

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

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

VOL. 3.

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For Terms, - - - See Last Page.

THE COURSE OF EMPTY HANDS.

At dawn the call was heard,
And busy reapers stirred
Along the highway leading to the wheat.
"Wilt reap with us?" they said.
I smiled and shook my head;
"Disturb me not," said I, "my dreams are sweet."
I sat with folded hands,
And saw across the lands
The waiting harvest shining on the hill;
I heard the reapers sing
Their song of harvesting.
And thought to go, but dreamed and waited still.
The day at last was done,
And homeward, one by one,
The reapers went, well laden as they passed
Their was no mispent day,
Not long hours dreamed away
In sloth that turns to sting the soul at last.
A reaper lingered near,
"What!" cried he, "idle here?
Where are the sheaves your hands have bound to-day?"
"Alas!" I made reply,
"I let the days pass by
Until too late to work. I dreamed the hours away."
"O, foolish one," he said,
And sadly shook his head,
"The dreaming soul is in the way of death.
The harvest soon is o'er,
Rouse up and dream no more!
Act, for the summer fadeth like a breath.
"What if the Master came
To-night, and called your name,
Asking how many sheaves your hands had made.
"If at the Lord's command
You showed but empty hands,
Condemned, your dreaming soul would stand dismayed."
Filled with strange terror then,
Lest chance come not again,
I sought the wheat-fields while the others slept.
"Perhaps ere break of day,
The Lord will come this way."
A voice kept saying, till with fear I wept.
Through all the long, still night,
Among the wheat-fields white,
I reaped and bound the sheaves of yellow grain.
I dared not pause to rest,
Such fear possessed my breast,
So for my dreams I paid the price in pain.
But when the morning broke,
And rested reapers woke,
My heart leaped up as sunrise kissed the lands,
For, came he soon or late,
The Lord of the estate
Would find me bearing not the curse of empty hands.
—Selected.

Notes and Comments.

HAD God executed the death penalty upon man when he had sinned, who can say that it would not have been right? And since a second probation is granted by which a people will be gathered out and saved, who shall say that God is unjust, if the offer of salvation does not reach every individual of the human race?

WE are apt to think that if our circumstances and surroundings were changed so as to be more favorable, we should certainly be able to live a life of devotion to God and his cause. If there were nothing to try our patience, how patient we would be! Perhaps you have heard some one say that it was

impossible for one to live a Christian in the situation in which he was placed. To such we may reply, It is impossible for the carnal mind to be subject to the will of God. No one can be a Christian without the change which we call conversion—a crucifixion of the old man, or the carnal mind, and a putting on of the new man; in other words, partaking of the mind that was in Christ and becoming like him.

NEVER sacrifice a right principle to obtain a favor; the cost is too great. If you cannot secure what is right and needful to you by square and manly conduct, better do without it by all odds. A little self-denial is better than dishonor.

"THERE is a sin unto death." 1 John 5:16. The sin unto death is that sin for which no atonement remains. The individual committing it must suffer the penalty of eternal death without remedy, because his course has been such as to exhaust the divine clemency before he has reached the end of his life, or the period at which the probation of most men terminates. The sin in question may be the sin against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31), or it may be the falling away spoken of in Heb. 6:4-6; i. e., a hopeless departure from God, as the result of deliberately continuing in sin after the mind has been enlightened.

"FOR we know that, if our earthly nouse of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. 5:1. In this text the mind of the apostle was directed to the reward of the saints in heaven, because that is to antedate, or go before, their reward in the new earth. Immediately upon the second advent of Christ, the redeemed will be taken to heaven, where they will spend a thousand years. Rev. 20:4-6; John 14:1-3. Subsequently the New Jerusalem will descend to this earth, where it will remain forever as the capital city of this globe. Rev. 21; Isa. 66. As remarked above, the mind of the apostle in the text quoted turned to the New Jerusalem, in connection with the thought that this body will be dissolved, because it is thence that the Lord is to come to clothe us with the resurrection body, and because when we receive that body we go immediately to heaven, where we are to spend the millennium.

By referring to the revised version of the New Testament, it will be seen that the word "eternal" is so used in 2 Cor. 5:1 that it teaches that the resurrection body will be eternal or immortal, and not that it will remain *eternally* in the heavens.

IT was a difficult thing for the disciples of John to realize that Christ had introduced a new dispensation, with new rites and ceremonies. To them it appeared that the Baptist was the standard of authority; and they evidently expected that Christ, instead of originating a new system of religion, would simply throw his influence in favor of the teaching and practices of John. They were astonished, therefore, when they learned that the disciples of Jesus, unlike John and themselves, fasted but seldom, if at all. Their surprise at this difference in the custom of the disciples of the two great leaders afforded Christ an opportunity to show them that the dispensation which he was inaugurating would necessarily

differ in many important particulars from the one which it was about to supersede. "Why," said he, in substance, "it was highly proper that John and his disciples should fast when they were anxiously expecting my advent. Men always do this when they are looking for a future good, but they cease to fast when that good has been obtained. The expectation of John has been realized, his prayers have been answered, and I have manifested myself to the world. While, therefore, I am present with you, feasting, rather than fasting, would properly be in order. By and by, however, I shall be crucified, and shall subsequently go to my Father, and be separated from my disciples. When this takes place, then it will be fitting that they shall pray and fast for my second advent, even as John and you fasted for my first manifestation. You must not get the impression that I and my disciples will do in all respects the same as John and his disciples have done. Men do not put new wine into old bottles, nor patch an old garment with a piece of new cloth. The new wine would burst the old bottles, and the piece of new cloth, becoming wet, would full up, and tearing itself loose from the old cloth, would make the rent larger than before. So, too, with the gospel dispensation which I am inaugurating. It is peculiar in its character. To introduce into it the rites, customs, and ceremonies of the Jewish age, would be destructive of its highest interests. For this reason, therefore, I and my disciples pay but little regard to customs which were well enough in time past, but are not adapted to the new order of things which I have inaugurated."

WHAT was sin once is sin now. To a right-minded person, who has a knowledge of the character of God as revealed in the Bible, this proposition must be self-evident. "Sin is the transgression of the law,"—the law of God. His law is perfect and unchangeable. With him is "no variability, neither shadow of turning." His moral requirements have been ever the same, from the days of sinless Eden to the present time; and they will ever remain the same, to the days of eternity. That which was sin in Eden is sin now. More than one precept of the decalogue was violated when the test of man's loyalty and obedience was violated. Is it not utterly unreasonable to suppose that an act or an omission that was sinful in ancient times is all right, or any less sinful now? Under the theocracy of Israel, the violation of several precepts of the decalogue were to be punished with death. The violation of the Sabbath commandment was subject to this penalty. Could that which was so heinous a sin in the sight of God then, be no sin at all now? Yet this is the case, if the Sabbath has been abolished, as some teach. Others pretend that they keep the Sabbath on another day. The theory of "any one day of rest after six of labor" had not been invented in those ancient times. But if it is true now, it was true then; and the man who worked on the seventh day could have evaded the penalty by resting on some other day. The fact is, nobody seriously believes this theory. This is evident from the fact that those who profess it are seeking for civil law to enforce the observance of a particular day. If their theory of the original Sabbath law is the truth, they are seeking from the United States an amendment to the law of God.

THE MILLENNIUM.—NO. 3.

BY J. O. CORLISS.

THE hope of the church, as set forth in the word of God, has never been the conversion of the world, but the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the just. Writing to the elders of the church, exhorting them to faithfulness, Peter holds up before them the Christian's hope, saying: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter 5:4. Paul, also, that faithful soldier of the cross, who had borne the banner of truth in many lands, when awaiting in a Roman dungeon his execution, wrote to Timothy concerning his preparation and expectation for the future: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:6-8.

This should be the Christian's hope to-day, rather than the expectation of a time of ease and prosperity to the church. But notwithstanding all the clearness with which the subject is set forth in the Bible, there will be amid the closing scenes some who will persist in asking, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Peter 3:4. The reason why they act thus is well stated in the previous verse,—they are scoffers, walking after their own lusts.

It would not be safe to say that these scoffers at the doctrine of the Lord's near coming are what are usually termed worldlings. No; there are found many who ridicule that doctrine, yet are staunch, earnest advocates of a temporal millennium. These are spoken of by the apostle Paul in 1 Thess. 5:1-5. Speaking of the second advent, he says that it will come as a thief. Then, as if to locate the period in which it might be expected, he adds: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape."

Although a belief in a temporal millennium has been entertained by some for centuries, it has not been so generally advocated as in later times. Now, however, the church at large is becoming so impregnated with the idea that the "good time coming" is just before us, that every nerve is strained to meet the general expectation. There was a time when Protestants would have deemed it apostasy on the part of any one of their number who would suggest an alliance with the Catholic Church under any consideration. Now it is far different; where apathy was once shown, a wonderful zeal is now manifested to have all nations know the Lord, and the arm of the law is invoked in this direction. But in order to attain this object, it is felt imperative to have the help of that party that has sanctioned the wholesale destruction of Protestantism, and therefore concessions are made to that end.

The cry, "Peace and safety," has gone forth, and this condition must now be secured at all hazards. Strange infatuation! Such a thing will never be. It is but a delusion of the enemy. Those who advocate and uphold such a course are in darkness, and will be overtaken as a thief by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But to those who, instead, are looking for the Saviour from heaven, the apostle says: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." He then offers an admonition: "Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."

But what ought we to watch? The word of God is full of admonitions on this point. The conflict between truth and error will deepen the nearer this age comes to its terminal point. The fawning of Protestants upon the Catholic Church to obtain its assistance in what they deem an extreme necessity, bodes no good to their own desire for peace. It will only give to that church a power and influence it has long sought, especially in America. And when that power is once obtained, then what? The Revelator tells its effect upon the last church. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman [the church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17.

These are words worthy of study. Here the last church on earth that is to keep God's commandments, and have the testimony of its Lord, is repre-

sented as being persecuted by the dragon. But one may ask, Did not the dragon, as used in the beginning of that chapter, symbolize pagan Rome? and if so, how can that which is no longer recognized as a power in the earth, persecute the people of the last true church? The answer is simple. The master spirit by which pagan Rome was actuated, and which has also animated the papacy all the way through, still lives. That was the spirit of Satan, and it will yet make war upon those who strictly maintain the doctrines of the Bible, and will persecute them even to the very end.

And the scenes of these days yet to come are not those for which the advocates of a temporal millennium are looking. The prophet says of them: "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan. 12:1. Solemn time; a time of distress and perplexity; a time such as never before came to God's people; and this to exist right up to the moment of their deliverance! And not only are the persecuted to be delivered at that time, but "them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;" which shows that it is the time of Christ's return to the earth for his saints. Surely, there is no opportunity for a time of peace to the people of God, before their final deliverance.

The fulfillment of the prophetic periods, then, ought to be watched by all to learn when their culmination will take place, that the mind of God may be known regarding the duty of his people in the time just preceding the manifestation of his glory.

THE ANTIDOTE OF DEATH.

BY R. F. COTTRELL.

"I AM the resurrection and the life." John 11:25.

The death of mankind, and that which lies beyond, has presented a problem to our race which unaided reason is not able to solve. Death seems to be a great evil. It is something which is unlovely in appearance, and which we instinctively dread. An antidote is exceedingly desirable. Hence human ingenuity has been taxed to find a remedy. And as it has been, and is, in the province of medicine, so it is in this. While quacks are continually discovering infallible remedies for every disease which flesh is heir to, disease and death are not banished, nor stayed in the least. The downward march to the grave is not retarded, but seemingly accelerated. Still the panacea is confidently sought, and in almost every direction we hear the exulting cry, "Eureka—I have found it!"

In like manner, since death seems to be the termination of our conscious existence, philosophers and theologians have been, and are, seeking to disclose that which is beyond, and disarm death of its terrors; but all in vain. Some tell us that there is nothing for our race beyond death; that to us, as to all the animal creation, death is what it seems to be—the extinction of life, an end of our conscious being. But this is not satisfactory, as it presents no remedy. All love life. There is a yearning for immortality; and men love to persuade themselves that they will have it, nay, that they already possess it. They seek in death its own remedy. As they have nothing else to depend upon, they strive to transform death into life, and sagely come to the conclusion that there is no death; that what seems such is only a transition to a higher state of conscious existence; that death, as some have expressed it, is life intensified, an awakening to powers and capacities which in the present life are lying dormant.

But what assurance have they for this? From that bourne no traveler has returned to tell the story. Even Lazarus, who had been dead four days, brought back no intelligence from the unseen world. So it is simply the desire that is father to the thought that man, by nature, is immortal. But when we turn to the revelation of the word of God, we find the remedy which human wisdom has sought in vain.

Says Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life." The literal meaning of this is, that Christ, the Son of God, has the power to raise the dead to life again, and that he is the author of life; and consequently on him depends all hope of a future eternal life.

But the question is asked, What is the resurrection? Some gravely tell us that the resurrection takes place at death; that the death of the body is the resurrection of the real man to a higher plane of existence. But revelation teaches us that death and

the resurrection are opposites; that death puts men into the grave, and the resurrection takes them out of it. "All that are in the graves shall hear his [Christ's] voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.

Our context demonstrates what Jesus meant by the resurrection. Jesus said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said unto her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." At the command of Jesus, the stone was removed from the grave, and he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." And he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, "Loose him, and let him go." Thus the meaning of the term *resurrection* is unmistakable. It is said, "He called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead;" and when "all that are in the graves" shall be called forth by the voice of the Son of God at the last day, it is the resurrection, first, of the righteous to life, and secondly, of the wicked to the condemnation of the second death.

To the righteous the antidote of death is found in Christ and the resurrection. To them the poison of death is counteracted, and the tyrant himself, their "last enemy," is slain. And the honor of bringing them to eternal life and glory belongs to Christ. Death has no part in the work of introducing men to the joys of heaven. But the resurrection of the righteous robs death of his prey, and gives them victory over the grave. At their resurrection, this mortal puts on immortality. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

ANNIHILATION OF THE WICKED.

THE Baltimore *American*, in reviewing the theological opinion which Rev. Dr. McKim is said to entertain, says:—

"There was a time when the holders of opinions like these would be speedily called to answer a charge of heresy before an ecclesiastical court; but of late years there is a remarkable indisposition to go into the questions that must necessarily be discussed in a trial for heresy. Freedom of opinion is the temper of the times, and the enforcement of dogma through the discipline of excommunication is outside the range of popular sympathies. But it is to be noted that what are called heresies are usually efforts to bring about more rational conceptions of religion.

"The Christian idea during the first and second centuries was that man in his natural state dies, but that Christ offers to believers second life. When Paul first spoke to the Greeks of an after life, they 'mocked.' The Sadducees denied the resurrection; there was no direct promise of immortality in the law or the prophets. Death meant death, and it was not until long after the crucifixion that death came to mean 'endless torment.' When it was written, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life,' those words were accepted in their natural sense. The people of that time did not believe that they meant, 'The wages of sin is eternal punishment.' They regarded eternal life not a possession of the good and bad alike, but only as the gift of God to the righteous. All through the New Testament this may be read more or less distinctly. It may be true that there are other passages which convey a contrary meaning, and upon which the awful dogma of eternal punishment is founded; but there are theologians who hold that under a better translation these passages would be modified, and that it is quite possible to believe that the 'fire' may be eternal, but not the people who are cast into it. The worm may never die, but the lost ones may. Eternal punishment does not necessarily mean eternal torment. If immortal joy awaits the righteous, then annihilation would be eternal punishment, but not eternal torture.

"If this be the doctrine which Dr. McKim holds, he does not hold it alone. He has had a long line of predecessors, and many thousands of contemporaries, in this belief. It dispenses with the hell that Dante depicted,—the hell that is sinking out of belief, along with diabolical possession, witchcraft, and all the rest of the demon lore. . . . 'I am the resurrection and the life, and he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' 'He that hath the Son

hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' To those Greeks who had no hope of an after life except the dreary shades of hades,—to those Greek Hebrews who had no hope of an immortality,—these assurances of Christianity came as the sweetest of messages. They expected death as the end-all, and when came to them the beautiful hope of an endless life and a fadeless youth in the 'kingdom of heaven,' they clung passionately to the hope. They rejoiced in the hope of immortal bliss for themselves without the dark misgivings of an immortality of torture. The gospel then was, indeed, glad tidings. But was it good tidings when the idea of eternal hell gradually took form and hardened into dogma? Is it glad tidings to be told that many are called and few are chosen, and that all who are not chosen, though our dearest ones on earth, are to suffer to all eternity tortures that no mind can conceive? Compare first and second century Christianity, when love and hope were the bonds of union, when martyrdom and torture were joyously encountered, with that of the sixth and seventh and eighth centuries, when fear of hell was the greater fact. Nothing can exceed the gloom and horror of the religion of these centuries—the Dark Ages. Dante and Milton and Bunyan show how long this shudder lasted. But it is passing away now. *If the dogma of hell and endless torture be rejected on Biblical grounds, so much the better; but it is sinking out of belief, come what may.*"

The Christian Life.

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

HEART-CONTENT.

A SIMPLE lesson, hard to learn,
Is this of heart-content;
And yet life's jarring notes by it
In harmony are blent.

The grandest symphonies sustain
A tender inner life;
The strongest souls are those which grow
'Gainst wind, and storm, and strife.

Sometimes a fierce sirocco blows,
Or flaming sun-rays burn;
Dead calms of waiting force the cry,
"O wind, unpitying, turn!"

The daily frets of circumstance,
The hope made desolate,
The obstacles which bar our path,
Bind hearts beneath their weight.

But need and use bring greater strength,
Weak souls fall 'neath despair,
While love, determined will, and faith,
Rise up to do and bear.

The subtle, happy art to win
Some good from all that's 'sont,—
This is the blessed secret of
A quiet heart-content.

—H. Coddington, in S. S. Times.

WHAT HE HAS DONE.

How successful has the great deceiver been for six thousand years in turning men from ways of righteousness into paths that lead to misery and eternal death! He committed the first sin in heaven, that of pride, and has inspired the hearts of kings and rulers with the same spirit, having filled their souls with the love of power and dominion, until battle fields have been strewn with the dead, and the earth, crimsoned with blood, has echoed with the groans of the suffering and the dying.

He has succeeded in deceiving the greater portion of every generation to the present time. He caused the Sodomites to think that Lot's message was a false warning,—an intended scare,—until the threatened wrath burst upon them in a shower of fire and brimstone. He deluded the generation that listened to Noah, while for one hundred and twenty years he faithfully warned them of a coming flood. Only eight out of the entire population of the world escaped his delusive grasp. Stubbornly they rejected the message, and willingly gave themselves over to the workings of Satan, until the waters buried them in oblivion.

And now in these last days, we find the words of the prophet fulfilling: "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." How desperate his effort to deceive! He knows that the coming of Christ ends his work in deluding mankind, and that af-

ter the judgment of the wicked, his existence also ends in the lake of fire. How hard he will work to lead us to grasp after the world and its pleasures, and to say in our hearts, "My Lord delayeth his coming," until in a day when we are not looking for him, and in an hour when we are not aware, the parting heavens will reveal to us the scenes of the last great day. Then will we drop our peace and safety cry, "My Lord delayeth his coming," and call for the mountains and rocks to "fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Reader, with which class shall we be found? the one that is ensnared by Satan's greatest and last of all delusions, or among that class that shall give heed to the Saviour's words, "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch?"

E. HILLIARD.

THE WORK OF GOD.

SCIENCE teaches us that we know not a millionth part of the marvels and wonders of this beautiful world. In fact, it is science which reveals to us that which a little thought prepares us to expect, a whole universe of invisible things and powers, "things not seen;" we are compelled to believe in what we cannot see; we can only see effects; we cannot see causes or things.

It has been truly said that the world of sight in which we live, is a sort of central point, or table-land, half way between the telescope and the microscope. But a very large portion of what we call the material world is invisible, composed of "things not seen." Heat and steam are invisible; we can feel a ray, and we can see vapor, that is, an invisible thing rendered visible by contact with cold air; but who ever saw the mighty giant at home in the boiler, the great moving power of the world? the force which drives a vessel of three thousand tons against wind and tide across the Atlantic, or hammers a twenty-ton weight of iron into shape as easily as you would mold a pellet of bread between your fingers? That five hundred or thousand horse-power nobody has ever beheld, only the vehicle through which it acts. Thus everywhere a light shines, guiding the mind to a principle of divine order and proportion; all things turn into windows through which we may look out upon an infinite presence beyond; and so, to the thoughtful mind, the universe becomes another universe, and the world another world; it is all as if mysteriously haunted by a presence of divine unity.—Sel.

KNOTS.

ON the table by the turning-lathe lay a rough, gnarled knot of hard pine. "Utterly useless, except to burn," was the general verdict. Not so thought the turner. With keen eye and skillful fingers, he "centered" the shapeless lump, turned up the set screws, slipped on the belt, and had it spinning before him. Then he laid a sharp chisel across the iron "rest," and moving it nearer and still nearer, chipped off the first rough protuberances, cutting more and more, until the whole outside was smooth and even. Another smaller tool, held in a different position, cut out much of the inside, leaving a mere whirling shell. Gentle touches with emery cloth and burnishes finished the task. The belt being thrown off, and the shell removed, it appeared transformed into a beautiful vase, highly polished, and rich in unique veining.

"There," said the turner, "that is my every-day lesson. No matter how rough-looking your material may be, don't call it useless until you have tried it. There is many a hard character, many a tough knot, which, under the right kind of turning, might be fashioned into a vessel fit for the Master's use."—Sel.

LOVE'S WORK.

A CENTURY since, in the North of Europe, stood an old cathedral, upon one of the arches of which was a sculptured face of wondrous beauty. It was long hidden, until one day the sun's light, striking through a slanted window, revealed its matchless features. And ever after, year by year, upon the days when for a brief hour it was thus illumined, crowds came and waited eagerly to catch but a glimpse of that face. It had a strange history. When the cathedral was in process of erection, an old man, broken with the weight of years and care, came and besought the architect to let him work upon it. Out of pity for his age, but fearful lest his failing sight and trembling touch might mar some

fair design, the master set him to work in the shadows of the vaulted roof. One day they found the old man asleep in death, the tools of his craft laid in order beside him, the cunning of his right hand gone, his face upturned to this other marvelous face, which he had wrought there,—the face of one whom he had loved and lost in his early manhood. And when the artists and sculptors and workmen from all parts of the cathedral came and looked upon that face, they said, "This is the grandest work of all; love wrought this!"

In the great cathedral of the ages,—the temple being builded for an habitation of God,—we shall all learn sometime that love's work is the grandest of all.

—J. L. Russell.

GOD'S CARE.

It has been said, and I will repeat it, "God is great in great things, but is very great in little things." I will illustrate this by an incident which occurred in the room of a relative during Scripture reading. There was on the wall a beautiful engraving of the Matterhorn Mountain. We were remarking that the wondrous works of God were not only shown in those lofty, snow-clad mountains, but also in the tiny mosses found in their crevices. A friend present said, "Yes, I was with a party at the Matterhorn, and while we were admiring the sublimity of the scene, a gentleman of the company produced a pocket microscope, and having caught a tiny fly, placed it under the glass. He reminded us that the legs of the household fly in England were naked, then called our attention to the legs of this little fly, which were thickly covered with hair;" thus showing that the same God who made those lofty mountains rise, attended to the comfort of the tiniest of his creatures, even providing socks and mittens for the little flies whose home these mountains were.—T. Newberry.

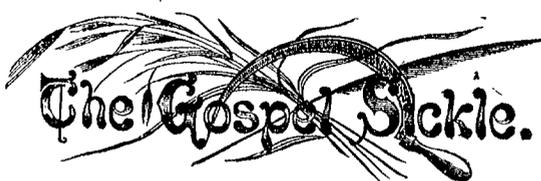
A BIBLE OLD AND RARE.

It is not generally known that in the Congressional library, at Washington, there is an old Bible, which is well worth a walk to the Capitol to examine. It is of Italian origin, and is supposed to have been written in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, but the actual date is unknown. It is written in Latin, upon vellum, in clear, bold characters, and extremely uniform. The writing is in two columns, about three inches wide, with a margin of two inches. It is embellished with 146 miniature paintings, and upward of 1,200 smaller illuminations, which are beautifully executed, and are as brilliant to-day as the day they were done. The initials of books and prologues are two and a half inches in height, and those of the chapters are one inch in height. It is contained in two large volumes, and cost the government \$2,200 in gold, when gold was at a high premium, and was purchased at a sale of the library of Henry Perkins, Hanworth Park, near London, in June, 1873. The skins in the first volume have all been repaired, except five; in the second volume they are nearly all perfect.—Methodist.

INDIFFERENCE TO SIN.

If there is a disease in our modern theology and our modern philosophy of life more conspicuous than another, it is indifference to sin. We hush it with anodynes. We call it anything but sin. We form our schemes of social improvement and material progress without any conviction of this deep plague-spot of our nature. We hide it from ourselves until it breaks out in some scandalous form, and startles us with its intensity. We will drill men into morality; we will repress crime by education; we will empty our jails by philanthropic legislation; but the sin that dwelleth in us is too strong for human remedies, too rampant for the social reformer's pruning-hook. Far truer is the novelist's sentiment, when he puts into the mouth of one of his characters the awful but grand words, "How gladly would I endure the torments of hell if thereby I might escape from my sin!"—Dean of Peterborough.

THERE is often a joy in making sacrifices for the good of others. Such work is twice blessed. It blesses him that gives and him that takes. It is angel-like. Christ-like. Activity characterizes the heavenly hosts.



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

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., AUGUST 15, 1888.

APPROACH OF THE DAY OF THE LORD.

In previous papers under this heading, consideration has been given to the early apostasy that occurred in the church, and to the application of the term "man of sin," as found in 2 Thess. 2:3. The position has been taken that the Romish Church, the papal succession, furnishes all the characteristics named by Paul, and also by the prophet Daniel, and consequently is the identical power referred to by those writers. Testimony in harmony with this position has been given from several eminent commentators. We are now to proceed to an investigation of the development, progress, and present status of this "man of sin." Before doing this, however, it will be profitable and interesting to enlarge the field of investigation somewhat by taking into consideration characteristics of this power given by Daniel, but not mentioned by Paul.

In the seventh chapter of Daniel is recorded a vision seen by Daniel, in which he was shown four beasts, a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a nondescript beast, "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly." It is not within the province of these articles to enter exhaustively into an interpretation of the first three beasts of Daniel's vision, and we will do no more than give the testimony of a few commentators, upon these matters, and pass to the more special consideration of that particular feature of the fourth beast that is pertinent to the question under discussion.

The Lion.—"All, or nearly all, agree that it refers to the kingdom of Babylon."—*Barnes*.

"The emblem of a wonderful beast so constituted might be chosen with propriety to represent the Chaldean, or, if it be preferred, the Assyrio-Chaldean world-power, since the winged lion with human heads recovered at Nimrod, and also the similar images of winged animals at Babylon, were doubtless designed as symbols of the power and glory of that empire or of its rulers. In addition, the description of Nebuchadnezzar as a lion in strength and an eagle in swiftness was familiar to his contemporaries."—*Schaff*.

As earthly kingdoms are not recognized in prophecy until they become connected with God's people, the date to be taken in this connection for the beginning of Babylon is B. C. 677, that being the time when it became so connected by the capture of Manasseh, king of Judah. 2 Chron. 33:11. Babylon came to an end B. C. 538, when it was taken by the Persians, and Darius the Median was placed upon the throne.

The Bear.—"This represented the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Its emblem was 'a bear,' less noble and courageous, but more voracious and savage, than a lion."—*Scott*.

"The powerful empire of the Medo-Persians, with its greed for lands and conquests, is intended."—*Schaff*.

The conquest of Medo-Persia by the Grecians was effected at the battle of Arbela, B. C. 331, and the latter power became the third universal world-empire, with Alexander at its head.

The Leopard.—"The comparative nobleness of the animal, a beast of prey, the celerity of its movements, the spring or bound with which it leaps upon its prey,—all agree well with the kingdom of which Alexander was the founder."—*Barnes*.

"That world-kingdom, which more than any other was remarkable for its extension by leaps of panther-like swiftness, and by the lightning-like rapidity of its rise and fall; namely, the Macedonian empire of Alexander the Great."—*Schaff*.

The conquest of Grecia by the Romans was completed June 22, B. C. 108, by the battle of Pydna. But as Rome did not become connected with the people of God until B. C. 161, this date should be taken as the one from which to reckon the existence of the empire when considering matters of prophecy.

The Fourth Beast—the Nondescript.—"This 'fourth beast' evidently accords with the legs and feet of iron, which were seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his visionary image, and which were at length divided into ten toes. . . . This was doubtless an emblem of the Roman state."—*Scott*.

"The fourth beast, which represented the Roman empire, was anonymous and nondescript."—*Cottage Bible*.

This fourth beast had ten horns when first seen.

The Ten Horns.—"The Roman empire, as such, had ceased, and the power was distributed into a large number of comparatively petty sovereignties, well represented at this

period by the ten horns on the head of the beast. Even the Romanists themselves admit that the Roman empire was, by means of the incursions of the Northern nations, dismembered into ten kingdoms (Calmet on Rev. 13:1, and he [Lyman] refers likewise to Berengaud, Bossuet, and Dupin).—*Barnes*.

Rome was divided into ten kingdoms between the years A. D. 356 and 488, as follows: Huns, A. D. 356, Ostrogoths, 377; Visigoths, 378; Franks, 407, Vandals, 407; Suevi, 407; Burgundians, 407; Heruli, 476; Anglo-Saxons, 476; Lombards, 488. This enumeration of the ten kingdoms is given by Machiavelli in his "History of Florence," chap. 1. The dates are furnished by Bishop Lloyd.

In relating his vision the prophet says: "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." Dan. 7:8.

The Little Horn.—"While the prophet was considering these ten horns, he saw another little horn springing up among them. This evidently points out the power of the church and bishop of Rome."—*Scott*.

"The most remarkable was the little horn, which rose after the others, and is by Protestant commentators (and we think with good reason) explained of the ecclesiastical dominion of the pope or bishop of Rome."—*Cottage Bible*.

"This evidently points out the papal supremacy, in every respect diverse from the former, which from small beginnings, thrust itself up among the ten kingdoms, till at length it successively eradicated three of them."—*Bagster*.

"It is a remarkable fact, that the popes to this day wear a triple crown,—a fact that exists in regard to no other monarchs. . . . The papacy [is] well represented by the 'little horn.' . . . This one power absorbed into itself three of these sovereignties."—*Barnes*.

This "little horn," then, is identical with Paul's "man of sin." In the interpretation of the vision that was given to Daniel, further information is found regarding its character. Thus it is stated: "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:24, 25.

The particular feature to which our attention is called in these specifications of the "little horn," is that relating to the *time of the continuance of its terrible power*; viz., a "time and times and the dividing of time." It was to exercise, or be in a condition to exercise, its persecuting power against the "saints of the Most High" for a specific period of time from and after its rise. In establishing the limits of this period of time, it is necessary to ascertain (1.) the signification of the expression "a time and times and the dividing of time," and (2.) the *beginning* of that period. Having once found the commencement of the period, it will be a very easy matter to ascertain the ending.

A "time" in the Scriptures signifies a year. Thus in Dan. 4:16, in the prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's debasement, we read: "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him." See also verses 23, 25. By Josephus we learn that Nebuchadnezzar remained in his demented condition seven years. Since a "time" is one year, two times (the least that could be denoted by the plural) are two years, and the dividing of time, or half a time, is half a year, we thus have three years and a half for the continuance of this power. But as we are in the midst of symbolical language, we must remember that a day stands for a year. As the ordinary Jewish year consisted of 360 days, in three years and a half there would be 1260 days; and as each day stands for a year, this prophetic period, denoted by the expression "a time and times and the dividing of time"—three years and a half,—is therefore 1260 literal years.

"It [the papacy] is to continue a definite period from its establishment. Verse 25. This duration is mentioned as 'a time, and times, and the dividing of time,'—three years and a half; twelve hundred and sixty days; twelve hundred and sixty years."—*Barnes*.

"Thus matters would be left in his hands 'till a time, and times, and the dividing of time;' that is, for three years and a half, or forty-two months, which, reckoning thirty days to a month (and this was the general computation), make just one thousand two hundred and sixty days, and those prophetic days signify one thousand two hundred and sixty years."—*Scott*.

"Until a time (i. e. a year), times (two years), and the dividing of time (that is, half a year), making, in the whole, three prophetic years and a half; 'or reckoning thirty days to a month, 1260 days, equal to the same number of years in prophetic language.'"—*Cottage Bible*.

In Rev. 13 the same power is brought to view, and

the time of its continuance is given as forty-two months, which at thirty days to the month would give exactly 1260 prophetic days, signifying literal years.

It will next be in order to ascertain by facts of history the date of the establishment of the papacy. This we will proceed to do in the next issue of the SICKLE.

G. W. M.

A BRIEF COMMENTARY ON HEB. 4:1-13.

VERSE 1: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

In the previous chapter the apostle referred to the fact that because of the unbelief and wickedness of the Israelites who came out of Egypt, they were not permitted to enter the promised land—the temporary rest that was promised them. He now exhorts Christian believers, and especially those of the Hebrew nationality, to be very cautious, lest they, through similar reasons, should finally fail of entering into the heavenly rest which God has promised.

VERSE 2: "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

The proclamation to the Israelites of a rest in Canaan, was in one sense a gospel to them; it was "glad tidings," and that is the signification of the word *gospel*. In addition to this, they also had preached to them the gospel of final salvation through Christ, the same as is now preached in this dispensation. The only point of difference was that Christ's first advent, his life on earth, his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, were matters of prophecy with them, whereas they are matters of history with us. Because of their lack of faith, the preaching of the gospel with regard to Canaan did not profit them; they fell in the wilderness, and never entered the promised "rest." It seems reasonable to conclude that they also forfeited all right to a final entrance upon the heavenly Canaan.

VERSES 3-5: "For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest."

The idea designed to be conveyed by the first expression is evidently this: It is sure—beyond the possibility of a doubt—that believers *will* enter into rest. And why?—Because God has sworn that *unbelievers* shall not enter into his rest, and this implies that believers shall do so. The declaration here referred to is found in Ps. 95:10, 11, and as it was made long after the children of Israel entered Canaan, it is conclusive proof that the rest given them in that land was not the rest that God had in store for his people. The rest that God designed for his people he speaks of as "my rest;" and that we may know the nature of that rest, he refers to the completion of the creation of the world. At that time, everything "was very good." Gen 1:31. It was a fit abode for perfect beings; it was just as God designed it should be for the eternal home of the human race, in an innocent, sinless condition. God has not relinquished his design, but will bring the earth back to its primitive condition, to be the eternal "rest" into which the saved shall enter. That is what God calls *his* rest; i. e., the rest that he prepared for the human race. The reference to God's resting upon the seventh day calls our attention to Gen. 2:2, as additional evidence that the rest that God designed for his children was this earth as he created it in the beginning. We are to understand that God was well pleased with his creative work; that he took supreme delight in it; and that when he ceased that work, he entered upon a period of rest and satisfaction. So in like manner Paul argues that the rest in store for the saints will be to them a period of like supreme contentment, pleasure, and delight.

VERSES 6, 7: "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief; again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

As God does nothing in vain, so his original purpose, that this earth in a perfect condition should be the home of a sinless race of beings, will eventually be realized; and consequently there will be some who will enter therein. The apostle repeats a statement that all must accede to; viz., that those to whom the gospel of this rest was first preached, did not enter therein because of unbelief. He then proceeds to prove by a second reference, that this rest

was a matter of promise in the time of David. "He limiteth a certain day,"—definitely designates a time,—"after so long a time,"—about five hundred years after their entrance into the promised land. "If ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." The purport is that at a point of time five hundred years subsequent to the entrance of the children of Israel into the land of Canaan, the Lord by the mouth of his servant admonished the people not to harden their hearts with unbelief, lest the result be to prevent them from entering into his rest.

Verse 8: "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day."

The word *Jesus* in this text should be *Joshua*. *Jesus* is the Greek form of the word *Joshua*, and all commentators and Bible students agree that *Joshua* is here intended. The object is to prove that in leading the children of Israel into Canaan, *Joshua* did not give them such a rest as to make it improper to speak of another "rest" after that time. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Verse 9.

Verse 10: "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

The closing comments upon verses 3-5 are applicable to this verse.

Verses 11-13: "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Paul reiterates the exhortation to strive for the rest that remains for the people of God, and adds his testimony regarding the value of the word of God to us in this striving. Dr. Adam Clarke, in his comments on the 12th verse, quotes Dr. Dodd as saying:—

"When the soul is thus distinguished from the spirit, by the former is meant that inferior faculty by which we think of and desire what concerns our present being and welfare. By *spirit* is meant a superior power by which we prefer future things to present, by which we are directed to pursue truth and right above all things, and even to despise what is agreeable to our present state, if it stands in competition with, or is prejudicial to, our future happiness."

Viewed in this light, the text in question teaches that the word of God is capable of separating carnal desires from spiritual aspirations, thus enabling one to live a holier and better life. The emphatic terms employed, and the reference made to literal things, demonstrate in the most forcible manner possible the power of the word of God. By the 13th verse we are instructed that nothing can be hid from God; he knows all, and takes cognizance of all that is going on upon the earth.

Commencing with verse 14, the inspired writer gives an extended dissertation upon the priesthood of Christ, reaching to the close of chapter ten.

G. W. M.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION: IS IT COMPLETED?—NO. 6.

We have found from the New Testament that the apostles were seventh-day adventists in faith and practice. That is, they observed the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, and believed and preached the doctrine of the second personal coming of Christ. Upon these and other gospel truths they stood in harmonious unity, being "of one heart and one soul."

We now come to the second point in this discussion,—the "falling away" mentioned by Paul in 2 Thess. 2. Many suppose a doctrine must be sound and scriptural that can be traced to the times of the apostles or to the age immediately succeeding. Hence many believe and teach that Sunday-keeping must be of divine origin, because in history mention is made of religious meetings which were, as early as the second century, held on the first day of the week. The absurdity of this position will be manifest. Both Scripture and history record that the "falling away" began in the very days of the apostles. It would, therefore, appear unsafe to accept a doctrine upon the merit of age alone, even though such doctrine were traceable to the first century, unless it were sustained by the Scriptures. Many of the senseless errors of popery are claimed by more than half the Christian world to have originated with the apostles themselves. Yet Protestants reject them because unsupported by the Bible. We find, even in the apostles, conduct that was sinful and pernicious. For instance, Peter dissembled, so that Paul "withstood him to the face"

with a sharp reproof. "Barnabas was also carried away with their dissimulation." Paul said they "walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel." Gal. 2. Suppose it could be shown that Peter and Barnabas kept Sunday for the Sabbath, instead of the seventh day; would that alone make it obligatory upon us?—Not unless it can be shown to be our duty to "dissemble," and walk contrary to "the truth of the gospel," because they did. We find rather that the "truth of the gospel" is the standard, and outweighs, as authority, even apostolic example.

Again: the Bible enjoins "all to speak the same thing," and to be of "the same mind" and of "the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1:10. But "apostolic example" sometimes ran directly counter to this. Paul and Barnabas had a very serious falling out. See Acts 15:39. "The contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other." Is it our duty to follow such an example?—Certainly not. Then apostolic example is not an infallible guide. If as clear a case of apostolic Sunday-keeping as of apostolic quarreling were on record, how vociferously would it be proclaimed, how tenaciously followed!

Many of the roots of the great apostasy are traceable to the very earliest age. Only twenty-three years after the cross, Paul wrote: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." 2 Thess. 2:7. Christianity had already begun to be corrupted by the introduction of pagan customs. Thirty-five years after the cross, Paul wrote to Timothy: "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me." 2 Tim. 1:15. Here was the most wholesale rebellion, right in the apostolic age. Church after church that had been established by the great apostle's wearing labors, went back from the truth. Not a very safe example for us to follow certainly, though it did occur in the days of the apostles.

To the elders of the church at Ephesus, Paul said: "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20:30. These words betoken an early start in the church down the fearful declivity of heresy and corruption. Again, John says: "And this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." 1 John 4:3. Paul said that Hymenæus and Alexander had made shipwreck concerning the faith, and that they had overthrown the faith of some by teaching the resurrection to be already past. 2 Tim. 2:18. Paul said to one church: "It is commonly reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles." 1 Cor. 5:1. These passages certainly indicate a state of corruption in the early church which it would be very unsafe and destructive to follow.

Errors were believed and propagated by the disciples of Christ themselves. See John 21:21-23. The saying went abroad among the brethren that one of the disciples would not die. Christ said nothing of the kind; yet this error was taught, and Christ's words were quoted as proof. It is not surprising that good men in our day endeavor to establish Sunday sacredness by arguments equally conclusive. These statements of Scripture should guard us from receiving doctrines not in harmony with the "law and the testimony," no matter how early their purported origin. If Sunday-keeping were known to have originated among Christians of the apostolic age, that alone would not be a sufficient warrant for its adoption by us. How much less, then, is the weight of its authority when it is found to exist no earlier, as a rest-day, than the fourth century, and then keeping company with numerous other gross innovations! Now hear the corroborative

TESTIMONY OF HISTORY.

Ecclesiastical historians are equally emphatic in their witness to the early prevalence of corrupt practices in the church.

Wharey says: "Even in this first century, several errors made their appearance, and heresies began to spring up."—*Wharey's Church History*, p. 22.

"It is painful to be compelled to acknowledge among the Christians of the apostolic age the existence of so many forms of error and sin."—*Life and Epistles of Paul by Conybeare and Howson*, p. 377.

The same authors tell us why this was: "In every city the nucleus of the church consisted of Jews and Jewish proselytes; on this foundation was super-added a miscellaneous mass of heathen converts, almost exclusively from the lowest classes—baptized, indeed, into the name of Jesus, but still with all the

habits of a life of idolatry and vice clinging to them."—*Idem.*, p. 376.

"We need, therefore, neither feel surprise nor alarm when we find, in particular instances, that the grossest errors of theory and practice are to be traced to the first century."—*Antichrist Exposed*, by Taylor.

Protestants have discarded many errors of popery which historians trace to an earlier date by scores of years than they do Sunday observance. How can they, then, with any consistency, argue for Sunday-keeping solely upon the ground of its early origin?

Whitsuntide, Easter, and Good Friday were held sacred even in the first century. See Murdock's "Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History," vol. 1, p. 85.

Well may Dowling, in his "History of Romanism," say: "There is scarcely anything which strikes the mind of the careful student of ancient ecclesiastical history with greater surprise, than the comparatively early period at which many of the corruptions of Christianity, which are embodied in the Roman system, took their rise."—*Idem.*, book 2, chap. 1, sec. 1.

No one, even among the most enthusiastic of Sunday-Sabbath advocates, claims to find any record of religious meetings on Sunday, previous to the middle of the second century. Thus the "People's Cyclopaedia," a work of three large volumes issued by Phillips and Hunt, the Methodist publishers, and edited by W. H. De Puy, A. M., D. D., for seventeen years associate editor of the *New York Christian Advocate* (Methodist), on page 1597 says: "There is no period since the time of Christ when there were not Sabbath-keeping Christians in the church. There is no positive evidence of any form of observance of Sunday by Christians previous to the middle of the second century."

Thus the best authorities among Sunday advocates frankly admit that Sunday observance is not apostolic, but arose scores of years after. But Catholics claim to be able to trace many of their pagan ceremonies to the very apostles. Concerning Lent, the "Catholic Christian Instructed" says: "We know of no beginning of it; for it is a fast that has been observed by the church from the time of the apostles." "It is mentioned by the holy fathers in innumerable places, who also inform us that they had received it by tradition from the apostles."—Page 193.

Again, concerning Holy Water: "Ques. How ancient is the use of Holy Water? Ans. Ever since the apostles' time."—*Abridg. Chris. Doc.*, p. 149.

We see, therefore, how unsafe it would be to accept a doctrine without Scriptural support, though the most positive assertions are made by modern theologians and ancient Fathers as to its apostolic origin. One such error admitted would unbar the door for others equally deserving, and one would be puzzled to know where to stop. These errors arose early enough to be accepted, if age alone were the test of truth. The only way to be delivered from the whole catalogue of papal abominations is to reject the first one. They all stand on the same level, and the acceptance of one virtually concedes the validity of all.

Speaking of the first century, De Pressense in his "Early Years of Christianity," p. 368, of first cent., says: "Nominal Christianity had crept into the churches. The world had joined hands with the church; scandalous falls were seen to result from this fatal association of the Christians with the heathen. Heresy during the period of John began to take a more decided form." Considering this decay of faith in the apostolic age, we shall not be surprised to find the downward grade steeper, and the speed more frightful in the second century. But we will reserve this topic until our next paper. W. C. WALES.

EXTENT AND MANNER OF NOAH'S PREACHING.

REGARDING the extent of Noah's preaching, so far as time was concerned, evidence is found in Gen. 6:3: "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." Then follows the Lord's instruction to Noah concerning the building of the ark. Upon the text above quoted, Thomas Scott, D. D., comments thus:—

"The Spirit of God strove with men, by inspiring Enoch, Noah, and perhaps others, to preach to them. . . . The Lord was pleased to declare that he would wait a hundred and twenty years, before he executed his purposed vengeance, that men might have space to repent, and to use proper methods of averting his terrible indignation."

Bush says:—

"This passage should be viewed in connection with

1 Peter 3:18-20, from which we learn that it was no other than the *Spirit of Christ* that through the instrumentality of the pious patriarchs preached to the disobedient spirits of the old world."

Peter calls Noah a "preacher of righteousness." 2 Peter 2:5. Upon this text Dr. Barnes comments thus:—

"In Gen. 6:9, it is said of Noah that he was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and that he walked with God; and it may be presumed that during his long life he was faithful in reproving the wickedness of his age, and warned the world of the judgment that was preparing for it."

In Heb. 11:7 we read that "by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

"The wickedness of the sinner is condemned, not only by preaching, and by the admonitions and threatenings of the law of God, but by the conduct of every good man. The language of such a life is as plain a rebuke of the sinner as the most fearful denunciations of divine wrath."—*Barnes*.

Temperance Outlook.

"TO PROHIBITIONISTS."

"AN APPEAL TO THE FRIENDS OF TEMPERANCE IN BEHALF OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE."

[We have received copies of a tract bearing the title above quoted, and deeming the subject treated to be of vital interest, we reproduce the same in these columns. We fully indorse the positions set forth, and bespeak for them the candid consideration of the readers of this paper. In consequence of dissenting, as we do, from that part of the work of Prohibitionists and the W. C. T. U. that seeks the enactment and enforcement of Sunday laws, we are subject to being misunderstood and wrongly judged. The design of the tract that we herewith copy is not only to protest against what we conceive to be an entirely erroneous proposition, but as a matter of justice to a somewhat numerous and worthy religious denomination, the members of which are, almost without exception, staunch Prohibitionists.—*EDITOR SICKLE*.]

This tract is issued by the N. Y. Health and Temperance Society, a branch organization of the American Health and Temperance Association. This society aims to inculcate temperance in all things. All discard the use of alcoholic intoxicants. More than nine-tenths discard tobacco, and the majority tea, coffee, etc., and all other stimulants and narcotics, believing that the use of these articles unfits mankind for the higher moral obligations resting upon them in their relation to God and their fellow-men. The greater number are sincere Bible believers, and are endeavoring to follow faithfully the great Pattern.

They believe that the cause of temperance is one which is worthy of earnest labor and sacrificing devotion. It is closely connected with the interests of the individual, the family, the neighborhood, and the nation. They are in hearty sympathy with this noble work of reforming the intemperate, educating the people in the principles of true temperance, and suppressing the liquor traffic. They have been strong advocates of temperance for more than twenty years, as reference to their record will show, and it is their earnest wish that the friends of temperance will not adopt a policy which will preclude their acting with them in this good work. The large majority have been staunch advocates of prohibition principles. The value of their influence and suffrages have been recognized in Michigan, Iowa, and other localities.

But our fears are aroused by recent events which indicate that religious liberty is threatened by the growing tendency manifested almost everywhere to connect religious legislation with legislation in behalf of temperance. We are pained to see the Prohibition party and the noble army of the W. C. T. U. abetting and aiding in this work. We refer to principles which have been repeatedly set forth by the National Reform Association, and by these temperance organizations, which may be summed up in these propositions:—

1. Christ must, by legislation, be recognized as king of the nation, and all laws must be made to conform to his requirements.

2. The Christian Sabbath (Sunday) must be protected, and its observance enforced by law.

Against these principles we most emphatically pro-

test, and firmly declare that we cannot conscientiously support any movement, however beneficent some of its principles or objects may be, which has for a part of its platform the above principles. Will you candidly and carefully consider our reasons?

1. In a certain sense, God's law may be taken as a basis of legislation. But an understanding of this is absolutely necessary in order to wise action. The laws of earthly government cannot, in the very nature of the case, be identical in *purpose* with God's law. God's law is moral; laws of human government, civil. The former is designed to promote morality; the latter, civility. The former takes cognizance of the thoughts, purposes, and motives of the heart; the latter, of overt acts alone. For instance: "Thou shalt not kill," is a part of God's law; it is a law of our government. But God counts that man a murderer who cherishes hatred in his heart against his brother, whatever his acts. Human governments take into account only the deed, in order to protect the rights of all. God alone has jurisdiction over the realms of thought, purpose, and motive. Human governments have an indefeasible right to deal with the outward act between man and man.

But while earthly governments may properly legislate in order to protect the life, chastity, property, and reputation of their subjects, they have no right to enter the domain of religion and exercise any surveillance whatever over the religious faith or practice of any. Our worship should be directed to God alone, and not to earthly powers; hence any attempt on their part to regulate or enforce any religious observance is a usurpation of the divine prerogatives.

The law of God was written upon *two* tables of stone. The *first* table defines our duty to God, and is purely moral and religious. With this, secular governments have no right to deal. The *second* table defines our duty to our fellow-men, and governments may regulate the conduct of their subjects in harmony with its principles, but only on a *civil* basis, because they can take cognizance only of outward acts. God has thus wisely distinguished between the duties we owe to him and those we owe to our fellow-men.

Religion is a matter of conscience and private judgment with each individual, and no other individual or church or state has any right to prescribe or regulate it. Whatever be a man's faith, his rights of conscience are equal to those of any other man, unless his religion leads him to incivility. At this point, governments may interfere; aside from this, they have no jurisdiction. They may interpret a man's duty to his fellow, as before stated, but they cannot interpret his duty to his God. Every attempt to do this has invariably led to religious persecution. Divine institutions will be held sacred in direct proportion as the word and Spirit of God are brought to bear on the heart and conscience. These are the agencies employed of God to build up and preserve true religion in the earth. The advocates of Bible religion have never found it necessary to use any other aggressive weapons than "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." An appeal to the secular arm by professed Christians is always an evidence that they do not consider that the word of God and the power of his grace are of sufficient potency in propagating and preserving their religion against the opposition of its enemies. A Christianity which has vowed fidelity to Christ, in whom is vested all power to be imparted freely to his ministers, and which then appeals to earthly governments for the exercise of authority in its behalf to protect it from vandal hands, must have forsaken her Lord and become sadly degenerated. It is an alliance with the world, which is characterized in the Scriptures as fornication with the kings of the earth, a sin which God greatly abhors. It is taking the sword, or secular power, to advance the Redeemer's kingdom, which our Saviour declares is not of this world, else would his servants fight, and he rebukes Peter, who used the sword to resist his Lord's enemies, by declaring that "they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

2. A union of church and state does not necessitate the establishment of a particular church and its support by state taxes. The great and popular churches are agreed in what they term "essentials." They unitedly demand that the government shall crystallize their interpretation of the divine will into statute law. Through their combined and powerful influence it is done. The church dictates; the state accepts. The church interprets; the state makes that interpretation law. It is a union of church and state, as no one can deny, and secures the enactment and

enforcement of these interpretations as effectually as though all came through the influence of one church. And the result is the same—persecution to those who may feel in duty bound to oppose and disregard the will of the majority.

The language of the gospel is not we "compel men," but "entreat," "beseech," "persuade men" (1 Cor. 5:11, 21); "whosoever will" may come, whosoever will may stay away. Those who would seek to *compel* religious observances, would do well to heed the rebuke of Christ to the rash zeal of his disciples. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Luke 9:55.

3. The principal religious institution for which legislative support is requested, is the so-called Christian Sabbath, or Sunday. But, first, the Sabbath as a divine institution is not Christian in any sense. It was instituted by the Creator 4,000 years before the opening of the Christian dispensation. Gen. 2:2, 3. It was made, not for any sect or nation, but for *man*, the whole race. Mark 2:27. It was made before man sinned, while he needed no Saviour from sin; hence is not a part of Christianity, or the gospel, which is a remedial scheme. Like all the rest of the moral law, it is forever binding on all; but it is a duty which man owes to God alone, and was therefore written on the first table. God gave it, and enjoined it to be kept holy to him. It is an institution which secular governments have no right to interpret or enforce.

Again: a great diversity exists in regard to faith and practice concerning the *day* of the Sabbath. Two bodies of Christians and the Jews hold to the plain, literal command of the divine law, which declares, "*The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.*" Ex. 20:8-11. It is also conceded by many able divines and authorities that the only Bible Sabbath is the seventh day. These Christians find no evidence whatever in the New Testament that the Sabbath has been changed, or its sacredness transferred to any other day of the week; neither do they find there any support for Sunday sacredness. They claim that it has only the great apostasy for its origin as a sacred day. Therefore they cannot obey nor support an observance which to them is opposed to the law of God.

Others, the majority, hold the first day sacred or expedient—many, no doubt, as conscientiously as the seventh-day observer. They do not believe that any have the right to dictate to them their duty in this respect. They would truly hold that no mere majority had a right to compel them to observe the seventh day under any consideration.

But admitting for the time that the Sabbath is a Christian institution (which it is not), and ought to be enforced by law, would it not be just as consistent for the state to enforce every other Christian institution, such as baptism, the Lord's supper, etc.? To be consistent it must do this. It is the logical sequence of legislation in behalf of Sunday as a religious institution. But Christian institutions are for Christians *only*. It would be sacrilege for an unbeliever in Christ to be baptized or partake of the Lord's supper. Is the Sabbath a Christian institution? Then none but Christians ought to observe it. What shall be thought of the spiritual discernment of professed Christians who appeal to the state to enforce upon all its citizens a Christian (?) institution? But it is to just such extremes as this that their logic drives them. They ignore the principle of Christ, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." The Sabbath belongs to God. Cæsar, or earthly governments, have no right to meddle therewith.

Our forefathers wisely framed our government in the interests of civil and religious liberty. Their anxiety was not to guard religion by statute law and constitutional guarantee, but to guard the rights of every citizen in the enjoyment of the religion of his choice. But now Sabbath reform is being pressed into the field of politics by many who seem eager and ambitious to secure the power which legal safeguards for Sunday will give to silence those who may dissent in faith and practice from themselves. As evidence of this, we cite the following utterances among many.

In the *Christian Statesman*, of Jan. 13, 1887, Rev. M. A. Gault, when speaking of the influences now acting against Christianity, says: "Our remedy for all these malific influences is to have the government simply set up the moral law, and recognize God's authority behind it, and lay its hand on any religion that does not conform to it."

In an address delivered in N. Y. City, in 1873, before a National Reform Convention, by the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Edwards, of Ill., when advocating a religious amendment to the Constitution of the United States, in defining who must be classed as atheists, says: "These all [the Atheist, the Deist, the Jew, and the Seventh-day Baptist, just enumerated] are, for the occasion, and as far as our amendment is concerned, one class. *They must be counted together.*" How are they to be treated? He continues: "Tolerate atheism, sir? There is nothing out of hell that I would not tolerate as soon." What do they propose to do with the heretics? Rev. Mr. Trefren, of Napa, Cal., at a ministerial convention at Healdsburg, in 1870, said in referring to some ministers who advocated views not in harmony with his own on the Sabbath question: "I predict for them a short race. What we want is law in the matter. And we will have it, too; and when we get the power into our hands, we will show these men what their end will be."

Rev. C. M. Westlake, of Antwerp, N. Y., a prominent local Prohibitionist, gives his views on the question in the *Watertown Advocate* of April 26, 1888. They may be summed up as follows:—

1. "Resolved, That we believe in preserving the sanctity of the Sabbath by the enforcement of present laws, and the enactment of such other laws as may be deemed necessary." This is the resolution passed at the Prohibition Congressional Convention held at Gouverneur, in March, 1888. This he indorses.

2. He says: "No necessity is known for the existence of two Sabbath days in every seven. The interests of good order, of organized society, demand the legal protection of *but one day*, and that the *first day of the week*, because it is so demanded by an overwhelming majority of the Christians of the land."

3. He says that in enforcing this law, "where the liberty of the few tends to the injury (?) of the many, it is, in that case, the duty of government to *abridge the liberty of the few.*" "The government would have a right to *invade their individual liberty* so far as to *compel the abstinence* . . . from such conduct as violated the rights of the majority. No necessity is known for two Sabbath days in every seven."

Here it is in a nutshell. The demand of a majority of Christians constitute what is *right*; and if others do not conform to what the *Christian majority* deem *right*, they must have their "liberties *invaded* and *abridged.*" That is all that religious persecution ever was—abridging the religious rights and liberties of some, and giving legal protection of those rights to others.

Some claim that there is no danger of persecution if Sunday laws are passed; that the people are too enlightened to persecute or permit persecution in this country. But stubborn facts of recent occurrence disprove this. In several States, observers of the seventh day have been subjected to fines and imprisonment for no other offense than quietly laboring on their own premises on Sunday. In Arkansas and Tennessee, in 1886, several aggravated cases occurred. That it was *religious* persecution is evident from the fact that at the very time of their arrest and incarceration, others who did not observe the seventh day were allowed to fish, hunt, run milk wagons, railroad trains, etc., etc. The truth is, that when any law enforcing any religious observance is placed upon the statute book, however good the motives of those may be who make or pass this law, it is taken advantage of by religious bigots to harass and oppress conscientious religious people who are not in harmony with the law. For particulars concerning the working of the Sunday law in Arkansas, we cite you to the speech of Senator Robert H. Crockett before the Arkansas Legislature, published in the weekly *Arkansas Gazette* of February 10, 1887.

But it is said that Sunday agitation is directed against open saloons on that day, wholly in the interest of temperance. But if the temperance sentiment is strong enough to close saloons Sunday, it can do it every day of the week. Therefore it is not in the interest of temperance that the saloon is closed on Sunday, but in the interest of *religion*. It is the exaltation of Sunday as a religious institution above the other days of the week, and discriminating between those who observe it and those who do not.

Again: it has been urged by those who demand Sunday legislation that it in no way interferes with those who observe the seventh day; for while Sunday laws may enjoin upon all rest from labor and business, it does not forbid the religious observance of

any other day of the week as the Sabbath. And therefore whatever hardship comes to the observers of the seventh day, comes because of their religion, and for this hardship the state is not responsible. These are some of the sophistries which are set forth as judicial fairness in religious circles and courts of justice, by divines and judges, in defense of Sunday laws. But a state which makes and enforces laws which favor one religious class and work injury to another, when one class holds the same relation to the state as the other in every other respect, must be guilty of legislation in the interest of a particular religion, whatever may be the avowed object. Is not the state therefore *responsible* for the hardship which such legislation imposes? For the hardship would *not* be experienced as a necessary result of such religion; but it *does* come in consequence of such legislation. The state also imposes a tax of over sixteen per cent on his income (one-sixth of his time) which it does not impose on the first-day observer. Therefore the *state* and *not* the seventh-day observer is responsible for the sufferings which follow Sunday legislation, unless it can be shown that the individual has no right to choose his own religion, but must accept that indorsed and enforced by the state. Are we to be deprived of our religious liberties through such platitudes and sophistries of religious leaders and the decisions of our courts of justice? We protest against such injustice. We only ask for *equality with others* before the law, and the same protection of civil and religious rights which is granted to others.

The *Watchman* has well said: True religious liberty is not the right to think for ourselves, but the right of the other man to think for himself. We ask nothing of others but what we are willing to grant to others, as taught by the golden rule: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matt. 7:12. Are our first-day friends willing to carry out this principle in dealing with those who differ with them in religious faith and practice? If not, why not?

But, say some, you cannot reasonably object to Sunday laws which make exemptions in favor of the seventh-day observers. But we do; for we firmly believe that Sunday legislation is wrong in principle. Sunday is a religious institution purely, and when the state upholds an institution of the church, a bond of union is formed between them which endangers the religious liberties of those who are opposed to it. And when once the Sunday is entrenched in the law of the state, however mild the provisions of that law and just its exemptions, the Sunday occupies vantage ground which will be used by its friends to sweep away the exemptions, as has been done in Arkansas, and to prevent their insertion, as in Pennsylvania and Tennessee.

The foregoing pages briefly set forth our reasons for protesting against Sunday legislation in connection with the temperance movement or elsewhere. In view of these considerations, our society felt constrained at its State meeting in Syracuse (May, 1888), to pass the following resolutions embodying our views on this question, which so vitally affects religious liberty and the rights of conscience:—

"Whereas, Governments are ordained of God to regulate the conduct of men in their relations to one another, and protect the lives, property, virtue, and good name of their citizens; and,—

"Whereas, The experience of the race has proved that every effort which governments have made to enforce any religion or any religious institution upon their subjects, has resulted in the invasion of the religious rights of the minority; and,—

"Whereas, We are accountable only to God for our religion or lack of religion; and,—

"Whereas, The Sabbath is a purely religious institution based upon the authority of the divine law; therefore,—

"Resolved, That whatever may be the avowed object of Sunday laws in connection with the temperance movement, we consider them in the interests of *religion* and *not of temperance.*

"And whereas, There are differences of opinion in our country in regard to the day which God requires us to observe as the Sabbath, bringing as a consequence diversity of practice; therefore,—

"Resolved, That we express it as our settled conviction that the enactment of laws enforcing any day of rest upon the people, or prohibiting the sale of intoxicants upon any particular day of the week, while permitting their sale upon the remaining days, is, in effect, elevating and honoring that day above other days, and thus discriminating in favor of those who

observe it as the Sabbath, and against those who observe some other day.

"Resolved, That, as such legislation is in the interests of a religious class by elevating and protecting an institution observed by them, we believe that it must of necessity result in the abridgement and invasion of the religious rights of those who do not observe it, but who conscientiously observe some other day.

"Further, resolved, That, while we pledge ourselves to labor earnestly and zealously for the prohibition of the liquor traffic on every day of the week and for all time, we hereby utter an earnest protest against connecting with the temperance movement any legislation which discriminates in favor of any religious class or institution, and that we cannot sustain or encourage any temperance party or any other organization which indorses or favors such legislation.

We earnestly appeal to our brethren in the noble cause of temperance not to stain their banners with religious legislation, not to commit themselves to a policy which will place the civil power in subservience to the ecclesiastical, not to make the state in any way a servant to the church. It is the straight road to Rome, and if followed, will subvert and destroy religious liberty in our beloved land.

We earnestly appeal to the noble women of the W. C. T. U., which has been so instrumental of good, not to use their influence and form an alliance with the National Reform Association, which is laboring to secure an amendment to the Constitution of the United States by which so-called Christian laws and usages are to be placed on a legal basis. It is sure to result in religious persecution, for the reasons herein set forth. We appeal to them not to stain their fair hands in placing upon the statute book, laws which can be and will be used in oppressing the weak and defenseless, and depriving conscientious Christians of their religious liberty and the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience.

The religious persecutions of the Dark Ages began with laws even milder than those now proposed by some of our National Reformers. Overzealous reformers believed that religious legislation was necessary to protect and advance the cause of Christ. Certainly, they argued, God's will ought to be made law. But it was only God's will as interpreted and enforced by the majority that put to death the early Christians. It was executing the supposed will of God that martyred the untold millions of the Dark Ages; that caused the death of Servetus through the instigation of Calvin; that hung supposed witches, imprisoned and tortured Quakers, and banished Baptists, in the colony of Massachusetts. And Christ assured the faithful few that the time would come that whosoever killed them would think that he did God service. John 16:2. Should such a law be enacted, but two alternatives lie before us,—either to stultify conscience, yield to the law of men, and transgress God's law, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me;" or, faithful to our Lord, to say as did those of old, "We ought to obey God rather than men." We can only protest and entreat. The responsibility of a wrong course must be left with those who pursue it. The issue we leave with God. Vengeful persecutors may light the furnace fires, but the Great Refiner will allow only the dross to be consumed. The gold will be preserved for that heavenly kingdom, when and where Christ will reign through his own mighty power and unmeasurable love.

WILLIAM PENN was an inveterate enemy of tobacco. This was well known to friends and acquaintances, and whenever he was seen approaching, the pipe was speedily put out of sight. Observing many of his smoking friends in the act of hiding their pipes on one occasion, he remarked, "I am glad to see that you are ashamed of your practice." The smokers of the present generation have less regard for the feelings of their more cleanly fellows than did their ancestors,—another proof of the degenerating influence of the drug. Once in a while, however, an insolent smoker gets a sharp hint of his impertinence, as did a man in a railroad car the other day, who received a thrust from his seat-mate's umbrella for puffing the smoke of a cigar in his face. The devotee of the weed sued for damages, but lost his suit, and was obliged to pay cost.—*Student's Journal.*

TRUTH is truth: though all men forsake it, it still remains unchanged; and its own excellence will recommend it, even though the conduct of its professors does not.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., August 15, 1888.

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CAMP-MEETINGS.

The following are the appointments for the later camp-meetings, to be held by the S. D. Adventists:—

Ohio, Columbus,	Aug.	10-21
Texas, Terrell, Kaufman Co.,	"	14-21
Kansas, Cawker City,	"	16-26
Arkansas, Springdale,	"	21-28
Michigan, Alma,	"	14-21
Michigan, Homer,	"	28-Sept. 4
Vermont, West Randolph,	"	28- " 4
Iowa, West Liberty,	"	29- " 4
Illinois, Springfield,	Sept.	4-11
Maine, Bangor,	"	4-11
New York, Rome,	"	11-18
Indiana, Indianapolis,	"	11-18
North Carolina,	"	11-18
Kansas, Neodesha,	"	13-23
Colorado, Denver,	"	18-25
Nebraska, Grand Island,	"	11-19
California (State meeting),		
Oakland,	"	20-Oct. 2
Michigan (State meeting),		
Grand Rapids,	"	25- " 2
Kansas (German), Aiken,	Oct.	3-8
Tennessee, Guthrie, Ky.,	"	2-9
Missouri, Kansas City,	"	2-9

The invitation is general and cordial for all to attend these meetings.

THE LETTER THAT KILLETH.

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." 2 Cor. 3:6. In this text the contrast is kept up between the Mosaic priesthood and the Christian ministry. The ten commandments were the basis of the old covenant. Obedience to them secured the blessings of that covenant. Their disregard insured the death of all offenders, unless relief was brought in some way. Christ alone could offer that relief. As all have broken the law of God, all are exposed to death, as a penalty for such violation. Moses and the Aaronic priesthood, therefore, were ministers of death in the sense that they introduced the dispensation of condemnation, or death. Rom. 7:13. Furthermore, they were the executors of the penalty of temporal death by stoning, etc., to those who broke the ten commandments. The Christian ministry, on the contrary, neither introduced nor executed any of the penalties of the law as was done under the old dispensation. They simply preached salvation from the penalty of the law through Christ. The law says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Eze. 18:20. The Christian minister says, The Lord Jesus Christ has died, that we may be saved from the penalty of the broken law. The spirit, or design of the law, was that of preventing sin, and thus of saving men from the terrible consequences thereof. The letter of the law, however, was such that on account of the weakness and sinfulness of men, it resulted in their death. Rom. 7. The Christian ministry, therefore, are working in harmony with the spirit and design of the law in leading men to Christ, as that was the original purpose for which the law was given. Rom. 7:13. Hence their ministrations, since it brought pardon and life to a world already condemned, was more glorious than the ministration of Moses, which, while it condemned, could only point to the future for a remedy.

Let it be observed that, according to the text, it is the letter of the new covenant, not of the old, which killeth at the present time. The law is still binding, and its penalty is death. 1 Cor. 15:55. That penalty is not executed by the Christian ministry, but will be executed by Christ in the day of judgment. All that the minister of Christ has to do, is to warn men of the consequences of disobedience, and point them to

the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. John 1:29.

EZEKIEL 43:27 AND THE SUNDAY SABBATH.

This text has been employed by some to prove Sunday sanctity. The text reads thus: "And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord God."

The man who first employed it for that purpose must have possessed an inventive genius in spiritual matters equal to that of Edison in physical matters. The difference between the two men, however, consists in the fact that the inventions of Edison generally have some value, while that of the man who created an argument for Sunday sanctity out of the passage in question, really originated nothing which possesses any value whatever. There is, however, a coincidence between the passage and the theory not a little striking. It is this: The altar, from the dedication of which he drew an argument for the first-day Sabbath, like that Sabbath itself, never had an existence in reality, but existed only in imagination. Neither the temple nor the altar spoken of in that book ever has been, or ever will be, brought into being. It was promised conditionally to the Hebrews; and as they did not on their part fulfill the condition, the promise was never executed. Nevertheless, if it had been, it never could have affected the Sunday question in the least degree: first, because there is no necessary connection between the offering of sacrifices and the sanctification of any day; secondly, because the sacrifices which were to be offered on the eighth day were to continue to be offered on every day of the week thereafter for all coming time, thus proving that it was not intended to bestow any honor in particular on the eighth day above other days; the simple fact being that the altar was to be in process of dedication during the seven days, and on each succeeding day thereafter, the eighth with the rest, was to be devoted to the ordinary offerings of the people; for let it be observed that it was not simply on every eighth day that the priests were to offer the sacrifices thereon, but it was on the eighth day and "so forward" that they were to make the offerings on the altar; i. e., on every day in the week; thirdly, there is no more evidence that the eighth day there spoken of would fall on Sunday, than there is that it would have fallen on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or any other day of the week. The eight days were to be counted from the day when they commenced to dedicate the altar, and the altar was to be dedicated when completed. As, therefore, the altar was never completed, it was never dedicated; and as it was never dedicated, it would be impossible to find the point at which we are to commence to count the seven days of dedication, and therefore we cannot locate the eighth day, or the one which, following the seven, was, it is claimed, to be especially honored.

Should it be replied that the whole account of the temple found in Ezekiel was designed to be a mystical representation of the gospel dispensation, we would reply: 1. No man who ever lived can take that temple, and find the antitypes of its doors, its windows, its priests and its Levites, its sacrifices, its offerings of blood, its flesh-hooks, its altars and tables, its chambers, etc., in the Christian dispensation; 2. No positive doctrine should ever be founded upon a mystical portion of Scripture, so obscure that it is susceptible of as many interpretations as there can be found men who are willing to undertake its explanation.

THE WAYS AND WORKS OF GOD HARMONIOUS.

The ways of God are perfect; they need no mending. "The law of the Lord is perfect." That which is perfect cannot be improved; hence no revision ever was, or ever will be, necessary. "Thy word is true from the beginning, and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever." "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth." Ps. 119.

The primary law of God—the moral law—and all the principles of his dealings with mankind have been the same from the very beginning. His plan of operation has not been improved, because his wisdom cannot be improved. It is true that when sin is disposed of, so that it exists no longer, he has promised to make all things new; but that relates to our earth, which now lies under the curse on account of sin;

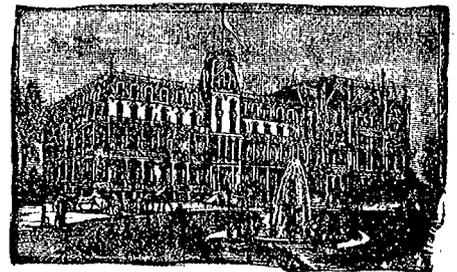
and this is in accordance with all his operations from the beginning. The time has never been, in the working out of his plan, that he has abandoned one principle of action, changed one precept of his primary law, or laid these all aside in order to begin anew. Yet people talk as though they thought that God had demolished all the past, and started out under a new plan of operation, with a new law to supersede the old; and they quote this text: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

But this declaration is suspended upon an *if*.—"if any man be in Christ." The change is all in him; "he is a new creature;" his old life of sin is passed away, and he enters upon a new life,—a life of obedience to the law of God. This is all that the text teaches. The apostle did not teach that if a man be in Christ, to him the law of God is abolished. If he did, what is the case of the man who is not in Christ? Is the old law abolished to him also? or is he still bound to keep it?

God says, "I change not;" and every consistent believer in the God of the Bible must perceive that God ever acts upon the same principles,—that the law by which he governs mankind is always the same, and consequently that the very same acts that were sins at any one time, are sins at all times. No old principle, nor precept of moral law, has been abolished or changed, and no new principle has been introduced.

All the ways of God are harmonious. His plan goes constantly forward. He does not pull down to build greater. He does not improve upon the original plan; for that was perfect, and therefore cannot be improved. The Father and the Son have ever been one. The law of the one is the law of the other. There has been no change in the administration. The Son has not superseded the Father; neither has the New Testament superseded the Old; but there is harmony throughout. The whole building of God is upon one foundation,—a foundation which was laid in the beginning, and a foundation which never has, and never will be, removed. Those who build their hopes upon this foundation will build securely. Those who build upon any other, will find that the storms and floods which are about to come will sweep them away. Let all be built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Those who hear and do the sayings of Christ, as set forth in the sermon upon the mount, build upon the rock; those who do them not, build upon the sand. Soon every one's work will be tested. R. F. C.

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