at the same time they are not willing to give up the world sufficiently to prepare for his coming? But to you who love his appearing, let us say, Read the following description of what comes when he comes, and see if you do not feel your heart inspired anew to breathe the prayer in response to Christ's declaration that he cometh quickly, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"When he cometh, the New Jerusalem cometh; the paradise of God cometh; the river of water of life, saints, angels, the new heaven, the new earth, all beauty, all splendor, all sanctity, the fruition of all right desires, the realization of all lovely dreams, love; in a word, all that is precious cometh; nor will it ever be possible for me to conceive of a good not found in the region irradiated by his smile."—Rev. George Bowen.

AMONG the many illustrations of Scripture which Whitefield introduced into his sermons, one is truly worthy of notice. Preaching from the words, "Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires," Isa. 24:15, he said: "When I was some years ago at Shields, I went into a glass-house, and standing very attentively, I saw several masses of burning glass of various forms. The workman took one piece of glass and put it into one furnace, then he put it into a second, and then into a third. I asked him, 'Why do you put that into so many fires?' He answered me, 'O sir, the first is not hot enough, nor the second, and therefore we put it into the third, and that will make it transparent.' Oh, thought I, does this man put this glass into one furnace after another that it may be rendered perfect? O my God! put me into one furnace after another, that my soul may be as transparent, that I may see God as he is."

Doctrinal Articles.

"Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Titus 2:3.

THE MILLENNIUM.—No. 2.

BY J. O. CORLISS.

It is true that the gospel is to be preached in all the world before the end comes (Matt. 24:14), but nowhere is it once said that this universal preaching of the gospel will cause every one to believe and obey it. Neither does the Saviour say that after the nations have all heard the good news, his advent to the earth will be deferred a thousand years. But what says the text?—Simply that the gospel shall be preached in all the world *for a witness* unto all nations, and *then*—what?—*then* (not a thousand years afterward) shall the end come.

"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," has been sounding in the ears of sinners for more than eighteen hundred years. But God can do nothing more, after giving his Son to die, than, through his servants, to plead with rebels against his authority and entreat them to turn to him and live. This has been done all through the ages by those who have, under the influence of God's Spirit, wept and prayed as they preached. Many have sealed their testimony with their blood, and yet the world is far from being converted. And what is the prospect for the future? We would that it were brighter than it is. For the convenience of the reader, we herewith present a diagram to show the relative number of Christians as compared with the heathen world.

Jews and Pagans, 16,470,000.
Greek Catholics, 70,482,000.
Protestants, 108,630,000.
Brahminical Hindoos, 120,000,000.
Mohammedans, 122,400,000.
Roman Catholics, 202,368,000.
Pagans, 227,000,000.
Buddhists, 482,600,000.
Unclassified, 51,050,000.

The ratio employed in the diagram is based on the generally received number of inhabitants in all the world, namely, 1,400,000,000. As will be seen, Protestants comprise a little more than one thirteenth of the number, and all believers in Christ combined (Catholics, Greeks, and Protestants) reach only to a little more than one fourth of the world's population. And this is after more than eighteen and one half centuries of Christianity. The result now shown is not because missionary work is neglected; for during the past hundred years, great efforts have been put forth in this direction. It is, however, a fact, according to statistics, that the annual birth-rate among the heathen is largely in excess of the converts among them to Christianity. Take, for instance, the population of India, 250,000,000. Allowing the birth-rate to be five per cent, which is a moderate estimate, the annual increase of inhabitants would be 12,500,000. If the converts to Christianity were to count up 100,000 a year in that country, it would be considered almost a miracle of grace. But even then the excess of births over the converts would be 12,400,000 every year. Lest these figures should seem appalling, we will make the estimate ten times more favorable toward evangelizing the heathen world. Suppose that each year there is but one birth for every 100 inhabitants of India, and that only one half of this number live to grow up. The native increase would then be 1,250,000, or 1,150,000 births

in excess of the annual conversions to Christianity.

Taking the whole heathen world as estimated at 1,000,000,000, and allowing one birth annually to every 200 inhabitants, it would give a yearly increase of inhabitants of 5,000,000. Reckoning the converts from all these, in the same proportion as from among the natives of India, we would receive into Christianity each year, 400,000, which would be considered an immense number. This would give, of heathen children each year, an excess of 4,600,000 over the converts to Christianity. At this rate the prospect of converting the world before the Lord comes, so that all shall know him from the least unto the greatest, is certainly not very flattering. But the question may arise, if these figures are not offset by the deaths that annually occur among the heathen. Doubtless many die, and perhaps nearly as many each year as are born. But that does not help the matter, as those that have been evangelized stand their chance of dying with all the others, so that the same proportion of these drop off each year as of the heathen themselves. This places the matter right back where our figures left it, with this exception, that some of the births occurring may be among the evangelized ones, and so saves them from being added to the list of heathen.

To show that we are not alone in presenting the increase of the heathen element in those lands, in excess of the conversions to Christianity, we give the following from Rev. James Johnson, F. S. S., in "A Century of Christian Missions," published in 1886. He says: "The heathen and Mohammedan population of the world is more by 200 million than it was a hundred years ago; while the converts and families do not amount to three million. The numbers now generally accepted as accurate, and quoted by the church missionary and other societies, are 173 millions of Mohammedans and 874 millions of heathen, 1047 [million] in all. . . . We mourn over the sad fact that the increase of the heathen is numerically more than seventy times greater than that of the converts."

With reference to the work in civilized lands, the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage says: "I simply state a fact when I say that in many places the church is surrendering, and the world is conquering. Where there is one man brought into the kingdom of God through Christian instrumentality, there are ten men dragged down by dissipations. . . . Within the last twenty-five years the churches of God in this country have averaged less than two conversions a year each. There has been an average of four or five deaths in the churches. How soon, at that rate, will this world be brought to God? We gain two; we lose four. Eternal God! what will this come to?" Looking at the matter from whatever stand-point one will, there is no prospect of all the world's being converted to Christ.

FAITH, AND ITS RELATION TO THE LAW AND THE SABBATH.

BY G. W. MORSE.

A CORRESPONDENT, arguing that the law of ten commandments has been abolished, quotes Rom. 14:23: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

The last expression, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," is emphasized; and then the claim is made that the law is not "of faith," hence it is not only binding, but actual sin is committed by those who attempt to maintain its jurisdiction and perpetuity.

A little reflection will show the utter fallacy of this reasoning. In Rom. 3:20 the apostle says, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Again in chapter 5:13: "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." In 1 John 3:4 we read, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." It follows that if the law is not binding, there is no occasion whatever to talk about sin. Wherever we find sin imputed, that very fact proves the existence and binding force of law. Hence Rom. 14:23 is equivalent to the statement that *whatsoever is not of faith is a transgression of the law*. It is unaccountably strange that any person of intelligence should claim the abolition of the law, and quote this text to support such a claim. It is stranger still that any one should, after having made such a claim, charge others with having committed sin,—a thing that can have no existence, if there be no law.

But what is the correct interpretation of Rom. 14:23?

"Whatsoever is not done with a full conviction

that it is right, is sinful; whatever is done when a man doubts whether it is right, is sin. This is evidently the fair interpretation of this place."—*Barnes*.

"Whatever he does, without a full persuasion of its lawfulness (see verse 22), is to him sin; for he does it under a conviction that he may be wrong in so doing."—*Clarke*.

"Whatsoever is not of (grounded in, and therefore consonant with) faith (the great element in which the Christian lives and moves and desires and hopes) is sin."—*Dean Alford*.

"In general, every action must be sinful, which is not done 'of faith,' as ratified by our views of the word of truth."—*Scott*.

The true relation between faith and the law is this: The law is the standard of righteousness that must be reached before we can become fit subjects for heaven. But in consequence of inherited sin, no human being can by his own efforts reach this standard. Says Paul, "By the deeds of the law [acts conformable to the law] there shall no flesh be justified." Rom. 3:20. Christ is the embodiment of the same standard of righteousness that is represented by the law, and one provision of the plan of salvation is that Christ's righteousness may be imputed to all whose sins have been washed away by his blood. Here is where faith comes in. We must accept the standard of righteousness as set forth by the law as the one that must be reached. Our faith must recognize Christ as exemplifying that standard. It must accept the plan whereby his righteousness is to be imputed to us. We must believe that the plan is practical. But "faith without works is dead." James 2:20. The primary exercise of faith is for the purpose of obtaining the forgiveness of sin. In order to obtain forgiveness of sin, we must first look into God's mirror (the law) in order to know what our sins are, so as to petition God understandingly. In this work Christ comes to our aid, for he interpreted the law by words and example not to be misunderstood. Faith enables us to accept and rest securely upon the promise of forgiveness through the merits of Christ's blood.

The secondary exercise of faith is for the purpose of securing to ourselves the benefit of Christ's righteousness. In doing this we must recognize the validity and jurisdiction of the law, and the perfect harmony existing between it and the life and example of Christ. In order that the exercise of faith in this respect may not be a dead faith, its genuineness must be shown by our best endeavors to conform our lives to the standard of righteousness which we profess to acknowledge. Thus it is evident that any standard of righteousness that falls below God's standard as exemplified by the law of ten precepts and the life and example of Christ, is too low; and those who expect to reach heaven without reaching God's standard of righteousness must inevitably fail.

It is furthermore evident that God's standard of righteousness includes the Sabbath. The Sabbath law was placed in the very bosom of God's standard of righteousness, and one very important work of our Saviour was to interpret that Sabbath law in a manner that could not be misunderstood. Christ recognized and observed the Sabbath. By precept and example he incorporated the Sabbath in the standard of righteousness that he exemplified by his life on earth. Hence the faith in Christ that omits the Sabbath, declaring it to be a non-essential, is a defective faith, and will never secure to its possessor the benefits of Christ's righteousness. It is the height of impudence and presumption for an individual to attempt a modification or lessening of the standard of righteousness erected by Christ, and seek thereby to obtain the benefits of Christ's mediatorial work. It is, in fact, placing one's self above God and Christ. It is presuming to say that Christ did more than he needed to do; *it is repudiating part of his work*.

Faith is the connecting link that joins man to the standard of righteousness that he must reach before he can be saved. The standard that he must be thus joined to is Christ, and Christ is the personification of God's holy and immutable law. That law requires, among other things, the observance of "the Sabbath according to the commandment." Hence Sabbath-keeping is of faith; nay more, to reject the Sabbath law is to reject a very important feature of Christ's righteousness; and the faith of that person who rejects the Sabbath falls that much short of being a saving faith.

LIFE is made up, not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in which smiles and kindness and small obligations, given habitually, are what win and preserve the heart, and secure comfort.—*Sir H. Davy*.

The Christian Life.

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

THE BEAUTIFUL.

BEAUTIFUL faces are those that wear—
It matters little if dark or fair—
Whole-souled honesty printed there,
Beautiful eyes are those that show,
Like crystal panes where hearth fires glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below.
Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart like songs of birds,
Yet whose utterance prudenee girds.
Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest and brave and true,
Moment by moment the long day through.
Beautiful feet are those that go
On kindly ministry to and fro,
Down lowliest ways, if God wills it so.
Beautiful shoulders are those that bear
Senseless burdens of homely care
With patience, grace, and daily prayer.
Beautiful lives are those that bless—
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountains but few may guess.
Beautiful twilight at set of sun,
Beautiful goal with race well run,
Beautiful rest with work well done.
Beautiful grave where grasses creep,
Where brown leaves fall, where drifts lie deep
Over worn-out hands—O, beautiful sleep!

—Church Union.

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION.

In saying that Jesus is the authority in religion, we do not mean to imply that he has made everything known that God knows. Far from it; we still "know in part" and "see through a glass darkly." But we mean that he has taught nothing but the truth; and, further, that the revelation through him will not be improved or superseded. He is not only an authority in religion; he is the authority. There is nothing later and higher to supplant him and his teaching. In his revelation is complete. Moses was an authority in religion. He had his call to his work from above, and was qualified by light imparted to him to fulfill it. But his teaching had need of supplement. He was far from teaching all that was to be taught respecting God. It was, in a sense, only the alphabet of revelation that Moses could communicate. Isaiah was an authority in religion. He went beyond Moses in the depth and extent of his disclosure of religious truth. But he and Moses, and all of the other divinely-called teachers who preceded Christ, were, and were conscious of being, reporters of an incomplete system, incomplete to their own vision. They pointed to one after them. They were, in their day, authorities—and they remain authorities—in religion; but their teaching must be read and interpreted in the light of the finished system. "The least in the kingdom of heaven," that is, the humblest Christian, "is greater," that is, has access to more knowledge than the greatest of them.

The absolute character of Christianity, in opposition to the idea that it is an imperfect, and, therefore, a transient religion, is a point to be asserted with all emphasis. There are many who affect to regard Christianity as one among the many religions of the world, having no distinct and peculiar rank in comparison with the rest, and destined to give place to some full and exact developments of religion hereafter; its rank and merit are relative, not absolute and exclusive. But it is one of the grand peculiarities of the religion of Christ, that it repels with disdain this half honor. It claims to be sufficient, supreme, exclusive. Read the New Testament, and you will see that this claim is stamped on every page. Consider what is said of the dignity of Christ, consider the demand of entire self-consecration to him that is everywhere made, and you will see that Christianity will take no middle place. The gospel will be satisfied with no partial acceptance of it. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." It will be everything or nothing. If the claim of Christianity in this particular were false, it ought to be branded as a detestable imposture. It is the product of arrogance and moral corruption. This exalted position belongs of right to the Christian religion. It is the adequate, the final, the supreme authoritative system by which all other systems, before and since, are to be judged, their deficiencies made good, and their multiform errors corrected.

But how is the authority of Jesus established? The answer to this question is the evidences of Chris-

tianity. His personal character, the sublimity and wisdom which every one must recognize in at least a great portion of his teaching, with the miracles that attend it, are an important part of the proof. The Gospel narrative, however, brings to our attention a peculiar verification of this claim, which lay in the tone in which Christ taught. "He speaks as one having authority."

Unlike the scribes, the Judaic schoolmen, who plied the people with their endless distinctions, their wire-drawn casuistry, and their traditional doctrines, Christ spoke directly to the soul from a direct intuition of the truth. Take, for example, a single passage (and you might take any other as well): "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, love your enemies . . . that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." "I say unto you"—this is the tone of assured knowledge. Here is One who is conscious of being authorized to teach. Even now, when we do not hear the living voice of Jesus, but only read what he said, it is still most impressive. This indescribable air and manner, when you see how it is blended with a strange humility, and the absence of all self-seeking, strikes the soul with irresistible effect. It is true that the contents of his teaching were such as to harmonize with this impression and strengthen it. There was an adaptation to the conscience, a depth of wisdom, a power of rebuke and of consolation, which agreed well with the authoritative tone. He spake, as to matter as well as manner, as never man spake. But it was far from being true that the whole of his teaching was at once intelligible to every hearer, or commended itself as self-evident, however docile the hearer might be. There were "heavenly things" which must be received, now as then, upon the testimony of Jesus. "If it were not so, I would have told you." And it is in regard to that portion of his teaching which does not instantly verify itself, that his authority, in a special sense, is acknowledged. There are two extremes. There is the external view, that would rest everything on mere authority, giving no value to any proof but that of miracles, and counting our judgment as to the truth and loftiness of doctrine as of no account. This is one extreme.

The other is the rationalistic or mystical position that nothing is to be received which is not discerned or felt to be true. The right position is neither of these. There is authority; everything is not understood and felt at once, and by every mind; but there is a partial and growing discernment, and this one day will be co-extensive with the whole teaching of Christ. In a word, we are disciples,—seeing enough to justify us in taking this reverent position. The most of the objections to the principle of authority in religion are removed the moment that one is willing to admit that, here in this life, we are and must be in a condition of pupilage. We are and must be learners. We come to Christ in this capacity. We are at the beginning of our existence; our powers are immature; the nature of our life on the earth debars us from direct experience in relation to the world beyond. Add to this that sin has come in to darken our spiritual perception, and to disable us, to a considerable extent, from that discernment and inward assurance of religious truth which are naturally possible to an unfallen soul. That sinful creatures of God, in the early period of their existence, should be in a state of pupilage, and subject, to a certain degree, to authority in the acquiring of knowledge, so far from being an indignity or a hardship, results from a Father's mercy. The simple proposition is that the pupil at the outset does not know all that the Master knows. He knows enough to choose the Master, and to sit at his feet.

Is difficulty made because revelation does not continue, but is consummated in Christ? The difficulty is solved when we remember that it is revelation. It is not a human science, that is growing from age to age, and never attains to perfection. It is not a product of human investigation and reflection, which is forever to be enlarged and rectified. There is some reason, perhaps, for surprise that the coming of Christ was delayed so long and occurred at so late a day. But the method of God is never magical, and a long preparation was required. Even if Christianity were not of supernatural origin, I am not at all sure that the theory of an indefinite progress in religion would hold. It is true that countless arts and sciences advance from step to step, without coming to a halt. But Homer lived in the dawn of European history, and the poetry of Homer has never been surpassed.

The modern sculptor hardly hopes to rival the works of predecessors who lived thousands of years ago. Within the sphere of intuition in the realm of genius, this principle of progress must be applied with caution. Insight, feeling, imagination, the deeper forces of spirit, do not wait for the slow march of civilization. They are more like instinct, a gift of Heaven. However, it matters not what could have been the fact, had God not chosen to communicate, through inspired teachers, his truth and his will to mankind. He has made a revelation, and it is not strange that he has made it complete, and that he brought the great historic movement in which the natural and supernatural were so closely united, to a climax in the mission of Christ.—Geo. P. Fisher, in *Christian at Work*.

PURE AMID IMPURITY.

I ONCE stepped upon a wharf, and made my way toward a vessel in which I was to make a voyage of several hundred miles; but, lo, what a sight! She was a collier, and the coal was just now being emptied by men who were so covered with the dust that filled the air, that they looked as black as the coal itself.

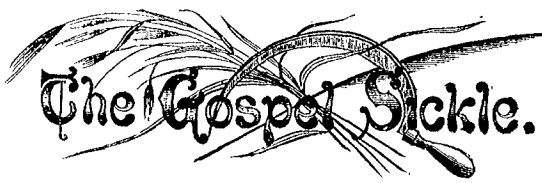
What a prospect for a voyage of comfort—everything blackened with coal dust so that nothing could be touched without soiling the hands! Decks, ropes, railing, everything alike—black, black, black—blacker, blacker, blacker; from stem to stern all was blackness and dirt. The little pet dog that lived on board, and was said to be white, was very far from white now; and the hope that I could escape the general contamination if I went on board seemed impossible. And yet I did go on board, and passed the voyage in cleanliness and comfort, notwithstanding I was on board such a collier as I have described.

Do you ask me how this could be possible, after what I have said? I answer: I took up my berth with the captain. On that dirty ship the captain had delightful apartments, neat, cosy, well furnished, and above all, scrupulously clean, despite the dirt outside. Here I found white linen upon the beds, and clean covers upon the tables; easy chairs, sofa, rich carpets, mirrors and pictures upon the wall. Sitting there, chatting with the captain, or reading from some choice book in his library, it seemed impossible there could be so much dirt all around. True, the only way to escape it was to stay with the captain.

But a change came upon the ship itself. Soon the coal was all emptied out, the voyage commenced, and the hands were put to work cleaning the vessel. Brooms, buckets, and water were freely used at the captain's order, and before long the dirt was gone. The cleanness of the cabin had spread all over the ship, and she was as clean as a pleasure boat. Then we could roam from stem to stern at will, for all was clean.

This is a polluted world we are in; from stem to stern it is impure. It is so unclean that we are commanded not to touch the unclean thing. The very air is full of the flying uncleanness; so that, if we but walk across her decks, we are in danger of breathing its impurities into our souls. But even in this unclean world we can be pure. Stay with the Captain; all is holy where he is. As he is, so are we in this world. We have the invitation, "Abide with me." By and by the Captain will purify the ship, and all shall be pure.—Rev. E. Stubbs, in *Christian Standard*.

We believe that moral reforms must be wrought by moral agencies. Christians must do Christian work by Christian methods, and in the spirit of Christ. Men are to be saved, not by wholesale, but one at a time. The gospel must be preached to every creature; it is the personal message of a personal salvation. All this we firmly hold, and have no disposition to substitute other agencies or methods. But can it be wondered at that Christian zeal and endeavor are paralyzed in view of the fact that the whisky saloon, the fountain and fortress of vice, is entrenched behind the law, and that the statutes against the social evil are a dead letter? The law of the land itself becomes the minister of evil, and the officer of the law the protector rather than the terror of evil-doers. The Christianity that thus crystallizes itself into heathen practices cannot be wholly genuine; it is a sham Christianity in so far as it supports or compromises with these evils.—Nashville Christian Advocate.



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

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., AUGUST 1, 1888.

OBJECTIONS TO SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

We are to consider, in this article, the question of the infliction of capital punishment, under the old dispensation, for the sin of Sabbath-breaking. This matter was brought up in the letter of our correspondent that was published in the *SICKLE* for June 1. The objection was stated thus: "We are all familiar with the commandment in regard to the Sabbath; but I have been looking up references, and find that in Ex. 31:15, God, speaking through Moses, said: 'Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.' . . . Again: in Ex. 35:2, God repeats this warning, saying, 'Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.'" Our correspondent takes the position that the requirement to inflict capital punishment for the sin of Sabbath-breaking must have been of equal force and perpetuity with the Sabbath-commandment itself; or at least with the commandment to observe the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. Rightly concluding that the death-penalty is not in this dispensation to be inflicted for Sabbath-breaking, our correspondent erroneously decides that therefore the commandment for the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is no longer in force. Speaking of those who violate the seventh-day Sabbath, she says, "Why not stone them to death, as the Lord commanded Moses?"

Before proceeding to explain why the death-penalty is not inflicted upon violators of law under this dispensation, as it was under the old, we wish to notice one point,—that many other offenses besides Sabbath-breaking were under the old dispensation punishable with death.

1. *Idolatry, actual or virtual in any shape—the violation of the first and second commandments.* "If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; . . . then shalt thou arise; forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die." Deut. 17:2, 3, 5. See also Lev. 20:2 and Deut. 13:6, 10, 15. That the death penalty was actually inflicted for idolatry see Numbers 25:2-9.

2. *Blasphemy—the violation of the third commandment.* "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him." "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him; as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord shall be put to death." "And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones; and the children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses." Lev. 24:13, 14, 16, 23. See also 1 Kings 21:10 and Matt. 26:65, 66.

3. *The dishonoring of parents—a violation of the fifth commandment.* "And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death." "And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death." Ex. 21:15, 17.

4. *Murder—the violation of the sixth commandment.* "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death." "But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbor, to slay with guile, thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die." Ex. 21:12, 14. See also Lev. 24:17, 21; Numbers 35:31; Deut. 19:11, 12.

5. *Adultery—the violation of the seventh commandment.* "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death." Lev. 20:10. See also Deut. 22:22; John 8:5. Unchastity, rape, and incest were also punishable by death. See Deut. 22:21, 23; Lev. 21:9; Deut. 22:25; Lev. 20:11, 14, 15; Ex. 22:19.

6. *Stealing, lying, and covetousness—the violation of the eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments.* In the sixth and seventh chapters of Joshua is an account of the sin of Achan and its punishment by the infliction of the death penalty. His crimes were those of covetousness, stealing, and lying. Chap. 7:11, 21. His act of concealing the stolen property was lying of an omnibable type. He was punished by death.

From the foregoing it is evident that under the

Mosaic dispensation, the death penalty was inflicted for the violation of any one of the ten commandments. The Sabbath commandment was not singled out, and its violation visited with a penalty different from that inflicted for the violation of the other nine; they were all treated alike.

It follows that if the reasoning of our correspondent (viz., that a law accompanied with the death penalty under the Mosaic dispensation is not in force under the present) be valid, then none of the ten commandments are in force under the present dispensation. This method of reasoning sweeps them all away, and leaves us with absolutely nothing upon which to base morality. It is not possible that any person in the possession of his reasoning faculties would insist upon the adoption of this system of logic. We believe we are safe in saying that none who read this article will ever be found to urge as an objection to the seventh-day Sabbath under the present dispensation, that the death penalty was inflicted for its violation under the Mosaic economy.

But why should the death penalty be inflicted for the violation of the ten commandments under the Mosaic economy, and not during the present dispensation? This question is easily answered. The form of government of the Israelites, from the time they were delivered from Egyptian bondage to the time of the kings, was that of a pure theocracy. In this form of government Jehovah, the God of the universe, was directly recognized as the supreme civil ruler, and his laws were taken as the statute book of the kingdom. The ten commandments were the fundamental law of the nation.

"This principle is repeatedly laid down in the Mosaic code, and was continually acted upon thereafter. Moses was but the appointee and agent of Jehovah in giving the law and in delivering the people from Egypt; and throughout the Exode the constant presence of God in the pillar and the cloud, as well as upon the mercy-seat, was on every occasion looked to for guidance and control. So, likewise, Joshua and the judges were special 'legates of the skies' to perform their dictatorial functions. Even under the monarchy, God reserved the chief direction of affairs for himself. The kings were each specifically anointed in his name, and prophets were from time to time commissioned to inform them of his will, who did not hesitate to rebuke and even veto their actions if contrary to the divine will. The whole later history of the chosen people is but a rehearsal of this conflict and intercourse between the Great Head of the kingdom and the refractory functionaries."—*McClintock and Strong*.

This explains why the death-penalty was inflicted for a violation of the ten commandments, under the Mosaic dispensation. Death is the penalty for violation of God's law. 1 John 3:4 says: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." Eze. 18:20 says: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" and Rom. 6:23 says: "The wages of sin is death." By putting these texts together, it is quite evident that the penalty of the decalogue is death.

It is evident, then, that it could not have been otherwise than that the death-penalty should be visited upon offenders under a theocratical form of government. Consistency required that such should be the case.

The theocracy of Israel in its completeness began to wane with the commencement of the reign of the kings. The people rejected God's direct government over them, and wanted kings, and a form of government resembling that of other nations around them. God permitted them to have their own way, and the result was that they continued to depart farther and farther from God, and God continued to interfere less and less with their governmental affairs, until their utter and complete rejection. There has never been a theocracy since that of Israel. The nations of earth have formed their own fundamental laws as has suited their inclinations or the caprice of those occupying positions of authority, and penalties have been prescribed accordingly.

The cessation of the theocracy of Israel, and the fact that no such form of government has prevailed since then, do not affect the law of God in the least. Its validity, jurisdiction, and perpetuity remain the same. The commandment requiring the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, is one of the precepts of that law; and the fact that its violation under the Mosaic economy was visited by the death-penalty, no more militates against its validity and jurisdiction under this dispensation than the same fact does against any of the other nine commandments. The penalty for breaking God's law also remains unchanged, and will eventually be inflicted upon all who are found guilty of its violation. The death that will finally be inflicted upon violators

of God's law will be the second death, from which there will be no resurrection. May the reader and writer both escape that penalty is our prayer.

G. W. M.

THE SAINTS' INHERITANCE.

THE Scriptures are replete with information concerning the final home of the saved, and the language that is used is sufficiently plain and explicit to admit of a clear and unmistakable interpretation. The prospect of a home provided by God for those who obtain full and final salvation, is held out as a prominent incentive to action in complying with the conditions of the plan of salvation. The theme of the "Saints' Inheritance" thus becomes one of great importance, and one that is within our province to study and understand in general terms, if not in minute detail.

1. What did Jesus say of the meek?

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5:5.

The purpose of God has not been frustrated by the fall of man. God's original design will yet be carried out, and the earth be possessed by man in an upright state. As St. Peter says, "We look for new heavens and a new earth [renewed earth] wherein dwelleth righteousness." Some paraphrase this text, "Wherein the righteous shall dwell," which probably gives the correct idea, and shows that God's purpose concerning the earth will be accomplished when he fills the earth with his immortal saints, composed of those who have believed and obeyed him.

2. What promise did the Lord make to Abraham?

"And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever." Gen. 13:14, 15.

"The promise of the land for a possession is *ad hunc diem*, unto eternity. The divine promise is unchangeable. As the seed of Abram should have an eternal existence before God, so also Canaan is the eternal possession of this seed. But this does not avail for the natural descendants of Abram as such, or his seed according to the flesh, but for the true spiritual seed, who receive the promise by faith, and hold it in believing hearts. This promise, therefore, neither prevents the exclusion of the unbelieving seed from the land of Canaan, nor secures to the Jews a return to the earthly Palestine after their conversion. Through Christ the promise is raised from its temporal form to its real nature; through him the whole earth becomes a Canaan."—*Keil*, quoted in Schaff's Commentary on Genesis, p. 398.

"Both Abraham and Jacob had small parcels of land in Canaan; but they had them by *purchase*, not by God's gift; for, as Abraham was obliged to *buy a burying place* in Canaan (Gen. 23), it is obvious he had no inheritance there."—*Clarke*.

3. Has this promise ever been wholly fulfilled?

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." Heb. 11:9.

"And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts 7:5.

"Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." Heb. 11:12-14.

"No intelligent Jew could suppose that Canaan was all the *rest* which God had promised to his people."—*Clarke*.

4. What city and country did Abraham and his children look for?

"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:10, 16.

This testimony shows that when Abraham was in the land, he did not receive his inheritance; for he was then only an *heir*, and he was a *stranger* in a land he should *after* receive. Again, when he does receive the final accomplishment of the promise, he will receive a city with foundations, "whose builder and maker is God." This city seems so fully to accord with the one described in the book of Revelation, that one would conclude it was the new earth with the New Jerusalem upon it, that Abraham expected finally to receive.

5. Does the promise still hold good?

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Isa. 55: 11-13.

6. How much of the earth does it include?

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. 4: 13.

"An heir is one who succeeds, or is to succeed, to an estate. In this passage, *the world*, or the entire earth, is regarded as the *estate* to which reference is made, and the promise is, that the posterity of Abraham should succeed to that, or should possess it as their inheritance."—Barnes.

7. Who is connected with Abraham in this promise?

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal. 3: 16.

"Christ is certainly the heir, only. He is the heir in order to procure for his people the participation of the inheritance, and therewith the blessing of God. And, as is self-evident, it is this truth, namely, that he in turn brings the inheritance into the possession of his people."—Schaff.

"Though Abraham had so little of the world in possession, yet he was heir of it all. Or rather, it points at Christ, the Seed here mentioned. 'To thy Seed, which is Christ.' Now Christ is the heir of the world."—Henry.

8. What did the prophet Daniel, when in vision, see given to the Son of man?

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7: 13, 14.

"It is plain from the eleventh verse, that the grand event predicted in this passage is his glorious coming to destroy the kingdom of every anti-Christian power, and to render his own kingdom universal upon earth."—Scott.

"There cannot be the slightest doubt, in view of the entire description, particularly in verse 14, and also in view of the exactly corresponding signification of the destroying stone, in the parallel vision of the 2d chapter (see 2: 44), that this superhuman form of man represents the Messiah, the Divine-human founder of that fifth world-kingdom, which is . . . of eternal duration."—Schaff.

9. Will he receive this kingdom while the earth is in its present condition?

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18: 36.

"The discussion merely concerns the relation of Christ's kingdom to the kingdoms of the world. . . . In no way whatever does it limit the extent of the kingdom of God itself. Like the kingdom of truth, it has a necessary tendency to become universal and all-prevalent, and to transform not only the spiritual, but ultimately also the material, world."—Olshausen, vol. 3, p. 71.

10. What will finally become of earthly kingdoms?

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2: 34, 35.

"We must understand that here a scene transpires of so much more violence and force and power than the overthrow of one nation by another through the strife of war, that the latter is not worthy even of mention in connection with it. The subjugation of one nation by another by war, is a scene of peace and quietude, in comparison with that which transpires when the image is dashed in pieces by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands."—Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation.

11. What will become of the earth and the works that are therein?

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,

the earth also; and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3: 10.

12. Nevertheless, what did Peter look for?

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Verse 13.

"This does not denote an ideal state of blessedness, but a real spirituo-corporeal body-world."—Schaff.

The earth is to become an abode for the righteous after it is purified by fire; and yet, after that purification, it will be the earth that is now, in the same sense that this earth is the one that existed before the flood. This earth is made of the same material that existed before the flood, and yet it is said that "the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." And so of this earth: when it has been melted, and undergone a change by the action of fire, it will become a new earth, in which the saints will dwell.

13. What has God promised to do with the earth?

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isa. 65: 17. "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." Rev. 21: 5.

Commenting on Isa. 65: 17, Dr. Barnes says: "It cannot be doubted that under this imagery there was couched a reference to far more important changes and blessings in future times under the Messiah,—changes as great as if a barren and sterile world should become universally beautiful and fertile."

14. What was shown to John in addition to the new earth?

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. 21: 1, 2.

For a more full description of this city, read verses 10-23 of the same chapter.

15. When the earth is made new, who is to take possession of the kingdom?

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11: 15.

In this verse the prophet glances forward to the full establishment of the kingdom of Christ in the earth made new.

16. With whom are the children of God joint-heirs?

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom. 8: 16, 17.

17. And heirs according to what promise?

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3: 29.

Christ's children could not be said to be heirs of a promise if that promise were already fulfilled. Jews, after the flesh, are not heirs of the final inheritance in Christ simply because they are descendants of Abraham; but, as expressed by St. Paul, "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

18. When they come into possession of their heirship, what will they receive?

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. 7: 27.

The testimony of the prophet Daniel is clear proof of the position that the earth is finally to become the kingdom of God. A kingdom under the *whole* heaven could be nothing less than the whole earth. So his former statement, "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom," implies clearly that they will take as their kingdom the same territory as that over which the four beasts have borne rule.

19. When all this is completed, what prayer will be fully answered?

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." Matt. 6: 9-13.

By reading our Saviour's testimony, as recorded by St. Matthew, we gain a further clue to the *time* of giving the kingdom to the saints, as well as its location, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep

from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

20. By what means may we share in the saints' inheritance?

"And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1: 5-11.

Reader, are you seeking for a home in the earth made new?

G. W. M.

APPROACH OF THE DAY OF THE LORD.

Our last paper considered the application of Paul's "man of sin," "son of perdition," etc., quotations from several commentators being given. We will continue the investigation of testimony of this nature.

Bishop Newton maintains that the foundations of popery were laid in the apostles' days, and that the superstructure was raised by degrees; and this is entirely in accordance with the statements of the apostle Paul. In his own time, he says, there were things which, if not restrained, would expand and ripen into that apostasy. He has not told us particularly to what he refers, but there are several intimations in his writings, as well as in other parts of the New Testament, that even in the apostolic age there existed the elements of those corruptions which were afterwards developed and embodied in the papacy. Even 'then,' says Bishop Newton, 'idolatry was stealing into the church (1 Cor. 10: 14), and a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels. Col. 2: 18. There existed strife and divisions (1 Cor. 3: 3), an adulterating and handling the word of God deceitfully (2 Cor. 2: 17; 4: 2), a gain of godliness, teaching of things for filthy lucre's sake (1 Tim. 6: 5; Titus 1: 11), a vain observation of festivals (Gal. 4: 10), a vain distinction of meats (1 Cor. 8: 8), a neglecting of the body (Col. 2: 23), traditions, and commandments, and doctrines of men (Col. 2: 8, 22). . . . These things constituted the elements of the corruptions which were afterwards developed in the papacy, and which are embodied in that system.'—Barnes.

Commenting on 2 Thess. 2: 3, 4, Dr. Thomas Scott says:—

"All the circumstances of this prediction were never verified, except in that departure from the faith, and that usurpation and spiritual tyranny connected with it, which took place by means of the church of Rome. . . . In connection with this apostasy, 'the man of sin' would be revealed. In the language of prophecy, a king generally signifies a succession of monarchs, of the same family or dynasty, carrying on the same design. Thus 'the man of sin' does not mean a single person, but a succession of men, impious in themselves; and conducting the same wicked design of corrupting Christianity, in doctrine, worship, and practice; establishing an intolerable tyranny on religious pretenses; and using all kinds of seduction, iniquity, and cruel persecution, to induce mankind to adopt the anti-Christian system. . . . It is manifest that no succession of men has yet appeared on earth, to whom this description fully accords, except that of the Roman pontiffs, as in succession the visible head of the popish church. This deceiver would oppose and exalt himself 'above all that is called God, or that is worshiped,' either by Christians or pagans. Thus the Roman pontiffs have opposed the truths, commandments, and disciples of Christ, in every age and by every means; they have opposed the prophetic office of Christ, by teaching human inventions; his priestly office by teaching human merits and created intercessors; and his kingly office by changing and dispensing with his laws. . . . They have exalted themselves 'above all that is called God, or that is worshiped' by claiming authority to forgive sins, even in those who manifestly continue impenitent; by granting indulgences to men to break the commandments of God; by dispensing with his laws, and placing their own decrees above them, as if of superior validity; and by presuming to give meaning and authority to the Scriptures themselves. . . . The Roman pontiff, claiming to be the universal head of the whole church of God; called by his flatterers 'Vice God,' 'a God upon earth;' arrogating the title of 'His Holiness,' boasting of 'infallibility,' claiming a right to depose kings and bestow kingdoms on whom he pleases; with these impious claims before mentioned, answers so exactly to the description here given, that we cannot reasonably doubt for whom it was designed."

Here is what John Calvin says on the same subject:—

"Now every one has learned from Scripture what are the things that more especially belong to God, and will, on the other hand, observe what the pope claims for himself—though he were but a boy of ten years of age—will have no great difficulty in recognizing Antichrist. Scripture declares God is the *alone Lawgiver* (James 4:12), *who is able to save and to destroy*; the *alone King*, whose office it is to govern souls by his word. It represents him as the author of all sacred rites; it teaches that righteousness and salvation are to be sought from Christ alone; and it assigns, at the same time, the manner and the means. There is not one of these things that the pope does not affirm to be under his authority. He boasts that it is his to bind consciences with such laws as seem good to him, and subject them to everlasting punishment. As to sacraments, he either institutes new ones, according to his own inclination, or he corrupts and deforms those which have been instituted by Christ—nay, sets them aside altogether, that he may substitute in their place the sacrifices which he has invented. He contrives means of attaining salvation that are altogether at variance with the doctrine of the Gospel; and, in fine, he does not hesitate to change the whole of religion at his own pleasure. What is it, I pray you, for one to lift up himself above everything that is reckoned God, if the pope does not do so? When he thus robs God of his honor, he leaves him nothing remaining but an empty title of Deity, while he transfers to himself the whole of his power. And that is what Paul adds shortly afterwards, that *the son of perdition would show himself as God.*"

We will conclude this article with an extract from the "History of Romanism," by John Dowling, D. D., p. 27:—

"It is an important fact that popery is plainly a subject of prophetic prediction in the sacred Scriptures; and though the almost entire subversion of true Christianity, which occurred in the course of only a few centuries, might otherwise have a tendency to stagger our faith in its divine origin, yet when it is remembered that this great anti-Christian apostasy, or 'falling away' (*αποστασία*) happened in exact accordance with the 'Scriptures of truth' the fact serves to strengthen rather than to shake our faith in the divinity of our holy religion. Not long ago the remark was made by a Roman Catholic, 'The Bible cannot be true without Holy Mother Rome.' He meant to say that the pope gives it all its evidence and authority. 'Very true,' said a Protestant; 'for as the Holy Bible has predicted the rise, power, and calamities of popery—if these predictions had not been fully manifested in the actual existence and tremendous evils of popery, the Bible would have wanted the fulfillment of its prophecies, and therefore would not have been true.' The same thought was recently suggested in an eloquent discourse by Professor Gaussens, of Geneva, before his theological class. 'In pointing to the pope,' said he, '*we point to a miracle which calls upon us to believe the Bible.* Considered in this view, the obduracy of the Romanists, like the obduracy of the Jews, wonderfully instructs the church *because it has been foretold*; and thus it is that the scandals of Rome are transformed into an eloquent argument. The sovereign pontiff and the Romish hierarchy become, in this way, admirable supports of the truth.'

To prove that popery is the subject of prophetic prediction, it would be easy to produce a multitude of passages, but we shall content ourselves for the present with citing entire the full length portrait of the Romish apostasy in the second epistle to the Thessalonians, chapter two."

It will next be in order to consider the development, progress, and present status of the "man of sin."
G. W. M.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION: IS IT COMPLETED?—NO. 5.

In order to keep before the reader the line of thought that is being pursued in this series of articles, we will repeat three propositions that have been stated in previous numbers: 1. Any reformation is but partial that does not restore to us Bible truths cherished by Christ and his apostles, and banish from our communion erroneous doctrines and practices unknown in their day. 2. Proceeding to an investigation of the situation from this stand-point, we find that concerning the weekly Sabbath, the practices of the Roman Church are adhered to by the vast majority of Protestants, in preference to the plain teachings of the New Testament. 3. Under this second proposition it was stated that the apostles observed as-sacred the seventh day of the week instead of the first. In support of this statement, two arguments were presented in our last number. We continue:—

(3.) In the Acts of the Apostles, written by Inspiration thirty years after the cross, no change of language concerning the Sabbath is to be found. The

seventh day is treated with the same consideration as in the great moral code. It is honored with the same sacred title. All other days are simply numbered; this, alone, is distinguished by name, being always referred to as "the Sabbath." Note a few examples.

"They came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down." Acts 13:14. That this was the seventh day no one disputes. By dictation of God's Spirit it is called "the Sabbath." Was it the Sabbath, the rest day? Men answer in the negative, but God in the affirmative. "Let God be true." If our practice prevents our adopting the terms used by the apostles, our practice needs regulating. What reply can men make to so plain a text?—Nothing more than to say that Paul went there on the Sabbath simply to secure a congregation. But does that weaken the argument?—Not in the least. It is immaterial what he went into the synagogue for; God says that day upon which he did go there was "the Sabbath." Then it *was* the Sabbath.

"And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made." Acts 16:13. Here again all are agreed that the seventh day is referred to. How do we know this was the Sabbath?—Because it says so. Not a Sabbath, nor the *old* Sabbath, nor the Jews' Sabbath, nor the day that used to be the Sabbath, but "the Sabbath." Reader, do you call that day "the Sabbath" which God calls "the Sabbath" here in the New Testament? If not, why not? What authority have you for applying this sacred title to another day? Inspiration says the seventh day was the Sabbath thirty years after the cross. If it was then, it is now.

"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." Acts 17:2. Here again God says a certain day was the Sabbath. What day was it?—The seventh day, the day on which services were held at the synagogue. No one disputes this. Was that day the Sabbath?—Yes. How do we know it was?—Because God says so. If it was then, it is now. Other texts might be cited, but these are sufficient to show what name the inspired apostles applied to the seventh day after the resurrection.

(4.) The New Testament teaches the seventh day to be the *only* rest day.

"Because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day." Acts 13:27. All admit the Sabbath here referred to was the seventh day. *Every* Sabbath must have included all there were. The prophets were read only upon the seventh day, and this was *every* Sabbath. "Sabbath" means *rest*. Hence the apostles were strangers to any rest day except the seventh day. "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." Acts 15:21. The day of worship in the synagogues was the seventh day, and that included *every* Sabbath, or rest day, there was. Then all others were excluded. The term "the Sabbath" shows there was but one Sabbath then known. Had there been two, some such expressions as "Christian," "Jewish," "old," "new," as used in modern times, would have been needed to designate which one was referred to.

(5.) The New Testament shows the seventh day to have been the day upon which all Gentile Christians were accustomed to meet for worship. In Acts 15 we learn what duties were laid upon Gentile converts by the Apostolic council. Four things only are enumerated. Verse 20. But we are not to suppose these included all that God requires of them, otherwise, they might swear, steal, kill, lie, etc. Where, then, would they learn more fully of these moral duties?—In the synagogue on the Sabbath. The reason James gives for not specifying other moral duties, we find recorded thus: "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." Verse 21. How would this benefit Gentile Christians if they did not go there on the Sabbath? A person unable to see a point so plain must have very dim spiritual eye-sight.

In the 18th chapter of Acts we find Paul at Corinth working at his trade, in partnership with Aquila, a Jew. "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Verse 4. "But," you say, "he could not work the seventh day, even if he were disposed to, for his partner, being a Jew, observed that day as holy." Why, then, I ask, did Paul select such a partner? Do you say that the preaching was in the synagogue, and that upon no other day but the seventh did a congrega-

tion there assemble to whom he could preach, and that this was a Jewish and not a Christian audience? Read the verses following our text. We learn that "when they opposed themselves, . . . he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. . . . And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." Acts 18:6-11. Here we find the Sabbath services of these Christian believers continuing for years *after* they were expelled from the synagogue, and Paul preaching to them while still making tents on the other six days. Consider, dear reader, this plain example,—Christian believers worshiping for years on the seventh-day Sabbath, and led in their worship by the greatest of the apostles.

Another instance of Christians' holding services on the seventh day is recorded in Acts 13. Paul had been preaching on the Sabbath to the Jews. Verse 14. "And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath." Verse 42. Many of them were brought to Christ by that sermon, for "many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, persuaded them to *continue* in the grace of God." Verse 43. Here were Gentile Christians requesting Paul to make an appointment for their benefit. How easy and natural, if the Sabbath had been changed, for him now to enlighten their minds concerning the Gentile Sabbath! He would have said, "To-morrow is the first day of the week, the resurrection day, and the appropriate day for Christians to Sabbathize. I have been addressing the Jews on the seventh day because they gather on no other day; but if I am to preach to Gentile Christians, we will meet to-morrow. No need of waiting a whole week, for to-morrow is the Christian Sabbath." Did he use any such language as this?—No. Why?—Because it was not true. They knew nothing about any change in the day; for they waited a week for the next Sabbath to come. "And the next Sabbath came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." Verse 44. That was a meeting held under the auspices of Gentile Christians, and yet on the seventh-day Sabbath, and doubtless at some other place besides the synagogue. These texts abundantly prove that meetings were appointed for, and constantly held by, Gentile Christians on the seventh day. This, so far as the record goes, was invariably their day of worship.

(6.) The apostles or Gentile Christians were never accused, even by their most bitter enemies, of violating the Lord's Sabbath. This point is worthy of notice. The Jews hated the apostles, and never failed to mention every instance of their apparent disrespect for Moses and the law. They were always watching for some occasion of complaint against Paul. How many times they unjustly charged Christ with Sabbath-breaking! Would they have treated Paul with more levity?—Certainly not. But did they ever accuse him of Sabbath-breaking?—Not once. Among all their charges they never arraigned him for violating the fourth commandment. Besides, Paul himself plainly stated, when on trial, "Neither against the law of the Jews . . . have I offended anything at all." Acts 25:8. And to the Jews at Rome he said, "I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers." Acts 28:17. As Paul's fathers were Jews, and kept the seventh day, could he have truthfully made this statement, and yet have lived in violation of the day they held sacred?

(7.) Neither Christ nor his apostles used Sunday for religious worship. As far as the record shows, they avoided holding meetings on that day. At the resurrection, Christ permitted the whole day to pass before even appearing to the twelve disciples. John 20:19. This was not without a purpose. It was no plan of his to establish a precedent for Sunday worship. And when he did appear at the day's close, it was without previous intimation or appointment, while they were eating supper, a common meal (Mark 16:14); and without the least expectation on their part of seeing him. The next recorded meeting (John 20:26) was "after eight days." This would reach, at least, till the second Monday,—just past Sunday. Why was the first day thus avoided? These examples are significant.

The only other meeting mentioned in connection with the first day of the week is in Acts 20:7. But this was a night meeting; for "there were many

lights in the upper chamber." Verse 8. Hence the meeting must have occurred Saturday night; for the day, as then reckoned, ended at sundown. (See commentaries and Bible dictionaries.) At day-break the meeting closed (verse 11), and Paul then resumed his journey toward Jerusalem. Why did he avoid holding services on Sunday? Why did he not remain to preach in the forenoon as modern ministers would have done? It may have been to avoid leaving a wrong example for after generations to follow. On the other hand, we have the distinct record of Paul's preaching the word upon eighty-four seventh-day Sabbaths! Where lies the strength of apostolic example?

(8.) Sunday was devoted to secular business by the apostolic church. Notice the first Sunday after the cross, the day of the resurrection. Luke 24:1. The day before all were "resting the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Upon that day the holy women would not even embalm the sacred body of their Lord. But Sunday morning dawns. The proper day for labor has arrived. Behold the activity manifested from early morn till fading light. Shining messengers were dispatched from glory's gates to roll the stone away. That was work. The holy women hastened to the tomb to perform the labor they would not do on the Lord's sacred rest-day. Work again. All the guard started in confusion for the city to report these wonders. More bustle. Two of the disciples came running excitedly to the sepulcher. No sacred rest in that. Two disciples walked fifteen miles before sundown. Hard work again. Christ went with them on this long journey. Thus Sunday was stamped as a working-day by God's own Son. And in the evening the eleven assembled to eat the common meal. Thomas was absent, probably on business. Not much Sabbath rest or sacredness here, surely.

Again take the case of the disciples mentioned in Acts 20. Saturday night and Sunday, Luke and others were working their ship around forty miles of sea-coast. That was wearing labor, as every sailor knows. That same Sunday, Paul traveled on foot from Troas to Assos (verses 13, 14,) a distance of nearly twenty miles,—a physical feat which would put to the test the muscular endurance of many modern theologians. Whatever sacredness Sunday might have possessed, was trampled into the dust by that long, weary march of the great apostle. This was work, not rest.

In 1 Cor. 16:2, Paul commands certain secular business to be done on Sunday. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." "By him" is at home, not at church. Balancing accounts to ascertain the amount of our profits, is certainly a business transaction, and might require hours of labor.

Thus we see the testimony of the New Testament concerning the Sabbath to be, (1.) That the Lord's day was the seventh-day Sabbath; (2.) That the Sabbath for this dispensation comes just before the first day of the week; (3.) That in the Acts of the Apostles the seventh day is still declared to be "the Sabbath;" (4.) That the seventh day is the *only* rest-day; (5.) That the seventh day was the day upon which all Gentile Christians met for worship; (6.) That Christians were never accused by the Jews of working upon the seventh day; (7.) That Christ and his apostles avoided Sunday as a day of religious worship; but (8.) That Sunday was devoted by angels, Christ, apostles, and church-members to secular labor and business. Where, then, did Sunday-sacredness originate? We shall see.

W. C. WALES.

The Theological World.

THE STANDARD LOWERED.

[The following, which we clip from the editorial columns of the *Christian Leader*, a Disciple paper published at Cincinnati, O., in its issue of May 29, is a truthful but appalling pen-picture of the modern worshiping establishments, misnamed churches of Christ; and we believe the writer has a true notion of religion and the standard of righteousness. Let every one give this article a careful reading, and then hand it to his neighbor.—L. Mc Coy.]

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is

death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 7:5-7.

It is painfully manifest that worldly-mindedness has seized the churches. All over this land the churches maintain a sort of moral respectability, but as to spirituality, it seems to have fled. No one can deny that the standard of righteousness has been lowered to meet "the spirit of the age," which, in plain terms, is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." A spirit of compromise pervades the religious world, and as a consequence a false standard of righteousness has been erected to please the demands of an exacting, dictating world. Little attempt is made to raise men up to a level with God's righteousness. It has come to be very unpopular to measure men by God's system of righteousness. Men go about to establish their own righteousness, and they positively refuse to submit themselves to the righteousness of God. The preacher who undertakes to measure men by God's standard of righteousness, will be dismissed from his post of duty gruffly and without ceremony. Such a man is pronounced a "fogy," a "crank," a "moss-back," and the churches submit to the reproach. Every possible effort is made to "please men," and the friendship of the world is sought after, and leaders in all the churches make little attempt to "please God." This is a severe arraignment, but who dare deny the statement?

Look at the standard of righteousness found in the churches of to-day. You can find a standard of morality, but morality is not the righteousness of God, though a component element of the divine system. Any moral man can be a member of the church, provided he does not steal and rob and commit murder and get drunk; and yet even drunkards are retained in the church if they make free use of their money in behalf of the church. Rich men are eagerly sought after by the church manipulators, and rich men are patted and flattered, and they are set in advance of men of high Christian character, simply because they represent wealth, and because their money is needed to give power and popularity to the denomination or to "our church." Men living in open adultery are harbored in the churches, because they have money and patronage. The churches want money, and they want a large amount of money; because by means of money they propose to advance the "interests of the church," and popularize "our denomination."

Men are retained in the churches who live by crooked speculation and speculation, who are guilty of all the tricks of trade, who extort money by taking advantage of the unfortunate, who oppress the hiring in his wages, and who exact illegal rates of interest. These are *quiet sins* known to the church authorities, but of which the church authorities are willfully ignorant, and who, by a false interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, allow the "tares" to grow up with the "wheat." The church—the modern church—seeks after numbers and wealth, and numbers and wealth mean power, and power gives influence. Just see how church-members—we don't mean Christians—run greedily after gain. See how these church-members seek place and power and worldly distinction just as eagerly and persistently as these things are sought after by the unregenerate men of the world. We speak of the tendency of carnality in the churches. We of course make exceptions of the noble few—devout and religious men—who really desire to accumulate means with which to honor God by advancing his cause and kingdom, and with which to establish the standard of God's righteousness.

No one—no intelligent, observing man—can deny the fact that the spirit of the world has largely taken possession of the church, and that decent morality has been substituted for spirituality. As illustrative of what we here assert, is the fact that the spirituality of the gospel has been expelled from the old songs of Zion, by the introduction of new-fangled music, purely secular and sensuous. The music of the dancing-halls and of the opera has been transferred to the fashionable place of worship, if a place of worship we may call it. The reading of the "lesson leaves" in the Sunday-school has supplanted the study of the Holy Scriptures. Everything connected with the worship of God has been cheapened. "Religion made easy" is now the standard motto of the modern church. Instead of convicting the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of the coming judgment, the modern church seeks the favor of the world, and craves the patronage of godless men and women. Moral men demand that the offense of the gospel be re-

moved, and it is removed. The spirit of the world which transfuses the churches, demands an "educated ministry," which, when properly interpreted, means a well-dressed clergyman; a man of soft tones and soft words; a man without pronounced convictions; a man who can gabble in Greek and Latin; a man who deals in "exegesis," "hermeneutics," "evolution," "protoplasm," "prognosis," "diagnosis," "dialectics," and "homiletics;" a man who gracefully bends to the whims and caprices of graceless choristers and cackling choir; a man who can utter elegant prayers over the dead body of a Christless Mason, and pronounce plaintive panegyrics over the remains of a godless Oddfellow; a man who, standing over the grave of a dead soldier, will magnify the sentiment of patriotism above the virtues of saintship; a man who from the pulpit politely addresses condemned sinners as "ladies and gentlemen;" a man who deals in glittering generalities, and who lacks the fortitude to rebuke sin in high places as well as in low places; a man who tolerates all error, and defines no line of essential and positive truth; a man who represents everything, but nothing in particular; a man who simply seeks a salary and popularity.

Thus it is that God's standard of righteousness is lowered. When a sinner is made to feel as happy in the house of the Lord as a saint; when no one is made to tremble at the word of God; when the promiscuous audience expects to be "entertained" by linguistic learning, and by literary and rhetorical display, and by the mocking mimicry of soloists and quartettes; when proud men and vain women occupy front seats and prescribe the polity of the church, and dictate a worldly policy—it is evident that Jesus of Nazareth is not present, and that he has been driven out of Judea into Galilee. When pastors are supported by the money of the whisky manufacturers; when money governs the church, and not godliness and Christian intelligence; when disreputable people are brought into the church, who remain disreputable, and are placed upon a social level with its best members; when theater-goers and the frequenters of parlor dances are regarded as among the "best-paying members" (as saith the pastor) in the church; when these amusement seekers have an equal voice in governmental affairs with the overseers, and they can vote out overseers, drive away an old-fashioned evangelist, and vote in a choir and chorister, and destroy congregational singing,—the evidence accumulates that God's standard of righteousness has been lowered, and that the spiritual image of the Son of God has been most shamefully marred and shockingly blurred.

Where is the line of demarkation between professors and non-professors? They equally run greedily after gain. They equally conform to the world. There is as much fashion and pride in the church as in the world. You will find nearly as many church-members in the theater as you find worldly people there. Many church-members are more often found in places of amusement, in the resorts of fun and frolic, than in the house of the Lord, or in the house of mourning. Church-members, and even preachers, run justly toward the goal of human ambition and political distinction as do the sons of Belial. See covetous church-members—even church officers—in the streets and in the market-places, stock-jobbing and pooling, and shaving notes, and driving hard bargains, and grinding the faces of the poor, with the same greediness and persistency that characterize the legalized gamblers of the coarse and cruel world. A church that has no kitchen and cupboard attachment; that has no refectory and confectionary; that has no "Mother Hubbard" department; in which is not heard the rattle and clatter of pots and kettles and the clang of tin pans; that is not in possession of stage scenery; that does not ornament the pastor's pulpit with exotic plants, from which is exhaled the aroma of spicy groves; that does not try to imitate the architecture of papal Rome, and invest its walls with the plastic touches of pagan art—is no church at all, according to the modern conception. And thus the standard of God's righteousness, has been lowered to the level of worldly expediency.

SOME one has said that "the saints are sometimes allowed to fall into an affliction, to preserve them from falling into a temptation." And we read in the Scriptures that "many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

THERE are many men whose tongues might govern multitudes, if they could govern their tongues.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., August 1, 1888.

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.

The last report of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association makes the assertion that seventy-five per cent of the young men of this country are never seen inside of any church; that only fifteen per cent of them can be said to be regular church-goers, and that but five per cent are communicants. And yet the National Reform party propose to have these very men, of whom but five per cent have religion enough to belong to any church, decide by ballot upon the question of legalizing the first-day Sabbath! The government now, according to the ideas of this party, being atheistic, it is proposed to make it Christian in character by the vote of the irreligious portion of its citizens!

THE DECALOGUE PERFECT.

The following tribute to the perfection of the ten commandments, and to the high morality of Old Testament teachings, is taken from "The Old Testament Vindicated," reprinted by the American Tract Society from "Companion to the Revised Version of the Old Testament," pp. 19, 20:—

"It is proper to begin with the assertion that the ethical rule of the Old Testament is perfect, absolutely perfect. It is contained in the decalogue, which, after laying a firm foundation in the obligations of religion, proceeds to build upon the foundation a code of social ethics, which never has been or can be surpassed, providing, as it does, for all relative duties, for life, for personal purity, for property, and for reputation, closing and riveting the whole by a precept which takes in the heart. The New Testament, so far from disowning or disparaging this rule of life, confirms and sanctions it in the strongest possible manner. Our Lord says expressly, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill' (Matt. 5:17), *i. e.*, as his further statements showed, to develop its deeper meaning, to guard against misconceptions, to remove false glosses, and to enable its subjects to keep it. So the great apostle said, 'The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' Rom. 7:12.

"Throughout the latter scripture, reference is continually made to the ten commandments as the permanent and authoritative standard of moral obligation. Matt. 15:4; 19:17-19; John 7:19; Acts 7:38; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 3:10; Eph. 6:2; Heb. 2:2; James 2:8-11; 4:11; 1 John 5:2, 3. Nothing in all history, nothing in the flights of human imagination, has ever exceeded the circumstances of majesty and awe amid which this divine code was announced to men. It was, and was intended to be, a complete summation of human duty."

It is very cheering to see this strong society, supported, as it is, by over twenty orthodox denominations of our land, taking such a scriptural stand in favor of God's law, in its publications. It is the ground upon which Seventh-day Adventists have ever stood.

David says, "The law of the Lord is perfect;" the American Tract Society says it is "absolutely perfect;" and we say, Amen. W. C. WALES.

A RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION IN JAPAN.

While so much is being said about an impending religious revolution in Japan, and, on the authority of the *Japan Mail* of Tokio, the government is actually considering the advisability of officially adopting Christianity as the national religion, it is interesting to notice the motives for such a step, which the discussion brings to light. It might be thought that a conviction of the divine truth of the Christian religion, and that alone, would constitute the mainspring of such an important move. But it seems that such is not the case. That motive which is all-powerful in leading the individual to accept Christianity—that convicting power which operates upon the individual conscience—is wholly wanting to the movement said to be in progress on the part of the Japanese government. Should the step be made, it will be but a repetition of what history tells us has heretofore been

done by governments where a State religion prevailed, and of which the celebrated act of Constantine in the fourth century is a noted example. Speaking of the position which the government and leading publicists of Japan are taking on the subject, the *Christian at Work* says:—

"They do not indeed accept the doctrine of Christianity, holding as they do that educated men should be guided by pure reason; but they think the adoption of the civilized creed essential to the perfection of their own civilization, and to the maintenance of a moral standard among their people. The Japanese, they say, have lost their old faiths; and it is indispensable for the safety of society that they should have a new one. Without it they will never obtain that strong coherence and reliance on each other which is essential to a powerful State. Among other reasons advanced for adopting Christianity, M——, a well-known Japanese writer, insists that Japan should take up with Christianity 'because it is the religion of the most highly civilized nation.' Professor Toyama, of the imperial university, supports this view, and alleges that Christianity would 'improve the Japanese music [!] and bring with it other advantages.' Others urge that religion is 'good for the uneducated,' and that the want of faith in the old religion has lowered the moral tone of the masses. Such are some of the curious grounds upon which the encouragement of Christianity is supported in Japan."

The *Christian at Work* recognizes the similarity of the situation to that which existed in the days of Constantine, but endeavors to derive some encouragement therefrom by claiming to see in this act of Constantine's a proceeding which "was blessed, ultimately, to a receiving and spreading of gospel truth all down the ages." This, however, is a very remarkable interpretation to place upon the act which changed the State religion of the Roman world from paganism to nominal Christianity, viewed in the light of the terrible centuries of darkness and moral degradation which followed. The simple truth which should be made prominent in the present discussion, is that the Christian religion is a matter which belongs to the individual conscience alone, and is nothing with which the State can have anything to do. As well might one talk of a State's having a soul and a conscience, as of the State's "accepting" or "rejecting" the Christian religion. It is by covering up and ignoring this distinction, as concerns religion, between the individual and the State, that the National Reform party of this country hope to succeed in their scheme for a State religion, based upon the compulsory observance of the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath.—*Review and Herald.*

THE PUZZLED DUTCHMAN.

The following story, although old, will bear repeating, as it illustrates very completely the folly of that method of Bible interpretation that seeks to compel the Bible to support one's preconceived opinions. The true method is to conform our beliefs to the plain, evident teaching of the Scriptures, even though in so doing we are compelled to relinquish some previously formed opinions. The story, as found in an exchange, is as follows:—

One who does not believe in immersion for baptism was holding a protracted meeting, and one night preached on the subject of baptism. In the course of his remarks he said, "Some believe it necessary to go down into the water, and come out of the water baptized." But this he claimed to be fallacy; for the preposition *into* of the Scriptures should be rendered differently, as it does not mean *into* all the time. "Moses," he said, "we are told, went up into the mountain, etc. Now, we do not suppose that he went into the mountain, but upon it. So with going down close by or near to, the water, and being baptized in the ordinary way, by sprinkling."

He carried this idea out fully, and in due season and style closed his discourse, when an invitation was given to those who felt so disposed to rise and express their thoughts. Quite a number of the brethren arose, and said they were glad they had been present on this occasion; that they were well pleased with the sound sermon they had just heard, and felt their souls greatly blessed. Finally a corpulent gentleman of Teutonic extraction, a stranger to all, arose and broke the silence, that was almost painful, as follows:

"Mister Breacher, I ish so glad I vas here to-night; for I has had explained to my mint sometings I never could pelief before. We reat, Mr. Breacher, that Taniel vas cast into the lions, and came out alive! Now, I never could pelief dot, for de wilt beast would shust eat him up right off; put now it ish ferry clear to my mint. He was shust close py, or near to, and tid not get into the ten at all. O, I vash so glad I vash here to-night!

"Again we reat dat Hebrew children vas cast into the firish furnace, and dot, sir, alwaish look't like a pig story, too; for they would have peen purnt up;

put it ish all plain to my mint now, for they were shust cast close py, or near to, the furnace. O, I vash so glad I vash here to-night!

"And den, Mr. Breacher, it ish said dat Jonah vas cast into the sea and into the whaleish pelly. Now, I never could pelief dot. It always seemed to me to be peeg feesh story; put it is all plain to my mint now; he vash not taken into the whale's pelly at all, but shust shumped onto his pack and rode ashore. O, I vash so glad I vash here to-night!

"And now, Mr. Breacher, if you will shust explain two more passages of Scripture I shall pe so happy that I vas here to-night. One of them is vere it saish ze vicked shall pe cast into a lake dot purns mit fire and primstone always. O Mr. Breacher, shall I pe cast into that lake if I am vicked, or shust close py or near to it, shust near enough to pe comfortable? O I hopes you toll me I shall pe cast shust py, a goot way off, and I shall pe so glad I vas here to-night. The other passage is that which saish, plessed are they who do these commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city. O! tell me I shall get into the city and not shust close py, or near to it, shust near enough to see what I have lost, and I shall pe so glad I vas here to-night."

He sat down with the impression made on many minds present, that it would do to take the Bible for what it clearly says.

AMERICAN FABLES.

THE TWO FOXES.

ONE day two foxes who were journeying together came across a track in the dust which much astonished them.

"I believe it is the track of a rhinoceros," observed one.

"I think it is that of an elephant," replied the other.

"I say rhinoceros!"

"And I say elephant!"

"Then I travel no longer with such an idiot!"

"Then you can travel alone with a fool!"

They were cuffing each other about in a lively manner, when along came a wolf, and asked the cause of the trouble.

"Why, that bigot sticks to it that this is not the track of a rhinoceros!" shouted one.

"And he, the narrow-minded muldoon, won't admit that it is the track of an elephant," added the other.

"Gentlemen," said the wolf as he examined the spot, "this is simply the place where a fat man struck a banana peel, and sat down to reflect. You are both wrong and both fools."

Moral.—Men are ever willing to fight in defense of what they do n't know.

THE HEN AND THE FARMER.

A hen having laid an egg set up such a cackle that presently the whole barnyard was in confusion, and the farmer came running out to see what was going on.

"What is it?" he demanded as the hen cackled louder than ever.

"Why, I have laid an egg!"

"An egg? Why, a single egg is worth but two cents at the present market price."

"Yes, I know, but if I did n't do two shillings' worth of cackling over every two cents' worth of egg, the world would soon forget me."

Moral.—Send a bundle of old clothes to an orphan asylum, and then interview a reporter.

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