

EXTRA.

THE HOME
MISSIONARY
HE THAT REAPETH RECEIVETH WAGES AND GATHERETH FRUIT TO LIFE ETERNAL.— *John 4:36.*

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., NOVEMBER, 1890.

WEEK OF PRAYER READINGS.

THE WEEK OF PRAYER.

THE REASON FOR THE OCCASION, AND HOW IT SHOULD BE OBSERVED.

READING FOR SABBATH, DECEMBER 20.

ANOTHER year has made its round, and its record has gone into eternity. Again we have thought it proper to appoint a week of prayer. It seems very appropriate near the close of the year to stop and consider the past and the future, both from an individual standpoint and from our standpoint as a people having a part in such a solemn work as that with which we are connected.

During the past year we have had many evidences of God's mercy and favor. It has been a year of special interest in several ways. The agitation on the subject of religious legislation ran high during the earlier part of the year. The Breckinridge bill before the lower House of Congress, the special canvass in the District of Columbia, the circulation of religious liberty reading-matter, and the obtaining of signatures to the petitions, gave a new impetus to our work everywhere, because we saw in this agitation the fulfillment of what we have been looking for, for years, and the unmistakable evidence that we are close to the end of time.

There has never before in our history been such a general and systematic circulation of literature treating on present truth as during the year now closing. We have also noticed with much interest the manner in which God's providence is opening the way for the work. Never before in our experi-

ence were there so many open doors for the truth and so many and such urgent calls for laborers from every part of the world, and never before were we so unable to fill these calls as now.

We have felt great distress of mind as we have seen so many of God's dear servants go down to the grave during the year. Beginning with the last General Conference, five valuable laborers have been stricken down in death: Elder Swift, who died in Ohio; Elder Sisley, who died in Illinois; Elder S. Fulton, in Oregon; Elders J. E. Robinson and A. D. Olsen, who died in Colorado. All these were men of prominence, and capable of taking responsible positions in the work. Besides these, other laborers of less experience have also been laid away to rest till the Life-giver shall return. These circumstances, with the urgent demand for laborers, led to the appointment of a season of fasting and prayer for the raising up of laborers, which was observed in the earlier part of October. The calls for labor were so many and our destitution so great, that we felt the time had come when we should with humility of soul and contrition of heart seek God, and ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers. Not only is the home field in desperate need of more faithful laborers, but the calls from foreign lands are very numerous and most urgent. We have also

reasons to believe that God has heard and is answering our prayers. The Spirit of God is moving on the hearts of men and women to give themselves to his work. Individuals of different nationalities are coming into the faith, and are anxious to take the truth to their own people.

Our ministers' school has opened with most encouraging prospects, and with a large attendance of the best class of workers; and God is greatly blessing the school.

During the past year we have built, equipped, and sent forth our first missionary ship, "Pitcairn," which is now on her way to the islands of the Pacific. We might also mention the tour of Elder S. N. Haskell, who now has reached New Zealand, on his voyage around the world, in the interest of the missionary work. His next sail will be homeward bound. All these things are matters of interest in our experience.

As to the reasons for the week of prayer, much might be said; but we will mention only a few points.

The times in which we live, and the work with which we are connected, demand that we be the most earnest and devoted people that have ever lived; but it is a sad fact that, while we make a very high profession, and are in possession of great light, we do not exemplify it as the Scriptures demand. The Scriptures have spoken most definitely in reference to the spiritual declension so prevalent in the last days, and we see the evidences of this on every side.

We see among our own selves not only that we fall far below the Scripture standard of piety and holiness, but that we even fall below the standard of those connected with this message in its earlier days. This is sad, very sad, when we consider that the church should be advancing, instead of retrograding; and all this while we are a people looking for translation at the appearing of Christ, which we believe is very near.

This state of spiritual declension certainly demands and calls for heart-felt repentance, a putting away of sin, and a drawing nigh unto God. The message to the Laodicean Church points out the present condition of things, and shows our danger when it says the church is lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, and that God is ready to spew it out of his mouth. That message states the situation as it is. While we think ourselves rich and increased in goods, and in need of nothing, the True Witness, who assures us that he knows our works, says we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked—a

most deplorable condition, indeed. Yet we do not realize it. We do not sense it. If we could but be aroused to sense the danger, there would be much more hope for the situation; for then there would be such a turning to God as we have never seen before. It would not be a spasmodic movement, but one that would be deep and thorough, and therefore lasting in its effects. But as it is, we see selfishness, pride, worldliness, and covetousness going on, unbuked, in the churches. In many places we see a patterning after the world in dress and vain display. But the soul is poverty-stricken and wretched. The True Witness counsels us to buy the gold tried in the fire; that is, the true riches,—living faith, that appropriates the power of God; and white raiment, that we may be clothed,—the righteousness of Christ,—this alone will make us presentable before God. Now is the time to be in earnest. The time to buy will soon be past. Then procure the eye-salve, that thou mayest see,—the Holy Spirit, the anointing which will make us see as God sees. Then what a power would come into the churches! Has not the time fully come for turning to God as never before?

We are exhorted by the apostle: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." But large numbers of the members of our churches know not what it is to come out from the world and be separate. They know not what the converting power is. They have accepted a doctrine; their intellect has become persuaded of certain divine truths, but they know nothing of their transforming and sanctifying power, nothing of the circumcision of the heart; and this state of things is on the increase in the churches, and if it shall continue, what will the result be but to be cast away forever? Is it not time to call a halt and look into the matter? While mercy yet lingers, while the heavenly merchantman has the gold, the white raiment, and the eye-salve, let us make haste and buy; soon it may be too late. Surely, this is the time to seek God that he may be found of us.

There never was a time when the people of God were carrying greater responsibilities than now, and never a time when the church should stand so distinct from the world, and be clothed with the power of the living God. We are fast coming up to the final struggle with the powers of darkness, out of which the church will be translated.

We are living in an age of unbelief. The Bible, the word of God, is but nominally regarded as such. It is not treated as God's word should be. Even by

many Christians it is treated more as a good, moral story, than as the word of God, by which our characters will be tested and judged.

As a people, we profess implicit confidence in the Bible; but do we heed its plain instructions on practical godliness and holy living? The Bible sets forth Christ as our Example and Pattern; but how little we have of his spirit! My soul is stirred within me as I see the professed followers of Christ so much more like the world than like Christ. Is it not time that there was a radical change? Are we not in danger lest it be said of us that we have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof; from such turn away? We are a people who not only profess faith in the Bible, but we also believe that God has spoken to us through the spirit of prophecy; and the very time in which we live, with its dangers, has been set before us again and again. The "Testimonies" speak of the shaking time coming, in which some with strong faith and agonizing cries will plead with God, their countenances pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressing their internal struggle. While some are thus engaged, others will not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading, but will be indifferent and careless. They will not resist the power of darkness around them, and it will shut them in like a thick cloud, and the angels of God will leave them.

"I asked," says the writer, "The meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and lead him to exalt the standard, and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear the straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people.

"I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs, has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it, will obey it, and be purified."

We would ask each one to turn to page 131, "Spiritual Gifts," Vol. 1, "Early Writings," and read the whole chapter. It is well worth your time to consider this matter with care. Truly, we are not left in the dark. The Lord has given us faithful warnings, but how much do we heed them? Is it not time to be awake to the sense of these things, before it is too late, and we find ourselves among those who are left in darkness and lost?

We also call attention to the lack of funds with which to carry on the work of the message. We have already made mention of our season of prayer for the Lord to raise up laborers, but if the Lord should answer our prayers, what could we do? We could not set them to work, because we have not the funds with which to do it. And why is this? Not because we are so impoverished that we have nothing, but because we have not contributed according to our ability.

We feel gratified for what has been accomplished by the message up to the present time. But when we compare this with what there is yet to be done, it is but little indeed. Take, for example, the States where the most work has been done. Do you think the work is finished there? that now all souls have been gathered that are to be saved? You answer, No. If that be so in the States where the most has been done, how is it with the States and Territories in which but very little has as yet been done? But our own country, with some sixty-two million inhabitants, is but a very small part of the world. Then there are the millions of Europe! The little beginning there is very, very small indeed when compared with what must yet be accomplished. Then there are the hundreds of millions in Asia, Africa, South America, and the islands of the seas! The thought is startling, and just now these souls are reaching out their hands to us for truth and light. We have already made mention of how the way is opening everywhere, and how the calls are coming in for help. What a mistake now to withhold means by which the light might be sent to those in darkness! Brethren, sisters, and friends, you to whom the Lord has intrusted means which should be used to forward the cause of truth, can you withhold your liberality in such a time as this? Do we not need to pray that God will give his people liberal hearts to support the work? and while we pray, let us see to it that we are not robbing God in tithes and offerings.

I will here quote from "Early Writings," page 40, "To the Little Flock," as it seems to place the situation before us as it really is: "As I viewed poor souls dying for want of the present truth, and some who profess to believe the truth were letting them die, by withholding the necessary means to carry forward the work of God, the sight was too painful, and I begged of the angel to remove it from me. I saw that when the cause of God called for some of the property, like the young man who came to Jesus (Matt. 19:16-22), they went away sorrowful; and that soon the overflowing scourge would pass over and sweep their possessions all away, and

then it would be too late to sacrifice earthly goods, and lay up a treasure in heaven.

"I then saw the glorious Redeemer, beautiful and lovely; that he left the realms of glory, and came to this dark and lonely world, to give his precious life and die, the just for the unjust. He bore the cruel mocking and scourging, wore the platted crown of thorns, and sweat great drops of blood in the garden, while the burden of the sins of the whole world was upon him. The angel asked, 'What for?' Oh! I saw and knew that it was for us; for our sins he suffered—all this, that by his precious blood he might redeem us unto God.

"Then again was held up before me those who were not willing to dispose of this world's goods to save perishing souls by sending them the truth, while Jesus stands before the Father pleading his blood, his sufferings, and his death for them; and while God's messengers are waiting, ready to carry them the saving truth that they may be sealed with the seal of the living God. It is hard for some who profess to believe the present truth, even to do so little as to hand the messengers God's own money, that he has lent them to be stewards over.

"The suffering Jesus, his love so deep as to lead him to give his life for man, was again held up before me; also the life of those who professed to be his followers, who had this world's goods, but considered it so great a thing to help the cause of salvation. The angel said, 'Can such enter heaven?' Another angel answered, 'No, never, never, never. Those who are not interested in the cause of God on earth, can never sing the song of redeeming love above.' I saw that the quick work that God was doing on earth would soon be cut short in righteousness, and that the messengers must speed swiftly on their way to search out the scattered flock. . . .

"The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth, and to sacrifice for God and his cause. The angel said, 'Think ye that any will be compelled to sacrifice? No, no. It must be a free-will offering. It will take all to buy the field.' I cried to God to spare his people, some of whom were fainting and dying. Then I saw that the judgments of the Almighty were speedily coming, and I begged of the angel to speak in his language to the people. Said he, 'All the thunders and lightnings of Mount Sinai would not move those who would not be moved by the plain truths of the word of God, neither would an angel's message awake them.'"

We pray that these words may properly affect each heart. If this could apply to our people years ago, it certainly must be of vastly more importance now.

Is it not time we repent in humility before God, lest we be among those that shall awake to these things when it is too late? During the past year we have been in great straits to provide the means to carry on the work. We have not been able to supply our missionaries in foreign countries with all the funds needed. And while the work has been somewhat enlarged, we have not done anywhere near what we ought to have done. The offerings last year fell short of the year before. They should have been far more than those of any previous year. The first-day offerings have not been what they ought to have been. We greatly deplore these things, because it shows a lack of interest in the work. But let us now redeem the past, and as we pray God to give his people a liberal heart, let us give liberally, and just as certain as we turn to God, we will realize his promise, that "he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

Now we have said much and spoken urgently on the importance of contributing to the cause of Christ, and have tried to urge the spirit of liberality; but we do not do this with any spirit of censure, nor would we desire that any undue pressure be brought to bear on any one. We have confidence in the willingness of our people to help the work of God; but as those on whom you have placed responsibility, we feel it our duty to place these things before you, our dear brethren and sisters, just as we view them. We also feel deeply the responsibility resting on us as a people, in view of the fact that God's providence is opening the way everywhere, and that urgent calls are coming from souls in darkness, who are pleading with us to send them light. We believe that our dear brethren and sisters would have us to speak plainly and set the facts before them, and we do it because we desire fruit that may abound to your account. What a great privilege God has granted us in permitting us to have a part in this work. We do desire that your crown of rejoicing may be filled with stars to represent the souls that you have been the means of bringing to the saving knowledge of God.

In reference to the manner of observing the week of prayer, much need not be said. That we are in great need of the blessing of God, none will deny. And our effort should be to observe the season in such a way as to secure this. And anything that would stand in the way of securing the blessing of God

in our hearts and in the church, should be avoided. We are fast coming up to the time of trouble. The time illustrated by Jacob's trial, is close at hand. Our faith in God will be tested; our sins and backslidings, unless repented of, will crush us to the earth. In view of this time, we read in Zeph. 2:3: "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." From "Great Controversy," Vol. IV., pages 438, 439, I quote as follows:—

"The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger,—a faith that will not faint, though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for his blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God."

How appropriate this language at this time! We quote still further:—

"We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving his promises. The angels record every prayer that is earnest and sincere. We should rather dispense with selfish gratifications than neglect communion with God. The deepest poverty, the greatest self-denial, with his approval, is better than riches, honors, ease, and friendship without it. We must take time to pray. If we allow our minds to be absorbed by worldly interests, the Lord may give us time by removing from us our idols of gold, of houses, or of fertile lands.

"The young would not be seduced into sin if they would refuse to enter any path, save that upon which

they could ask God's blessing. If the messengers who bear the last solemn warning to the world would pray for the blessing of God,—not in a cold, listless, lazy manner, but fervently and in faith, as did Jacob,—they would find many places where they could say, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." They would be accounted of Heaven as princes, having power to prevail with God and men."

Again on page 434, "'He had power over the angel, and prevailed.' Through humiliation, repentance, and self-surrender, this sinful, erring mortal prevailed with the Majesty of heaven. He had fastened his trembling grasp upon the promises of God, and the heart of Infinite Love could not turn away the sinner's plea. As an evidence of his triumph, and as an encouragement to others to imitate his example, his name was changed from one which was a reminder of his sin, to one that commemorated his victory."

May these earnest words stir our souls. Yes, we are in need of God's blessing, and we can have it if we will but be in earnest. A glorious victory is before the people of God, and the earnest, faithful ones will share in it.

This certainly is the time to be in earnest. We therefore advise that you lay by all work as much as circumstances will permit, and make it indeed a week of prayer. Enter heartily into the work of self-examination, confess your sins to God and to others, if you have trespassed against them. Parents, labor for your children, that they may share a blessing with you. We advise that it be a time of self-denial, and abstinence, yes, of fasting, rather than feasting. Instead of making gifts and presents to those who have no need, but only that you may receive something in return, give liberally to the needy cause of Christ, remembering that the scripture says, "So let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." If our hearts become touched by the holy flame, our souls will go out in love for Christ and our fellow-men.

O. A. OLSEN.

 THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN ESTABLISHING THE CHURCH.

 READING FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21.

THE one great purpose of God in all his dealings with men, has been the salvation of a lost world. This was "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." From age to age, different agencies have been employed, but always with a view to the one great object sought. "The Lord called out his people Israel, and separated them from the world, that he might commit to them a sacred trust. He made them the depositaries of his law, and he designed, through them, to preserve among men the knowledge of himself."

"The opinion is held by many that God placed a separating wall between the Hebrews and the outside world; that his care and love, withdrawn to a great extent from the rest of mankind, were centered upon Israel. But God did not design that his people should build up a wall of partition between themselves and their fellow-men. The heart of Infinite Love was reaching out toward all the inhabitants of the earth. Though they had rejected him, he was constantly seeking to reveal himself to them, and make them partakers of his love and grace. His blessing was granted to the chosen people, that they might bless others."

"Through them the light of Heaven was to shine out to the dark places of the earth, and a voice was to be heard appealing to all peoples to turn from their idolatry to serve the living and true God. Had the Hebrews been true to their trust, they would have been a power in the world. God would have been their defense, and he would have exalted them above all other nations. His light and truth would have been revealed through them, and they would have stood forth under his wise and holy rule as an example of the superiority of his government over any form of idolatry." And although they failed in many cases to make the best use of the great opportunity which God gave them of representing him in the earth, for centuries they were the chosen agency through which he carried forward his work in behalf of fallen man. "But when the fullness of the time was come" "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ," "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel," it was necessary that some new agency should be brought into use to accomplish God's plans. The Jewish nation would not ac-

cept Christ, and therefore they could not be intrusted with the commission to carry the gospel to all the world. God's plan had not failed. His purpose could not be thwarted by the neglect of those whose high privilege it might have been, as laborers together with him, to give the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ to a world in darkness. Deliverance must arise from another quarter.

Organized effort was necessary in order to continue the work which had been begun by Christ. In no other way could there be unity of plan and labor. So long as Christ himself was upon earth, he could organize and direct his own work. He could send out the seventy, and to him they could report their triumphs in his name. He laid the foundation for the church, "himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord," and to the future church he delegated authority to represent him in the earth. "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The church, then, was designed to be the representative of Christ in the earth. Its members were to be living epistles, "known and read of all men." Christ has always been the light of the world. From him has come every ray of light which has ever reached this dark world. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

"Our Lord designed that his church should reflect to the world the fullness and sufficiency that we find in him. We are constantly receiving of God's bounty, and by imparting the same, we are to represent to the world the love and beneficence of Christ. While all heaven is astir, dispatching messengers to every part of the earth, to carry forward the work of redemption, the church of the living God are also to be co-laborers with Christ. We are members of his mystical body. He is the head, controlling all the members of the body. Jesus himself, in his infinite mercy, is working on human hearts, effecting spiritual transformations so amazing that angels look on with astonishment and joy.

"The same unselfish love that characterizes the Master is seen in the character and life of his true followers. Christ expects that men will become par-

takers of his divine nature, while in this world, thus not only reflecting his glory to the praise of God, but illumining the darkness of the world with the radiance of heaven. Thus will be fulfilled the words of Christ, 'Ye are the light of the world.'

Christ is "the power of God," and the gospel of Christ "is the power of God unto salvation." Before his ascension, our Saviour gave to his disciples the divine commission, which is of full force to-day, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This was to be done, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," and so the command was, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." And when on that birthday of the Christian church "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" and the representatives of many provinces heard in their own tongues "the wonderful works of God," the words of our Saviour began to be fulfilled. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." The church is the agency through which this work was to be carried on, and so God's purpose was that it should be a missionary organization. The great head of the church, although possessed of all the riches of heaven, could not rest content while there was a world lost in sin, and so "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame."

Every true believer in him will share in the same spirit, and will endure, "as seeing him who is invisible." "God cannot display the knowledge of his will and the wonders of his grace among the unbelieving world, unless he has witnesses scattered all over the earth. It is his plan that those who are partakers of this great salvation through Jesus Christ, should be his missionaries, bodies of light throughout the world." "Every follower of Jesus has a work to do as a missionary for Christ, in the family, in the neighborhood, in the town or city where he lives." And not only this, but some must go to the other nations who sit in darkness. Thus it was in the early church. "As they ministered unto the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work where-with I have called them. And when they had fasted

and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

The words of Christ to his disciples may well be the motto of the church for all time: "Freely ye have received, freely give," and every member of the church who has received "the true riches" should feel as did the great apostle, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." There is a most emphatic call for the true church of God at this time to manifest the missionary spirit. "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings," said the angel. A message of most thrilling interest is now to be given to the world, and the command to the church is, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."

It was God's purpose in establishing the church that every talent in it should be employed in his service. "To every man his work." "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Those who bury their talent or employ it solely for their own benefit now, are no more in harmony with God's purpose than was the man in the parable.

It was God's plan that his people should come out and be separate, that a special work might be wrought in them and through them. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Such is the work which God designed to do for the church and for the world through the church. It is the privilege of every member to co-operate with him in this great work. "And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

W. W. PRESCOTT.

THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO GOD.

ITS OBLIGATIONS TO GOD, AND THE SIN OF NOT FULFILLING THEM.

READING FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 22.

"I, EVEN I, am the Lord ; and beside me there is no saviour." "Ye are bought with a price."

God sustains to man the double relation of Creator and Saviour. To him as his creator, he owes his existence ; to him as his Saviour, he owes the hope of the life which is to come.

When the foundations of the earth were laid, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." At this time there seems to have been perfect harmony in the universe ; and when Adam was created and added to the unnumbered host of intelligent beings, he was called a son of God. Luke 3 : 38. To him was given the dominion of the earth ; and in his innocence, man communed with God as a son with his father. God provided for all his wants, and supplied every condition of happiness. The sentence of death was pronounced against the single restriction which was laid upon man, — the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Man transgressed and forfeited his life, and with it the dominion of the earth that had been given him. But "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish," and "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

With the plan of reconciliation, the church was established, with Christ at its head. The object in view was three-fold : first, to save man from death (Heb. 2 : 9) ; second, to destroy the works of Satan (1 John 3 : 8) ; and third, to destroy him that had brought sin and death into the world (Heb. 2 : 14). In undertaking this work, Christ took upon himself human form and became subject unto death. In his death he paid in full the penalty of man's transgression. And "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." When clothed with humanity, Christ was at the same time the Son of man and the Son of God ; and, standing in this relation between the offended and the offending parties, he became the medium of reconciliation. Those who avail themselves of the plan of reconciliation that is provided in Christ, become "members of his body" — "members of the church of God." Because of the close relationship of Christ to the church, it is written of him, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one : for which cause he is not ashamed to call them

brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praises unto thee."

Outside of the plan which God ordained for the salvation of man, there is no hope. In the letter to the Ephesians, speaking of the time prior to their acceptance of Christ, the apostle says : "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." But after they had accepted of the provision made for their reconciliation to God, and become members of his church, addressing himself to them in their then present condition, the apostle continues : "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace."

It was with inexpressible obligations to God for the goodness and mercy which he had extended to it, that the church started on its mission with a message of mercy and reconciliation to a world lying under the curse of sin. It was first established with Adam, the representative of the race ; when the world had gone off into wickedness and idolatry, the covenant of mercy was renewed to Noah ; and again, a few hundred years later, Abraham, because of his great faithfulness, was chosen as the representative of the people of God in the earth, and the one through whom God would carry on his work for the salvation of man. To Abraham the promise was made that he should inherit the earth, and he became the "father of all them that believe." "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's [spiritual] seed, and heirs according to the promise [made to Abraham]." It was because of Abraham's peculiar traits of character, that he was elevated to so important a position in the church. His faith in God could not be shaken ; while his integrity and love of truth and justice were such that his influence was felt on all about him. His children and they of his household were faithfully instructed in the principles of righteousness, and were kept through the powerful influence of Abraham, from the contaminations of sin and idolatry, which prevailed around them.

The descendants of Abraham were led out of Egypt and established in the promised land, as a nation of

which God himself was the head and king. It was his purpose to establish his church as a righteous and holy nation in the earth, a nation that would hold up the principles of truth, and from which could go forth to the nations of the world the glorious message of redemption and reconciliation with God, through the Messiah which was to come. To David it was said, "Thy throne shall be established for ever." Had they remained true to him, God would have exalted them above every other nation; their enemies would have fled from before them; disease would have been banished from their midst; prosperity would have attended all the works of their hands; the wealth of the world would have flowed into Jerusalem; the kings of the world would have become their vassals; and all the people of the earth would have known that the God, by whose name they were called, was the true God, and turning away from their idols, would have worshiped the God of heaven.

But the church proved unfaithful to this sacred trust, and utterly failed to do the work that God had commissioned it to do. The people thus honored turned their backs upon God, and bowed down to the gods of the heathen nations about them, and were shorn of their strength and their glory.

But the purposes of God could not be thwarted; and what his people refused to do in prosperity and honor, they were compelled to do in disgrace and servitude. When scattered to the four quarters of the earth, as a just punishment for their sins, they remembered the Lord who had chosen Abraham, and who had delivered their fathers from the bondage of Egypt, and established them in the land which he gave unto them; and in their humiliation they bore witness to the true God. When those that carried them away captive, required of them a song, they hung their harps on the willows, and wept when they remembered Zion. Thus, in their captivity, God accomplished, in a measure, by their instrumentality, what he would have accomplished through them had they remained true to him, by elevating them as a nation, above the nations around them.

When Christ came into the world through the chosen line, he was rejected by the nation of Israel, which had been restored from captivity, and that nation was rejected by God. Henceforth the church was to be established on a different basis. Through the disciples of Christ, the gospel of reconciliation, which would have brought peace, happiness, and unparalleled prosperity to the nation of Israel, was sent forth to the Gentiles. The Gentile nations feared not the God of Israel, because they had no

respect for the people who were called by his name; for they had seen them "scattered and peeled" by their enemies, and the temple of their God robbed and destroyed. They knew not that this was done in chastisement for their sins. The heathen nations, therefore, had no knowledge of the true God. With them no covenant had been made, to them no promise had been given; but when his own chosen people rejected his mercy, and refused to do the work which he had given them to do, he committed that trust to those among the Gentiles who would accept of the gospel. Thus, those who were dead in sins were quickened with Christ, and were raised up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; and those who had been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, became his instruments in carrying out his great purpose for the salvation of man. And having reconciled a people unto himself by Christ Jesus, he "committed unto them the ministry of reconciliation;" and thus was the church again sent forth with the great and solemn responsibility of presenting to the world the doctrine of reconciliation to God through Christ Jesus; this time with the commission to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." To them also was the assurance given, that Christ, the head of the church, would be with them to the end. The Holy Spirit was given to the church to assist in carrying out the commission which it had received from Christ; and through this medium was established a direct communication between the church upon earth and its living head in the sanctuary in heaven. The church is responsible for the perpetuity of this connection, since it is only through the sins of the church that it can be broken off, and the lack of spiritual power will as surely bring upon the name of God the reproach of his enemies as did the chastisement of his ancient people bring upon him the contempt of the heathen.

Perhaps in the apostolic church, converted under the direct influence and power of the Spirit of God, is to be found the best example of what God designed the church to be, that is brought to view anywhere in the Scriptures. The Spirit of God rested upon it; worldly ambitions were cast aside; the missionary spirit was manifested in a large degree; all feelings of superiority vanished; perfect unity and love existed; and they became so unselfish, that all their goods were placed in a common stock, to be used equally for the benefit of all. While in this condition, the church had great power, and thousands of conversions occurred almost daily. The fame of the

church was spread abroad ; and when its members were scattered through persecution, they went everywhere preaching the word, and the word preached, accompanied by the wonderful works which they performed in the name of Christ, had great power, and the name of God was honored and revered. Within a few years it was written, "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

At every step in the unfolding of the plan of redemption, the church has been able to comprehend more fully the plans and purposes of God, and the obligations and responsibilities of its members have increased. In the closing messages of the gospel, these obligations will reach their climax. "Light is sown for the righteous." Through patriarch, prophet, and apostle has light from God been shed upon the church. But in Christ was bound up the fullness of truth, and in his life were demonstrated the principles of righteousness, that should characterize the lives of all his followers.

The truths which Christ brought into the world were not fully comprehended by the generation to which he came, and have never yet been fully comprehended by the church. In indorsing the Scriptures, the Saviour transmitted to the church all the truths that had been given from the days of Adam to his own time ; but only the mind illuminated by the Spirit of God, is capable of gathering up these rays of light and combining them into one perfect system of truth. One office of the Holy Spirit, which is called also the Spirit of truth, was to "guide them [the people of God] into *all* truth."

The Spirit began to fulfill its mission on the day of Pentecost ; but it remains for those who shall be living when Christ comes the second time, to comprehend the truth in all its fullness, as it is revealed in Christ. As a consequence of this increase of light and of a knowledge of the truth, the church in the last days will stand in a peculiarly close relationship to God. A fearful responsibility rests upon those to whom is committed the proclamation of the threefold message which is to ripen the harvest of the earth for the sickle of him who cometh upon the white cloud. A great work must be accomplished for the church as well as for the world. The church will be "blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ ;" it will be presented to him "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing ;" its members will have "no guile in their mouths," and will "stand without fault before the throne of God." This perfect state of the church is brought about by the elimination of all false doctrine, and the belief

and practice of all that is true ; the purity of its members, through being clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Toward the time when the perfect state described in 1 Cor. 1 : 8 ; Eph. 5 : 27 ; and Rev. 14 : 5, should exist, the church is hastening ; a high standard is to be reached, and the closing messages of the gospel are to be given.

The church is the medium through which God works to accomplish all his purposes toward man. For it to prove unfaithful and recreant to the trust committed to it at this time would be to show itself utterly ungrateful, and to bring down upon itself a curse instead of a blessing. To accomplish these objects the church needs to make the fullest use of every means of grace placed within its reach. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, which the remnant church is represented in prophecy as keeping, embrace both the object to be attained and the means for attaining it. In the commandments of God is set forth the whole duty of man, and in the faith of Jesus is to be found the means of grace which will enable us to keep the commandments. In the faith of Jesus is included all his teachings. Not one precept can be slighted without peril. Faith, repentance, baptism, the ordinances of the Lord's house, the study of the Scriptures, assembling together for exhortation and worship, assisting by personal effort and free-will offerings to fulfill the commission given to the church to preach the gospel of the kingdom to all nations, — are solemn duties, not one of which can be neglected by him who would be a "good and faithful servant."

The oft-repeated injunction, to "watch," to "watch and be sober," to "watch unto prayer," to "watch . . . lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping," has its special application now, when there is great danger that a flood of worldliness will come in and drown the spirituality of the church. Sin has always been deceitful, but never more so than in these last days, when evil men and seducers are waxing "worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." To avoid these deceptions will require no small amount of vigilance and self-denial. The candidate for eternal life should remember that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God," and that "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

Christ is the source of all strength, and the remedy for all sin. "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness ;" and through him "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises ; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." Christ is the head of the

church, and God accepts of Christ ; so those who are in Christ are accepted with him ; as it is written, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

This is the consummation of the Christian's hope ! When Christ appears the second time, he will come as King of kings and Lord of lords. Having gained the victory over Satan, redeemed man from the curse of sin by his own blood, and taken unto himself the first dominion, he comes to dispossess and destroy the usurper, cleanse the earth from the effects of the curse, and give unto those who have believed on him, eternal life, and establish them forever in the promised inheritance. The New Jerusalem will descend from God out of heaven, "the tabernacle of God [will be] with men, and he will dwell with them." "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it." "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." "And there shall be no more curse ; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him ; they shall see his face ; and his name shall be in their foreheads." "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,

neither shall there be any more pain." And the promise is, "He that overcometh shall inherit these things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." [R. V.] Thus when the plan of redemption is finished, man will be brought back into the same relationship to God as at the beginning.

Such are some of the responsibilities laid upon the church, and the promises set before it. It is just entering upon what will be the severest conflict ever waged between truth and error. All the powers of evil are marshaled for the conflict. All the legions of holy angels stand ready to help those who are faithful to the truth. Those who stand firm cannot be defeated. On the eve of a great naval engagement which was to decide the supremacy of the seas, Lord Nelson signaled to his veterans : "England expects every man to do his duty." All did their duty, and the victory was theirs. The conflict before the church is for the supremacy of truth over error, and to vindicate the righteousness of God. The issue of the conflict is eternal life or eternal death. Let the church awake to the supreme importance of the hour, and "put on the whole armor of God." The contest will be fierce, but it will not be long. *God requires every man to do his duty.*

DAN. T. JONES.

WHAT THE CHURCH OWES THE WORLD.

READING FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23.

THE church of Christ occupies a peculiar position in the world. Its members are comparatively few, and are mostly poor ; for God has chosen the poor of this world (James 2 : 5), and not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called (1 Cor. 1 : 26) ; yet this poor, despised company, whose only legacy from this world is tribulations and afflictions (read John 15 : 19-21 ; 16 : 33 ; 1 Thess. 3 : 3) owe to the world a debt which can scarcely be paid with their utmost efforts. This is a truth that is not considered by professed followers of Christ as much as it should be. Too many scarcely ever think of it. The sentiment which finds expression in the blunt statement, "The world owes me a living," has insidiously crept into the church, and has affected to a great degree many of its members who are perhaps unconscious of it. But such a sentiment as this is directly opposite to the spirit of Christ—the spirit that must be in every one of his true followers. Let us together

read some of the scriptures which set before us our true relation to the world.

In 1 John 2 : 6 we read these words : "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he [Christ] walked." True Christians are those who abide in Christ ; for those that do not abide in Christ, are cast forth, and are gathered to be burned. John 15 : 6. The word "ought" implies something owed ; therefore the members of Christ's church owe it to him to walk as he walked. They cannot walk otherwise, as long as they abide in him ; and if they walk otherwise while professing to abide in him, they bear false witness against Christ.

Now what was Christ's life here on earth ? He himself tells us : "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Matt. 20 : 28. He gave himself for the world ; he offered himself as a servant to the world. Therefore if we abide in him, walking as he walked, we shall likewise consider ourselves servants to all.

This shows that all Christ's followers must be servants; but the question arises, What do we owe? It is evident that each one owes just what he has received. What, then, have we received? We have received the riches of the grace and mercy of God. The apostle Paul tells us that in Christ, the Beloved, "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Eph. 1:7. Again he says: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:4-7.

To the Romans, also, he writes that we have received "abundance of grace." Rom. 5:17.

Turn now to the words written by the apostle Peter: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever." 1 Peter 4:10, 11.

The gift which we have received is the gift of grace, and we have received it freely and abundantly; and as we have received it, so are we to minister the same to others. "No man liveth to himself." We have received the gift, not for our own exclusive benefit, but only as stewards, that we may as freely distribute it as we have received it. This is in harmony with our Lord's injunction to the twelve when he sent them out the first time: "Freely ye have received, freely give." Matt. 10:8.

Of course we cannot of ourselves impart to others the grace of God; but we can become workers together with God by making known to others that which we have heard and seen and received. As ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech men by us, we are to pray them, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. 2 Cor. 5:20. The command of the Spirit is, "And let him that heareth say, Come." Rev. 22:17.

One of the ways in which we can work with Christ in discharging our debt to the world, is by giving of our means. This is in the direct line of Peter's injunction to minister to others the grace of Christ, which we have received, for the apostle Paul says: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." 2 Cor. 8:9. He counted not the riches and glory of heaven a prize to be grasped and held for his own use, although they were his by right; but he divested himself, and took upon him the form of a servant. (See Phil. 2:4-7.)

Jesus gave all the wealth of heaven for the redemption of the world. He became poor, that he might make others rich. He was under no obligation to do this; but we who have received the gift, and who have nothing that we have not received (John 15:5; 1 Cor. 4:7), owe all we have to Christ; and since he has given himself and all that he possessed to the world, it follows that what we owe to Christ we owe to the world. We give to Christ by giving to carry the message of his grace to the world.

That we owe all that we have is evident from the apostle Paul's words in 1 Cor. 6:19, 20: "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price;" that price being "the precious blood of Christ." 1 Peter 1:18, 19. If we are not our own, then of course nothing that we have is our own. All that we have we owe, in Christ, to the world, that they may learn of the riches of his grace. There was a time in the history of the church when not one of the members said that ought of the things which he possessed was his own (see Acts 4:31-33); and that was a time of great power in proclaiming the message, and of wonderful growth in the church, because "great grace was upon them all." If every one who professes to be Christ's in these days would consider that neither he nor his property is his own, but that he owes all to Christ and to his last message to the world, might we not expect that the message would be given with great power?

We may be poor in this world's goods, yet this does not relieve us from responsibility. We have on record for our example the churches in Macedonia, "How that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Even beyond their power they were willing of themselves; and this they did because they "first gave their own selves to the Lord." 2 Cor. 8:1-5. Let it not be overlooked that this was the result of the grace of God bestowed on them. (See verse 1.) From their example we may learn how we may be counted "good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

We have already learned that Christ came into the world to minister as a servant, and that as followers of him we owe our service. Now we read what he says of his disciples, in his last recorded

prayer for them. John 17:18: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." Our work, therefore, is the same as his. What a wonderful thought, that we are permitted to do a part of the same work that Christ came to do! Now turn to John 18:37, and read his words concerning why he came into the world: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Then since we are sent into the world as he was sent into the world, we owe to the world a perfect testimony, both by word and practice, concerning the truth. Christ, who is the truth, says to his people, "Ye are my witnesses."

We are Christ's representatives here on earth, to carry forward in the world the work which he began. The world has no means of knowing Christ except through his representatives. In his prayer for his disciples, Christ said further: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17:20, 21.

Very emphatic testimony as to our duty to the world is borne by the apostle Peter. Read 1 Peter 2:9-12: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises [or excellencies] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation [that is, your course of life] honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

It is for this purpose that Christ has called us to be his servants, that we should show forth his excellencies, and by our good works lead others to glorify him. Therefore we owe to the world a perfect example of honesty and goodness; in short, we owe them a perfect image of Christ.

As Christ has called us into his marvelous light, it is that we may reflect that light to the world. He is the Light of the world (John 8:12); but since the world cannot see him, they must learn of the light from those to whom he has committed it. So he says: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set

on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5:14-16.

In order to discharge this debt, it is not necessary for Christians to keep calling attention to their own attainments. Christ uttered these words as a direct rebuke to the Jews, who were God's chosen generation to show forth his excellencies, and who held themselves aloof from the world, and boasted about the great light which God had given to them "as a people." But their light had become darkness, just as will be the case with any light that is shut up. Light does not make a noise; it simply shines *in the darkness*. A light is of no value unless it shines where the darkness is. So God wants his people to mingle with the world, not of it, nor conforming to it; but letting the light which they have received from heaven shine clearly and steadily. Are there not many Seventh-day Adventists who in their desire "to get among Sabbath-keepers," are letting their light almost, if not quite, go out in some large church, and robbing the world of the light which God designed that they should give in the community where he had placed them?

These two points, namely, that it is by *doing*, rather than by *talking*, that we are to let our light shine; and that it is to shine *in the world*, and not in some sheltered nook in which we may hide, are very clearly put by the apostle Paul in Phil 2:14, 15: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, *in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation*, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

This, then, is what the church, not "as a people," simply, but as individuals, owes to the world. Each one owes his property, to be used just as fast and in just such ways as the needs of the cause of Christ demand; each one owes a godly example, a life free from impatience, murmuring, or disputing; in short, each one owes himself, with all that is intrusted to him. Shall we not, then, with a sense that we, no less than the apostle Paul, are debtors to all men (Rom. 1:14), hold ourselves and our means subject to God's call? Nay, rather with the feeling of one who cannot rest easy under unpaid debts, shall we not eagerly say, "Here am I; send me," or use me in any way that will advance thy cause? When the individual members of the church shall with united hearts arouse to a sense of their obligation, and in the fear of God begin to pay the debt they owe to the world, the message will go with a loud cry, and the unearned reward will soon be given.

E. J. WAGGONER.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE FIELD WITH REFERENCE TO THE MESSAGE.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ; WHAT IS TO BE DONE ; AND THE AGENCIES BY WHICH IT IS
TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

READING FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24.

THE three messages brought to view in Revelation 14, are not circumscribed by any limitations. The field assigned them is the world ; their objective point, so far as the extent of their proclamation is concerned, is "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people." They constitute the culmination of that "gospel of the kingdom," which was to be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations." Matt. 24 : 14.

The gospel is the light of the world. Those only can preach the gospel who have that light. The spread of the gospel therefore throughout the world, was, from the beginning, in the very nature of the case, committed to those who were to be under the civilizing and enlightening influence of the truth of God's word. Before, therefore, the prophecy could be fulfilled, and the gospel be preached to all nations, it would be necessary for civilization to send out its voyagers till all the earth was explored and every nation discovered.

Moreover the time must be reached when the territory had been so far taken up that it would be impossible for any new nation, not before known, to be developed, as such. This brings us down this side the closing portion of the fifteenth century, when the knowledge of the western hemisphere began to be opened to the nations of the east, and a new era of discovery dawned upon the world.

Scarcely two hundred and fifty years passed away, after this epoch was reached, before our whole globe with all its continents and islands, oceans, seas, rivers, mountain ranges, and spreading plains, had been explored, its nations discovered and geographically located. And not only this, but missionaries of the cross had so stationed themselves in all parts of the world that their sound could easily reach every nation.

Thus, in our own generation we reach a point of more thrilling interest than any the world has ever seen ; for we reach the time when the prophecy— "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations"— can be fulfilled, and the doctrine of the second coming of Christ can be consistently proclaimed to the world.

But we are often reminded that Adventists have

been long looking for the coming of the Lord, and he has not come so soon as they have believed that he would, and so they may still be wrong in their views, and their expectations may still be disappointed. This is not possible in the light of truths more recently developed. The voyage which led to the discovery of the American continent, was undertaken with the object of finding a shorter passage to the East Indies. And when the country proved not to be what was expected, all the straits, rivers, gulfs, and bays along the coast were carefully explored, with the thought that some of them would prove a short channel to the object of their search, the Eldorado of the East. They did not know that a whole continent and another ocean still broader than the one they had crossed, lay yet between them and their desired haven. But all that doubt and uncertainty and ignorance is now dispelled. Every ocean and sea is traversed, every body of land discovered, and every coast explored. The full size of the globe is ascertained, and the East Indies are given their right location thereon.

These geographical discoveries well illustrate the discoveries which have been made in the field of prophecy in the last forty-five years. What was once obscure is now clearly discerned. Every mistake is explained. All the great prophetic events now appear in their right relation to each other. The wonderful subject of the sanctuary bridges over the otherwise unspanned gulf between the ending of the prophetic days and the coming of the Lord. And a reform on the law of God is the last and highest reform that can be attained among men. And when there is found a harmonious and satisfactory application of the entire testimony of every line of prophecy, there can be no doubt nor uncertainty as to our whereabouts in the prophetic highway.

Such is the knowledge on these great themes possessed to-day, to which reference has been briefly made simply to show that no era can ever be reached when it will be more fully possible than now to have the gospel of the kingdom preached in all the world for a witness to every nation, as a sign of the end.

But the providence of God never falls behind his

prophecies; and no sooner was the fullness of time reached in the beginning of the present generation than a remarkable movement suddenly arrested the attention of the world. Fulfillments of prophecy had so accumulated in the annals of time, they had become so numerous and well defined, that they could no longer escape the attention of the students of prophecy; and the minds of many were directed to the great question of the close of the present dispensation to which so large a proportion of the prophecies evidently relate. Sometime this dispensation, as clearly set forth in God's word, is to end, the proclamation of the gospel to be finished, the work of man's redemption to be completed, and scenes eternal take the place of things which are now seen and temporary. And what if that solemn era had already come? The conclusion reached was that the "time of the end" had in truth arrived, and the world was about to undergo its last change.

Such a conviction could not be smothered into silence. The result was that a world-wide proclamation went forth heralding the fact that the hour of God's judgment had come, and the second advent of the Saviour in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels was near at hand. Wm. Miller and his fellow-laborers in this country, raised the cry, and others simultaneously in other countries, not knowing of each other's work, went through the principal countries of the world with a similar proclamation.

This movement was then held to be, and must still be regarded as, a fulfillment of Rev. 14:6, 7: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." What is now known as the great advent movement of 1840-44, is the religious awakening referred to as the fulfillment of the initiatory work of this message. It was a movement which can be explained only by referring it to this cause. As just stated, men were raised up in different parts of the world, unaware of each other's movements, giving simultaneously this cry.

That this was in the direct line of the final accomplishment of Matt. 24:14, it is not the province of this paper to argue. We only refer to the fact that when the era was reached at which that prophecy of the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom could be fulfilled, this great movement, which aside from that and parallel prophecies it is impossible to account for, appeared in the world.

Assuming, then, that we have found a starting point in the beginning of the present generation, it is easy to trace, through following events, the development of the work till we come to our own time and reach our present situation.

A second message followed the first, announcing a retrograde movement, and a great spiritual declension on the part of the churches. The treatment received from their former brethren by members of the churches who had espoused the first message, compelled them to raise, as a distinct message, the announcement of Rev. 14:8, and sever themselves from their former communion. During the summer and autumn of 1844, 50,000 members of these churches, restricted in the free exercise of their new-found faith, came out of those organizations upon a new platform where they could be free. Abundance of facts and plenty of testimony from acknowledged representatives of those churches themselves could be produced to show the deplorable change which then came over that portion of the religious world which had rejected the light; and the results were just such as a fulfillment of the prophecy would warrant us to expect.

A third message followed them with such a warning as would lead men to the acceptance of the commandments of God, and the rejection of the mark of the beast, and the worship of both the beast and his image. As the movement referred to as fulfilling the second message, occurred in the summer and autumn of 1844, the beginning of the third message was then immediately due. And again the providence of God appeared right abreast of his prophecy; for right there light began to shine forth on every feature of that new message. The symbol of the beast had long been understood; but now began to be seen what would constitute the worship of the beast, what was the mark of the beast, what the image and its worship would be, what the patience of the saints was, and what was meant by the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

The time had come; the truth was there; and John says, "The third angel followed them." It then remained for the agents to appear by whom the work should be carried forward; and lo! at that very time they began to come upon the stage of action. Very few at first in number, very feeble in health, and very destitute of means, but relying upon the scripture, "Lord, it is nothing with thee to help whether with many or with them that have no power," their only study and anxiety was to do their duty, and let the light which God had given

them shine out to others as fast and as far as lay in their power.

The great disappointment which the Advent is experienced in 1844, the world imagined was a final defeat for them, and a great triumph for themselves. Hence their ears were closed to all further attempts to explain the prophecies as connected with the Advent movement; the Adventist body itself was rent into fragments; and prophetic study was at a zero discount in the religious world. Yet in the orders laid down in the great book of instructions for this emergency were found these directions to every one who had enlisted in the movement: "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." These were their marching orders; it was theirs to go forward; God's, to open the way and give the increase.

This reference to the conditions under which the message began, is necessary to a clear appreciation of the situation at the present time. For awhile the number of believers scarcely exceeded the number of fingers on one's two hands, and not much greater was the number all told who had heard any exposition of what then began to be denominated "the present truth." Now millions upon millions have heard the sound of the message, and believers are multiplied on every hand. The strides which this cause has taken, the territory which it has covered, the noble companies that have gladly accepted its truths, the earnest workers who have entered the field in its defense, the long list of carefully and prayerfully written books and tracts which have been issued in support of its doctrines and principles, the millions of pages which have been scattered like the leaves of autumn, the facilities that are now provided for carrying forward the work, the different branches which are receiving attention, the number and efficiency of the organizations devoted to its interests, the great inventions and scientific discoveries of this age, which make it easy to flash intelligence almost in a moment of time all over the world, the developments in the moral, social, and political worlds, all confirmatory of what the message declares is to be — if all these things which we see to-day, could have been seen by the early pioneers of the cause, their hearts would have been filled with a sense of overwhelming astonishment and joy. They would have asked, incredulously, what more remained to fulfill the prophecy of this work, and bring that closing phase, the "loud voice," with which it was to be proclaimed.

The change is indeed wonderful, and represents much real and substantial gain. But as one ascend-

ing the mountain side gains continually wider views of the surrounding landscape, and better understands the relation of objects not before perceived, so we, through the increase of light and the experience of years, perceive that the field is wider than was at first apparent, and though we perceive a great growth and advancement in our own work, we also see more clearly the relation it sustains to its ultimate design, to be preached as a witness to all nations before the end comes. "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings," says one prophecy, while another says that a third message follows the two preceding, the first of which went "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." This shows the extent of the field. What is the condition of this field with respect to the message?

We may adopt as applicable to our own time, the words which Christ used when he was upon earth: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest." The peculiar condition which existed at the time of the great disappointment has largely passed away. In almost every place people are now found who are willing to hear, and in many places are earnestly calling for a visit from some one who is able to set before them our views of the Scriptures. Those who watch the reports of the laborers will notice that they almost uniformly bear the testimony that there are many more calls for help presented to them than they are able to fill. No stronger incentive to earnest labor could be laid upon any one who loves the truth, and also loves his fellow-men, than the fact that there are those about him who are hungering and thirsting for that truth, and reaching out eager hands for the precious boon. The voice which Paul heard in a vision of the night from a man in Macedonia, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us," fired his heart with enthusiasm to go at once into that country with the truth of the gospel. Are not the calls all around us the voice of God to us? and ought not that voice to be regarded?

This is not saying that the laborers will not find the world hard and bitter against the truth; for they will; and this is all the more reason why every opening that presents itself should be at once improved. The opponents of this work are daily growing more alert and desperate and determined; but the fact that the expressed desires to hear upon these things are more numerous than in former days, is one of the encouraging features of the present situation, and points to a rapid consummation of the work when men and means enough can be found to meet these demands.

Another condition of the field in which our labor lies, is such as should inspire each heart with anxious zeal in the work of the Lord. And that is, the fact that we have reached those perilous times which were to be characteristic of the last days. And these perils seem to work their peculiar damage within the precincts of the church; for Paul writes to Timothy that eighteen of the dark sins of heathendom will be found in the last days, clinging like barnacles to many — we may infer even the great majority — of those who have a form of godliness, that is, claim to be the Christians of the land, but deny the power thereof. 2 Tim. 3:1-5. It is this condition on the part of those who are appointed to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth, that makes the times perilous. Throughout the religious world there is a lowering of the standard, a vitiation of the tone and texture of piety and consecration, a worldly blood poisoning of the religious currents. The present standard of righteousness in most of the denominations, is not sufficient to hold them against the evil tendencies of the times. It is not sufficient to prepare them for the test of the judgment. Nothing is now sufficient to hold men loyal to God, except the present truth concerning the near coming of Christ, and the preparation necessary to meet him in peace; but this the religionists of our day most generally reject. And hence the tendency is downward in geometrical ratio. And if God, as the only saving means, has sent forth a special message of instruction and warning to men, how important does that message become! and what responsibilities does it lay upon those to whom it is committed!

It is to be noted further that when religion is at a low ebb, and truth languishes, and worldliness prevails, and the moral sensibilities of the people are benumbed and paralyzed, then is the time for all forms of error, and all forms of false worship to run riot in the land. This is why we now see Romanism everywhere throwing out its fatal octopus arms, and Protestants standing around in stupid indifference, or half-concealed friendship. Mormonism flourishes; agnosticism lifts its deformed head; even heathenism sends its missionaries into the most cultivated centers of the most civilized nations; and infidelity and atheism like a flood are threatening to engulf the rising generation. Everywhere the outlook suggests the Saviour's almost despairing words, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" In such a state of things, how ought those to act in whose dwellings, as it was with Israel in Goshen, the light of the Lord still shines?

There has been another change in the condition of the field, calculated to give to the message a new degree of strength; and that is, that its predictions are now so far advanced in the way of fulfillment, that he who will pause a moment and seriously consider the situation, can but see that the end is not far distant.

a. The message was to bring out a people who would be distinguished by their manner of keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And already from thirty-five to forty thousand, in obedience to its teaching, are standing staunchly for a crowning reform on the law of God, and interpreting at the same time in a higher light the faith of Jesus, as set forth in the teachings of the New Testament.

b. The message, in connection with the prophecy of Revelation 13, brings out the fact that the people of this Protestant American government, are to be made to worship the beast (the papacy). And now we see Protestants in every walk of life truckling to the papal organizations, and a host of Protestant teachers all at once fired with an immense zeal to elevate and enforce an institution of the papacy, the first-day Sabbath.

c. It forewarns that an image to the beast is here to be erected, and the worship of it to be enforced by heavy penalties; in other words, that this nation is to plunge into the fatal vortex of religious legislation, link church and state together, override the rights of conscience, destroy religious liberty, and wage a legalized and systematic warfare upon the truth, the work, and the people of God, for this time. "The dragon was wroth with the woman, 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. And now we see a body of men entering with unaccountable infatuation upon this very work. Organizations of various kinds are wheeled into line to indorse it; agents are traveling from State to State to recommend it to the people; the press is pouring forth its torrent of books and papers in exposition of its principles; and the pulpit is everywhere lifting up its voice in behalf of the movement. But worse than all, alliance is eagerly courted with the deadliest enemies of our civil and religious commonwealth, to accomplish the end in view; bills are urged upon State legislatures, and millions of petitioners are clamoring at the doors of Congress for religious laws. Deaf to reason and Scripture, blind to the lessons of history, and fired by bigotry, prejudice, and passion, the men who are enlisting in this move-

ment, are as ready as human nature has ever been, to be led to any degree of religious intolerance and oppression. He must be shortsighted indeed who cannot see that the fulfillment of the prophecy is at hand, and that what is done to rescue perishing souls from the impending doom, must be done quickly.

And what is to be done? We may not attempt to arrest the fulfillment of prophecy, nor do we seek to do this. The nation, as a nation, is not to be restrained from doing that which the prophecy says it is to do; but those who, in the light of prophecy discern the nature of the work and foresee its inevitable result, are under the most solemn obligations to do what they can to expose the evil, warn their fellow-men of the danger, and rescue as many as possible from the snare. To this end it is desirable to arouse all possible opposition to the movement, and through the consequent agitation and delay, enlighten the nation, and fortify every loyal heart for the great struggle with which the controversy between truth and error is soon to close.

But the controversy is not confined to this country. So far as Christendom is concerned, the issue pertains to something connected with the work of the beast—the worship of the beast, the mark of the beast, and the image of the beast. While the United States is to make the image, the worship and the mark can be enforced in other countries as well; and the warning against these things will bring a conflict there as well as here, as our brethren in foreign fields are learning.

Practically, Christendom is divided between Catholicism and Protestantism. These are symbolized in prophecy, the one by the "beast," and the other, in its apostate condition, by the "false prophet." Rev. 19:20. But one of the three "spirits" which gather the nations to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, comes out of the mouth of the dragon, as the others come out of the mouth of the beast and the false prophet. And the dragon represents paganism. Thus the whole field is covered. Paganism, including its many branches, Catholicism and Protestantism, practically cover the whole world. And on these lines the warning is to go; and in all these divisions the issue is to be met.

There are over fourteen hundred millions of human

beings now living in the world. Out of them all a remnant only will be saved. These will no doubt be gathered principally from the so-called enlightened nations of the earth. But out of all lands a few will be rescued as brands from the burning. That the truth should be presented to every person individually is not necessary. Yet God will give one last exhibition of his longsuffering and mercy in causing his word to be so far proclaimed among all nations as to be to them a "witness," and to leave them without excuse. Before the gospel closes, a work is to be wrought symbolized by an angel coming down from heaven, having great power, and by the glory of whose presence the whole earth is enlightened. Rev. 18:1.

This brings us to the closing inquiry of our subject, namely, By what agencies is the work to be accomplished? And this can be answered in one word; for there is but one agency by which it can be done; and that is the power of God. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." But though all depends on him, he has conferred upon mankind the honor and the privilege of being co-workers with him. We plant and water, and he gives the increase. And to all efforts sincerely put forth with a purpose and desire to honor and glorify him, he has promised to append the influence of divine power.

The agencies already in operation are good and timely. The ministry, the church, the Conference, the tract society, the academy and the college, the sanitarium, the publishing houses, and the Sabbath-school, all have their place to fill and their important work to do. And by the living preacher, the devoted missionary, the earnest writer, the consecrated physician, the zealous publisher, the patient canvasser, the colporter, the Bible reader, the teacher, the class leader, the friendly epistle, the printed page, and faithful Christian endeavor in all the walks of life, the private as well as the public, seconded by the quickening and prevailing power of the Holy Spirit, the work of the Lord in the earth will be accomplished, all lands be lightened with its glory, a remnant be saved, and the worn and weary toilers, at last, with joy and rejoicing will shout the harvest home, and enter into rest. U. SMITH.

OUR FOREIGN MISSIONS.—A GLANCE AT THE YEAR'S WORK.

READING FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—

This is the day appointed for our annual contributions for the support of foreign missions, and it seems appropriate that their progress during the past year, and their immediate wants, should be briefly stated.

At present we have twenty American ministers laboring in other lands, under the direction of our Foreign Mission Board. These are assisted by ten editors and business managers, fourteen Bible workers, and fourteen book agents, who have been sent from this country. Thus the whole number of laborers who have gone from America to our foreign missions is forty-eight, an increase of about twenty over the number at work one year ago. In this reckoning we count the six persons sent out on the Missionary ship "Pitcairn," and twelve book agents sent to British fields. The number of American workers in other fields has been changed but little during the year.

But this represents only a part of our working force in these foreign fields. The number of native laborers who are engaged in our work in foreign countries is about as follows: ministers (including licentiates), thirty-two; editors and business managers, six; lady Bible workers, thirteen; book agents, 111, making a total of 162.

Thus you will see that our whole working force in foreign fields is as follows: ministers, fifty-two; editors and business managers, seventeen; Bible workers, twenty-seven; book agents, 125; making a total, including both American and native laborers of 220, against a total of 175 for the preceding year. Besides these, there are in our four printing-offices in foreign lands, sixty-nine printers and binders, who, though not directly engaged in the missionary work, are in many cases fitting themselves for it.

By countries, the number of workers is,—Central Europe, thirty-nine; Scandinavia, sixty-seven; Great Britain, thirty-three; Australia, thirty-nine; New Zealand, twenty-one; China, two; "Pitcairn," six; South Africa, thirteen.†

It is a significant fact that the greatest increase of workers is in those lines of labor which are largely or wholly self-supporting. In fact, it is one of the most encouraging features of our work in foreign lands, that of those who join our number a large percentage soon take up some line of missionary

labor, and that a large part of this work, even in Europe, is self-supporting. This is in marked contrast to the work of some other missionary societies in the same and similar fields. If it were not for the economical and practical methods of work adopted by both American and native laborers, we could not, with our present income, sustain more than one-half this number of workers.

We have reason for the most profound gratitude that during the past year there has been an increase of more than forty workers in the foreign fields. But when we look at the openings for labor; when we see that the fields are "white already to the harvest;" when we consider that the Saviour is soon coming, and that the end of all things is at hand; and when we realize the solemn importance of the last warning message, which must be proclaimed everywhere to prepare men for the day of the Lord,—then we wish, oh, so earnestly, that the increase of workers during the year had been much greater.

It would be impossible in the short time allotted to this subject to present an account of what is transpiring in all our foreign missions. But I will present a few points which may be of special interest.

Elder Conradi is now in Russia. We knew that such a visit would be attended with considerable danger, and we hesitated for some time before giving our consent. The principal reasons for the visit were these: The truth has been making rapid progress in that country, notwithstanding the great difficulties that attend the efforts to labor there. Brother Klein was arrested and imprisoned only a few months ago; and although he has been released on bail, he is not free to leave the province where he was arrested. Brother Laubhan's work has been greatly hindered by persecution. And yet the cause moves forward. The people in that country seem to be hungering for the truth. The knowledge of it is passing from one to another, and there are many who have the courage to obey. At last reports, there were 360 Sabbath-keepers in Russia, 225 of whom are members of organized churches. Part of these are in the Caucasus, and part on the Volga, more than a thousand miles apart. Other small companies are scattered about in different parts of the Empire. It is exceedingly difficult for the two

ministers employed in this great field to visit these companies; and it is evident that if the message is carried to the thousands of honest souls in Russia, who are hungering for the truth, we must have more laborers to take part in the work. The training of workers cannot be done to advantage in Russia. Among our people there are young men who could fit themselves to be workers, and it seems to be the best plan for these to get a six months' leave of absence, and spend that time in study at our school for ministers and colporters, in Hamburg, Germany. One of the principal objects of Elder Conradi's visit to Russia at this time is to select a few young Russians to come to Hamburg and enter this school during the present winter.

Elder Conradi will also visit important points in Austria and Turkey, that he may become better acquainted with young men who have accepted the truth there, and who wish to come to Hamburg to receive a training that will fit them to labor among their own people. Last year the class at Hamburg numbered about a dozen, and most of its members are now doing efficient work in various parts of Holland, Germany, and Switzerland. We have reason to hope that the class for the present winter will be twice as large as the one that was held there last year.

In Scandinavia our work has been going forward during the past year with uniform success. There are now 1,300 Sabbath-keepers in Scandinavia, 976 of whom are members of organized churches. During the last year the forty canvassers at work in Scandinavia sold more than ten thousand dollars' worth of our religious publications. We are now exceedingly anxious to extend the work from Sweden into Finland; for although Finland is a part of the great Russian Empire, many of its people are closely allied to the Scandinavians in character and in customs. Like the Scandinavians, a large percentage of them can read and write, and many of the Fins understand the Swedish language. If the funds of the Board will permit, we hope to send laborers into Finland during the present year.

For many years we have desired to do something for the Spanish people both in the Old World and in the New. But until a few months ago it seemed that the time to begin had not yet come. At the last General Conference the wants of South America were presented, and the Sabbath-school Association volunteered to devote the missionary contributions for the last half of 1890 to the work of opening up a mission in South America. Some of our brethren expressed the fear that this fund would lie idle for

some time before we could find suitable men to engage in the work. But scarcely had we begun to raise the fund for the mission among the Spanish-speaking people of South America, when word came to us from various quarters showing that our provision for this work had been made none too soon.

Those who have read in the *Review* of October 21, the appeal of Brother Jose Gomis, of Relizane, Algeria, in behalf of the work in Spain, will be pleased to know that Brother Gomis is now laboring in Switzerland, that he may gain an experience in our work, preparatory to carrying the message to the Spanish people in Algeria and in Spain. At the same time he will assist our brethren at Basel in the preparation of Spanish tracts and books for the use of our colporters on both sides of the Atlantic.

We have received word from a number of noble-hearted young men in different parts of the United States, that they were ready to consecrate their lives to the work of carrying the message to South America. Some of them are already studying the Spanish language without a teacher, and others propose to begin as soon as a competent teacher can be secured.

This, with the action of our Central European Missionary Committee in recommending that Brother Albert Vuilleumier go immediately to Argentine, to carry the message to the French, German, and Italian communities in that republic, has led us to believe that the time has fully come for us to begin our work in South America.

But South America is not the only country where providential openings for labor call upon us for immediate action. In some parts of South Africa, where our book agents have met with marked success, there are doors open for three or four ministers, and twice as many Bible workers. What shall we do? Sister Druillard pleads most earnestly for a Bible worker to come and labor in Cape Town, and Elder Hankins pleads for two or more to come to the Eastern Province and to Transvaal.

A still more urgent appeal for help comes from the Gold Coast, about 3,000 miles north from Cape Town, where there are more than thirty persons keeping the Sabbath and rejoicing in the hope of the second advent. Some of these are converts from heathenism, and desire to adopt Christian names when they are baptized. The leader of this company shows a good degree of energy, tact, and perseverance. He first received the faith by reading copies of the *Signs of the Times* and *Present Truth* left by a passing ship, and he at once began to labor for others. Reading in the *Signs* about the Sabbath-school work in Amer-

ica, he determined to do something in this line. He had no lesson papers or song books; but securing a room for meetings, he borrowed a hand bell, and rang it through the streets, at the same time announcing the time and place of the school. In this way he labored several months. At last, when a large package of our papers, lesson pamphlets, and other reading-matter was received from the International Tract Society, he would not enjoy alone the opening of the precious package, but called in members of the Sabbath-school, and they rejoiced together over the abundant supply of literature.

In a recent letter to Brother Chadwick, he says that in company with another brother he had just visited a neighboring town, where they found the streets and the market place crowded with people engaged in the riotous celebration of their superstitious funeral rites. They called the people together, and preached to them the importance of worshiping the true God. After relating this, he makes a most touching appeal to us to send missionaries, to teach them the way more perfectly, and to carry the gospel to the thousands around them who are dying in darkness for lack of teachers.

We must notice one more point in Africa. At Cairo, one of the great cities of Egypt, there are several persons who became interested in the Sabbath question through reading publications sent out by the secretary of the International Tract Society, and a few have begun to observe the Sabbath.

Brethren, the Lord has set before us an open door. Shall we enter? Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. Shall we obey? As recorded in Matt. 28:18-20, the Saviour first gives us an assurance of his power,— "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Then he says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations;" and then follows the blessed promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Do we realize the meaning of this precious promise? Are we obeying the Saviour's command?

We cannot all go to foreign lands to teach the gospel, but we can all do something at home. It is the privilege of every one to take a part in sending the preacher to "the uttermost parts of the earth." (Read Rom. 10:12-15.)

In the twelfth verse it says there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. Is it not equally true that in the sight of God there is no difference between the Englishman and the African, the American and the Spaniard? If, then, there is no difference, and if the good news of Christ's soon coming

is to go to all, should we be satisfied, and feel that we are acting unselfishly when we send abroad twenty ministers, and keep at home 360? The people of the United States comprise about one-twentieth of the world's population. But of the 412 ministers in all lands proclaiming the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, we have 360 in this country, and seem content to have only fifty-two laboring among the nations that make up nineteen-twentieths of the world's population. Are we giving to foreign missions their rightful share? Our Lord said, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

By referring to the reports in the Year Books, you will observe that in the statistics reported in the last Year Book, the total number of preachers in our ranks had increased three per cent during the year; the membership of our churches, nine per cent; and the financial support for the work at home, thirty per cent. In sad contrast with this is the fact that during the last year there has been a decrease of more than twelve per cent in the support of foreign missions.

But we do not believe that these figures correctly represent the real interest which our brethren and sisters have in the work of foreign missions. We believe that they are as willing as ever both to labor and to make personal sacrifices, that the good news of Christ's soon coming may be carried to the ends of the earth. Brethren and sisters, we appeal to you to give more thought to foreign missions. We ask your earnest prayers in their behalf. Become acquainted with the workers in each field, through reading the *Review* and the HOME MISSIONARY, and then pray for the missionaries by name. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Our brethren who are laboring in foreign lands, need our prayers. Shall we not remember them?

Let us all study to become more intelligent in regard to the work in foreign lands. Facts are the fuel that feed the fire of missionary zeal. Let us study the field, and then inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

We must never forget that the church bears the same relation to the missions that the steam engine in a large factory does to the machinery which it moves. The machinery does the work, but the engine furnishes the power. The machinery may be ever so well prepared to do the work, yet if the engine does not move, no work is done.

Again: the relation of the church to the mission, is like that of the heart to the human body. It is

the work of the heart to force the life element, the blood, into every member, every tissue and fiber of the whole organism; and we all know that any part of the body which is cut off from a continual supply of this life current, will perish. How important, then, that the working of the heart shall be continuous, healthy, and vigorous. Just so it is with the work of the church for the life, and health, and growth of foreign missions.

This is one of the special occasions on which our Lord and Master, the Great Physician, will feel the pulse of the world, to see how strong and healthy is the action of the church in sending along the life-restoring message to every nation, kindred, and tongue.

About \$80,000 is the amount needed for our missions during the present fiscal year. Why is so much needed?

1. Because we want to translate and publish several important books in the German, French, Spanish, Dutch, Swedish, and Danish languages, that our 125 canvassers who are working on the

self-supporting plan, may have the best possible material to work with. And we want to translate and print smaller works in many other languages. This will require from twelve to fifteen thousand dollars.

2. Because of the 200 workers we have in foreign lands, about sixty have to be supported from funds contributed by the churches in the United States. This, with the assistance given to schools for the education of laborers; the support of ship and city missions; and the support of the missionary ship will require \$50,000.

3. Because about \$12,000 is needed to make up the deficiency of the present year.

4. Because we want to open up the work in Finland, Poland, and other parts of the Russian Empire; and to carry the message to the people of Austria, Spain, South America, and Western Africa, and to other lands, as the way may open.

Brethren and sisters, are we planning too much? Read Acts 1:8 before you answer.

W. C. WHITE.

MISSIONARY OFFERINGS.

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

THE Committee on Arrangements have thought best not to provide for a separate service for the collection of the missionary offerings this year, but would advise that the following program be made a part of the regular service, Thursday, December 25, whether this service be held during the day or in the evening. It has seemed to the Committee, in view of the great need of means for our foreign missionary work, and the importance and solemnity of the times in which we are living, that we ought to make our arrangements for the collection of the missionary offerings very simple and inexpensive.

The envelopes should be distributed Sunday, December 21, and pains taken to supply any who are absent, and the offerings be inclosed in the same and brought to the meeting December 25, so they may be quietly collected before the close of the service. Two or more children may be selected to collect the offerings, and some person or persons should be chosen beforehand to receive them, and the amount can be ascertained and announced at the close of the meeting.

In order that the services may not be too lengthy,

we would suggest that the opening exercises be made as brief as consistent. Hymn No. 1057 would be appropriate for opening, and can be followed by two or three short prayers and hymn No. 1256; then the regular reading for the day may be given, and hymn No. 85 sung. Immediately after this, the verses given below can be recited, previous arrangements for the same having been made. All of the children, or as many as can be drilled together, should repeat the first short verse in concert. Four children or young people can be selected, each one to respond with one of the succeeding verses, and as they respond, they could indicate upon the map of the world, which was provided last year to all the Sabbath-schools, the portions from which their voice is represented as coming, then all should unite in the closing verse.

Let the offerings then be collected, and after they are counted, the entire company can join in singing the closing song, “Come Over and Help Us.” The meeting may then be dismissed either by benediction or an earnest prayer for God’s blessing to rest upon the offerings that have been made, and his

prospering hand to go with the laborers who may go, or who are already in foreign lands carrying the precious truth to those who are anxiously yearning for it. The elder of each church should select some person or persons to instruct the children with reference to their part, and special pains should be taken to help them in learning the songs so that all may join in the same.

COME OVER AND HELP US.

All.

Voices are sounding and calling for me,
Over the mountain and over the sea ;
"Come over and help us," they all seem to say.
Whence do they come, and from which way?

NORTH.

1st voice.

My voice is so weak, but I send it forth
Down o'er the hills of the frozen North.
I wish it could sound out so loud and clear
That all in Christian lands could hear.
There are long dark nights in the land of snow,
In the cheerless home of the Eskimo ;
There are nights of darkness and nights of sin.
Will you not bring the light of the gospel in ?
Come over and help us, and tell us where
The Lord is the light, and there 's no night there.

SOUTH.

2nd voice.

Where the tossing waves of the South Sea roar,
And scatter their foam on the coral shore,
From the distant isles of the sea we cry,
"Come over and help us before we die."
Christ said, "Let the little ones come to me,"

And though we are found in the distant sea,
Will you not come over the waters and bring
The isles of the sea to their Lord and King ?
Come and teach us to know where our home shall be
When the earth is removed, and there 's no more sea.

EAST.

3rd voice.

From the land of the East, O hear my cry !
Come over and help us, nor pass us by,
For bitterness, cruelty, pain, and sin
By the ruler of darkness have been brought in.
Wise men of the East came here long ago
To seek for the wonderful Child, you know ;
Yet these lands so near where the Saviour dwelt
Have never the light of his presence felt.
Come over and help us ; we long, like them,
To find the blest Saviour of Bethlehem.

WEST.

4th voice.

My voice will speak of the western wild,
The home of many a wandering child,
Where wickedness, anger, and hatred burn
In the hearts of those who even yearn
To know of the merciful Prince of peace,
Who causeth the wars of the heart to cease.
I think you who know him must love him so
You 'll come o'er and teach us his love to know.
Come over the wilderness drear and vast,
And teach us of Him who will save at last.

All.

And so from the East, the West, South, and North,
Again and again doth the sound go forth,
"Come over and help us ;" from one and all.
The earth is the Lord's from sea unto sea ;
And, O, if the children of God are we,
We 'll send them help in response to their call.

THE RELATION OF CHURCH-MEMBERS ONE TO ANOTHER.

READING FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26.

THE subject for our consideration to-day is the relation of church-members one to another. In order to understand this, it is necessary first to understand what the church is. If we realize what the church is, we can better understand what it is to be a church-member, and then we can better understand what relation these members bear to one another. First, then,—

THE CHURCH IS THE HOUSE OF GOD.

For saith the scripture, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in *the house of God, which is the church of the living God.*" 1 Tim. 3:14, 15. And again: Christ [was faithful] as a son over his own house; *whose house are we*, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Heb. 3:6. The church being the house of God, those who are members of the church are members of the household of God; for "ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Eph. 2:19.

Well then, brethren, the church being the house of God, and the members being of the household of God, it ought not to be difficult to discover what is the relation of the members of this house to one another. When a person who owns a beautiful house invites us into it, and we go into it, in the very nature of things we expect to act circumspectly, to move carefully, and to treat with deference and courtesy all those within the house. We seek to know the wishes of him who owns the house, and who has so kindly invited us into it, and all endeavor to conform to his wishes; and, if not for their own sakes, out of respect to the owner of the house, we treat all within it with deference and courtesy. Thus it is with men among men, in the houses of men. Then how much more should it be so in the house of God, which is the church of the living God. Wherefore, brethren, "be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." 1 Peter 3:8.

THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

Paul says that in the sufferings which he endured he was filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh "for his body's sake, *which is the church.*" Col. 1:24. The church being

the body of Christ, the members of the church are members of the body of Christ. Therefore, says the scripture, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor. 12:27. This idea of the church as the body of Christ is presented under the figure of the human body, and the members of the human body are spoken of as figures of membership in the church. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not of the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." 1 Cor. 12:12-18.

The members of the human body, as God hath set them in the body, are also members one of another; so also is the body of Christ, the church. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Rom. 12:4, 5. Now in the natural body, when one of the members suffers, all the other members suffer with it. If a hand or a foot gets crushed, or if there be a felon on a thumb or a finger, all the other members suffer with it, and rally to the relief of the suffering member. So, also, it is in the body of Christ, the church. "The members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." 1 Cor. 12:25, 26. Therefore, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." Heb. 13:3.

CHRIST "IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, the church." Col. 1:18; 2:19; Eph. 4:15.

When any member of our natural body is affected, or in pain in any way, it is the head which is first

and most conscious of the pain. So, also, it is with the body of Christ, the church. When any member of Christ, of the church, is afflicted, it is Christ who is first and most conscious of the affliction. "In all their affliction he was afflicted." Isa. 63:9. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eph. 5:30. When you or I cause grief or pain to any member of Christ, it is Christ to whom we first and most cause the grief or pain. Therefore, as certainly as we love Christ, so certainly we will never willingly or intentionally cause grief or pain to one of the members of Christ—one of these little ones who believe in him. So surely as we love Christ, so surely will we love those whom Christ loves.

The relation of church-members, one to another, therefore, is the relation of these same members to Christ.

If the relation of church-members one to another is one of hatred, the relation of those same members to Christ is one of hatred. If the relation of church-members one to another is one of variance, then the relation of those same members to Christ is one of variance. If the relation of church-members one to another is one of envy or bitterness or strife, then the relation of those same church-members to Christ is also one of envy or bitterness or strife. It matters not what they may say, or profess that it is, that is what it actually is. For from every consideration which the Scriptures present, we repeat, The relation of church-members one to another, is the relation of those same church-members to Christ.

It is clearly evident, therefore, that the only *true* relation of church-members one to another is the relation of the love of Jesus Christ—a relation created and sustained by the love of Christ. This is so plainly manifest from all the Scriptures, that it is not necessary to multiply references. One quotation is enough: "This is my commandment, *That ye love one another, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.*" John 15:12.

Some of you will say in your hearts, "Well, how can we love one another as Christ has loved us?"—Easy enough, if we go about it in the right way. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, and everywhere; and his love is the same. And if the love of Christ be in our hearts, we shall love one another as he loves us. That love will manifest itself in that way, and that is the only thing that it can do, because it is the love of God, who is love.

How can we have this love?—We can have it by the Holy Spirit, "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. 5:5. Mark, this does not say that love *for* God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. But it is *the* love *of* God. That is, God's love itself is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. God's love is the same wherever found. God's love in his own heart loves his enemies; that love in our hearts will love our enemies, nor will we have to *try* to do it, either. If the love of God be there, it will manifest itself in love to all whom God loves. If the love of God be in our hearts, we can love one another as he loves us.

Then, brethren, henceforth let this be the relation of church-members one to another. Let the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. In this our week of prayer, and in these the last days of our week of prayer, let us cry mightily unto God, that we may receive such a baptism of the Holy Ghost, as shall seal forever upon our hearts the love of Jesus Christ. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; *that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*" Gal. 3:13, 14. Then as we plead for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, let faith ascend and claim the precious promise of the Spirit, "for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39. And if we know how to give good gifts unto our own children, how much more will our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. (See Luke 11:13).

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John 4:10, 11. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Verse 7.

Finally, brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. Let brotherly love continue. And, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Amen. A. T. JONES.

 THE SOURCE OF THE CHURCH'S POWER.

 READING FOR SABBATH, DECEMBER 27.

THE church of Christ is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. Its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. Jesus said to the representatives of his church, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." There is no limitation to this command. The good news of a Saviour,—Christ dying as our sacrifice upon Calvary, Christ pleading as our high-priest and intercessor before God, Christ our king and deliverer, coming to redeem his children,—this is the message to be carried to all the world, to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. And the obligation rests upon all Christians. Every one, to the very utmost of his talent and opportunity, is to fulfill this commission. The love of Christ, revealed to us, makes us debtors to all who know him not. They are our brethren, and God has given us light, not for ourselves alone, but to shed upon them.

When Jesus gave the commission, he added, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And he bade the disciples, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Here is the source of the church's power to fulfill her divine mission,—Christ with us, Christ abiding in our hearts by faith.

Without a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour, it is impossible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. If you would draw sinners out of the swift running current, your own feet must not stand on slippery places.

We cannot impart heaven's light unless we have received it. We cannot reveal a Saviour, of whom we have no knowledge. You cannot teach others of Jesus and his righteousness, you cannot portray his matchless love and the fullness of his grace, you cannot picture him as the Christian's all in all, as the comforter and guide of men, unless your own heart is filled with his love. You will not be able to present God as a God of compassion and love unless you can say, "I have tasted, and know that the Lord is good." The heavenly influences surrounding the soul of the true worker are felt by those for whom he labors; the presence of heavenly angels is not seen by human eyes, but it is felt.

"We are laborers together with God." Bear this ever in mind: Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." It is God who must accomplish the work.

The Saviour declared concerning what he himself had wrought, "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." The laborers are to be partakers of the divine nature; divinity and humanity must be combined. Humanity will adapt itself to humanity, and by manly resolves and wise efforts, will set the springs of intellectual life in motion under a tide of divine forces that are [powerful, thorough, and permanent.

Of the disciples after the transfiguration of Christ, it is written that at the close of this wonderful scene they "saw no man, save Jesus only." "Jesus only,"—in these words is the secret of the life and power that marked the early church. When the disciples heard the words of Christ, they felt their need of him. They sought, they found, they followed him. They were with him in the house, at the table, in the closet, in the field. They were as pupils with a teacher, daily receiving from his lips lessons of holy truth. They looked to him as servants to their master, to learn their duty. They followed him as soldiers follow their commander, fighting the good fight of faith. Though Jesus ascended to heaven, the sense of his presence was still with them. It was a personal presence, full of love and light. Jesus, the Saviour, who had walked and talked and prayed with them, who had spoken hope and comfort to their hearts, had, while the message of peace was upon his lips, been taken up from them into heaven, and the tones of his voice had come back to them as the chariot of angels received him, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He had ascended to heaven in the form of humanity. They knew that he was before the throne of God, their friend and Saviour still; that his sympathies were unchanged; that he was still identified with suffering humanity. He was presenting before God the merits of his own precious blood, showing his wounded hands and feet as a remembrance of the price he had paid for his redeemed. They knew that he had ascended to heaven to prepare places for them, and that he would come again, and take them to himself.

As they returned from Olivet to Jerusalem, the people looked upon them, expecting to see on their faces expressions of sorrow, confusion, and defeat; but they saw there gladness and triumph. The dis-

ciples did not wail over disappointed hopes, but were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.

As they met together, they were eager to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus. In solemn awe they bowed in prayer, repeating to one another the assurance of the Saviour, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." During the ten days following the ascension, they with one accord devoted the time to prayer and praise, waiting for the descent of the Holy Spirit. They extended the hand of faith higher and higher, with the mighty argument, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

And Pentecost brought them the heavenly illumination. The spiritual truths which they could not comprehend while Christ was with them, were now unfolded. Power from on high was given them, and they became witnesses for Christ, even unto the uttermost part of the earth.

All that Christ was to the early disciples, he desires to be to his children to-day. They too may say, with the assurance of the beloved John, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." Communion with God through Christ and in Christ,—here is the source, the secret, of all spiritual life. It is a communion not limited to times and places, but constant, abiding. This is not the privilege alone of the minister, the Bible worker, or the missionary, but of the canvasser, the man of business, of all the followers of Christ. All may walk and talk with Jesus; their hearts may be stayed on God.

It is because there is so little communion with God, that spiritual life is so feeble, and the efforts of our workers meet with so little success. Our natures must be raised from their earthliness; they must be kindled and purified in the upper brightness of God's divine presence. Why are we so easily satisfied with little flashes of light, when there is a heaven of illumination for us? We drink at shallow streams, when there is a great fountain just above us, if we will only rise a little higher in the pathway of faith.

It is by beholding Christ, through faith, that we are to be changed into his likeness. As we meditate upon the perfection of his character, we shall desire to become wholly transformed and renewed in the

image of his purity. There will be a hungering and thirsting of soul to be made like him whom we adore. The more our thoughts are upon Christ, the more we shall speak of him to others, and represent him to the world. We shall represent him in our words, in our love for the brethren, in our deep, earnest love for the souls for whom Christ died.

We need to study the Bible more, that our minds may dwell upon the infinite sacrifice of Christ, and his mediation in our behalf. Let not Christ's words and the words of some finite being, bear with equal weight upon you. Fill the whole heart with the words of God. They are the living water, quenching your burning thirst. They are the living bread from heaven. Of this bread you must eat, and you will gain in spirituality and power, ever growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We need to study the truth for ourselves. We must individually look to God for divine enlightenment; and if we do this, his Spirit will be given us to illuminate the words of the Living Oracles. When Nathanael came to Jesus, the Saviour exclaimed, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Nathanael said, "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus answered, "When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." And Jesus will see us also in the secret places of prayer, if with the whole heart we will seek him for light, that we may know what is truth.

It is impossible for any human mind to comprehend all the richness and greatness of even one promise of God. One catches the glory from one point of view, another the beauty and grace from another point, and the soul is filled with the heavenly light. If we saw all the glory, the spirit would faint; but we can bear far greater revelations from God's abundant promises than we now enjoy. It makes my heart sad to think how many lose sight of the fullness of blessing designed for us; they are so contented, feeling, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," and know not that they need everything worth having.

Dear brethren, pray as you never before prayed, for beams from the Sun of Righteousness to shine upon the word, that you may be able to understand its true meaning. Jesus pleaded that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth,—the word of God. Then how earnestly should we pray that He who "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," He whose office it is to bring all things to the remembrance of his people, and to guide them into all truth, may be with us in the investigation of his holy word.

He who desires the truth in his heart, who longs for the working of its power upon his life and character, will be sure to have it. And when our minds are filled with thoughts of God, the realities of the unseen world will open to our understanding; all the powers of the mind will be subject to new, fresh impressions, we shall take higher, holier views of the truth, and a transformation will be going on in us daily. Then we shall be able to present the truth to others in such a way as to make an impression upon their minds.

When you have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, you will have something fresh to tell. Like Philip, when he found the Saviour, you will go forth to invite others into his presence, saying, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write."

Our prayer and social meetings should be seasons of special help and encouragement. Each one has a work to do to make these gatherings as interesting and profitable as possible. This can best be done by having a fresh experience daily in the things of God, and by not hesitating to speak of his love in the assemblies of his people. If you do not allow darkness and unbelief to enter your hearts, they will not be manifest in your meetings. Do not gratify the enemy by dwelling upon the dark side of your experience, but trust Jesus more fully for help to resist temptation. If we thought and talked more of Jesus, and less of ourselves, we should have much more of this presence. If we will abide in him, we shall be so filled with peace, faith, and courage, and shall have such an experience to relate when we come to meeting, that others will be refreshed by our clear, strong testimony for God.

There is need of a different kind of labor in our churches from what they have had. Those ministers who are inclined merely to preach, and not to visit and put forth personal effort, need to break up this habit by working earnestly in families. Let families invite in their neighbors, and then let the minister hold Bible readings with them, and become acquainted with them. There needs to be less preaching and more pastoral work done in our churches. Those who have no aptitude for this kind of labor, should educate themselves, and come more into harmony with Christ's manner of working. Habit is not formed by one act alone, but is the result of a succession of actions. God's workers are called upon to vary their labor; they should surprise the people and happily disappoint them by doing work that will be instructive, and that will interest the mind. There should be fewer sermons, and more educating.

Brethren, we must have less of self, and more of God. We are not to trust for success to what we can do, but to what Christ can do through our efforts. The efficiency of our labor depends upon our hold on God. The Lord requires of you diligent culture of your abilities; unless you are constantly in Christ's school, the tastes and aspirations will become earthly, and the energies intrusted to you for the accomplishment of God's work will be perverted and misplaced.

The Holy Spirit is grieved and driven away by the self-sufficiency, the unchristlike spirit, that is cherished. You have no time to spend in contention. Draw near to God, and go to work for Christ and the souls he died to save. If mistakes are made, as they will be, do not fall back, content to make no further effort, but try again. With agony of desire, in humility, with wrestling faith, come to One who is too wise to err, and who will make no mistake in your case; One who knows your every weakness, and who will hear your heart-felt prayers. May God make his servants wise through the divine illumination, that the mould of man may not be seen on any of the great and important enterprises before us!

The Lord wants us to come up into the mount,—more directly into his presence. We are coming to a crisis, which, more than any previous time since the world began, will demand the entire consecration of every faculty of the mind and every power of the being, on the part of all who have named the name of Christ.

It is through the church that the self-sacrificing love of Jesus is to be made manifest to the world; but by the present example of the church the character of Christ is misrepresented, and a false conception of him is given to the world. Self-love excludes the love of Jesus from the soul, and this is why there is not in the church greater zeal and more fervent love for Him who first loved us. Self is supreme in so many hearts. Their thoughts, their time, their money, are given to self-gratification, while souls for whom Christ died are perishing.

This is why the Lord cannot impart to his church the fullness of his blessing. To honor them in a distinguished manner before the world would be to put his seal upon their works, confirming their false representation of his character. When the church shall come out from the world, and be separate from its maxims, habits, and practices, the Lord Jesus will work with his people; he will pour a large measure of his Spirit upon them, and the world will know that the Father loves them. Will the people of God continue to be so stupefied with selfishness?

His blessing hangs over them, but it cannot be bestowed in its fullness because they are so corrupted with the spirit and practices of the world. There is spiritual pride among them; and should the Lord work as his heart longs to do, it would but confirm them in their self-esteem and self-exaltation. Shall Christ continue to be misrepresented by our people? Shall the grace of God, the divine enlightenment, be shut away from his church, because of their lukewarmness? It will be, unless there is most thorough seeking of God, renunciation of the world, and humbling of the soul before God. The converting power of God must pass through our churches.

A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. We must have the holy unction from God, the baptism of his Spirit. This is the only efficient agent in the promulgation of sacred truth. It is the Spirit of God that quickens the lifeless faculties of the soul to appreciate heavenly things, and attracts the affections toward God and the truth. What we need, what we cannot do without, is the power of the Holy Spirit to work with our efforts. All pampering of self must be at an end. There is a weakness of intellect, a lack of religious fervor, in those who want to lean upon others, to be petted, waited on, and propped up. There must be an earnest longing, a soul-hunger, for the presence of the Lord. Make him your support, your front guard and your rearward. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." He who has endowed the human mind with all its powers, will so mould these capabilities that there will be no extremes; all will act harmoniously.

It is a case of life or death with us. We have been stricken with spiritual paralysis, and every one needs the help of the Great Physician. He alone can reach our case. He is only waiting to be invited by us with earnest heart, with sincere desire. Nothing is wanting but a preparation of heart; we are to clear away the rubbish, open the door, and invite Jesus to come in and abide with us. Simple, earnest, believing prayer always brings him to our side as a mighty helper. He says to us, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." He longs to come in; he is only waiting for us to prepare the way, to open the door, and he will come in.

A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. When churches are revived, it is because some individual seeks earnestly for the blessing of God. He hungers and thirsts after God, and asks in

faith, and receives accordingly. He goes to work in earnest, feeling his great dependence upon the Lord, and souls are aroused to seek for a like blessing, and a season of refreshing falls upon the hearts of men.

Many are weary of their half-hearted service. Their souls cry out after the living God. They cannot be satisfied with a form of godliness; they long for the deep movings of the Holy Spirit. Let the weary, discouraged one cry, as did Jacob, for the Comforter. Let him lay bare his soul in the secret place before God. Let him with loathing put away soul-defilement. The work is between him and his God.

God is at work; he doeth wonders; and although he is high and lifted up, prayer will reach his throne. He that is turning and overturning, he that can do marvelous things, will regard the contrite prayer of faith from the humblest of his children.

We are not to look at ourselves. The more we dwell on our imperfections, the less strength we shall have to overcome them. Jesus says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." It is not necessary for us to be ever stumbling and repenting, and writing bitter things against ourselves. It is our privilege to believe the promises of the word of God, and accept the blessings that Jesus loves to bestow, that our joy may be full.

Put away all doubt. Dismiss your fears. Obtain the experience that Paul had when he exclaimed, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Surrender everything to Christ, and let your life be hid with Christ in God. Then you will be a power for good.

The Lord did not lock the reservoir of heaven after pouring his Spirit upon the early disciples. We also may receive of the fullness of his blessing. Heaven is full of the treasures of his grace, and those who come to God in faith may claim all that he has promised.

I beseech you to keep reaching out after God, to keep drinking of the Fountain of living water. You may be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, whose leaf does not wither. You may be full of moisture, and be able to refresh others, and to give them grace and comfort.

In our schools, the students can do much more than they have done, or are now doing, to exert a right influence upon others. Those who love the truth will be workers together with God to sustain the authority and purity of the school. New stu-

dents are coming in, and now, at their very introduction to the school, is the time for those who love God to put forth loving, earnest, intelligent effort in behalf of souls out of Christ. Before associations are formed, companions chosen, that will give no religious strength, sow the seed for time and eternity; let the better influences preoccupy the thoughts. A few zealous, wise workers for the Master could secure many souls who are liable to drift in a wrong direction.

As the palm-tree, drawing nourishment from fount-

ains of living water, is green and flourishing in the midst of the desert, so the Christian may draw rich supplies of grace from the fountain of God's love, and may guide weary souls, that are full of unrest, and ready to perish in the desert of sin, to those waters of which they may drink and live. He is ever pointing his fellow-men to Jesus, who invites, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." This fountain never fails us; we may draw, and draw again.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE ARRANGEMENT AND EXERCISES DURING THE WEEK OF PRAYER.

WE are very desirous that our coming week of prayer should be observed by our people everywhere. As a people and as individuals, we stand in much need of the blessing of God. The way is open for the truth to go; but we lack the men and the means to do what ought to be done. Our churches are in need of a spiritual revival. In order to accomplish all that we ought to at this time, we need the cooperation of every one,—ministers, elders, deacons,—and every member should contribute to the interest and success of this occasion.

In order to secure uniformity and success in the exercises, we offer a few suggestions that may aid the brethren in charge at each place, to make the best arrangements for the meetings and exercises during the week of prayer.

THE NUMBER OF MEETINGS EACH DAY.

The number of meetings must be arranged according to circumstances. Where a minister is present to take the lead in the services, we would advise that you arrange for as many meetings as the interest seems to demand. But there should be one meeting each day, when the address prepared for the occasion will be read; and this should be the meeting at which the largest number of our brethren and sisters can be present. Sometimes in the past when a minister was present, they have asked him to preach, and have ignored the reading altogether. We think this is not advisable, and experience has taught us that it has not generally tended to secure the object desired. Other meetings may be held where the minister can speak to the people, as circumstances will permit.

MANNER OF CONDUCTING THE SERVICE.

We would advise that the meeting, when the subject for the day is to be taken up, be opened by

singing and a season of prayer, in which as many may take part as feel free to do so; the more, the better. After the season of prayer and another song, let the reading be taken up and read by the one previously appointed. After the reading is over, it would be well to give opportunity for a social meeting, in which all the brethren and sisters can feel free to take part. Care should be taken that the meeting does not drag, or hold too long. If a minister is present and conducts the reading, he may wish to make some comments on the subject treated; but these should not be so extended as to crowd out the opportunity for the brethren and sisters to take a part in the meeting.

THE APPOINTMENT OF A READER.

This is quite an important item. The manner in which an article is read has much to do with the interest it will create. Where a good reader can be obtained, who will read slowly and intelligently, and give expression to the subject treated, the effect on the congregation will be much better. It devolves upon the elder or leader to select a good reader. If the elder or leader knows of a person in the church who can read better and more intelligently than himself, he should not feel it out of place to ask such an one to read the article; and then the elder can follow the reading with such remarks as he thinks proper. If a minister is present, he, in all probability, would be the best reader. But the ones called upon to read, whoever they be, should be notified early, and the readings placed in their hands, so that they can read them over and make themselves perfectly familiar with the subject, as this will add much to their ability to read the address intelligently. If there are several persons in a church that are good readers, it is not necessary that one should do all

the reading. In such cases, one person could have one reading, and another person another reading. But we repeat, that whoever is called upon to read should be informed beforehand, and the reading placed in his hands, to read over so that he will be prepared.

THE OBJECTS TO BE GAINED.

The first and important object of this season of prayer is, to seek God for a present blessing. Look where we may, we find a great need of a deeper experience in spiritual things. Our churches everywhere are languishing for the reviving power of the Spirit of God. Therefore, we have set apart this season for special prayer and the humbling of the soul, that we may draw nigh unto God and obtain this so-much-needed blessing of the Lord. We would therefore advise that our daily work be laid aside as much as possible, and that only the most necessary duties that must be attended to, be looked after; and that it be a time of seeking God, in the home, and in the closet, as well as in the meetings. Let it be a time for the examination of our individual hearts; and if we find that there are sins in the way, let us repent and turn to God. If we hold grudges against our brethren, let us confess and put them away, and do all on our part to open the way for the Spirit of God to come into our hearts. We must not rest satisfied with mere formal worship, but enter into this matter heartily, as unto the Lord, and in the spirit of Jacob, saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

The second object is to raise means for our foreign missionary work. While others are engaged in entertainments and levity, let us be seeking God, which is more befitting our time and our work. And while others are spending money on many foolish indulgences and in making gifts where they are not needed, let us deny ourselves and bring a contribution to the Lord that really costs us something. The cause of God is in need of means. The Lord's providence is opening the way for work everywhere; but we lack the men to send, and the means with which to send them. We have prayed God to raise up laborers, and he is answering our prayers. Now let us bring a liberal contribution, and show the sincerity of our prayers by doing all we can to help forward the work of God, and send the light and truth to the thousands and millions who are yet in darkness. The time has come to work and sacrifice as we never have done before. We expect that you will talk up these things at the very beginning of the meetings. Articles have appeared in the *Review and Herald* and

the HOME MISSIONARY, from time to time, setting forth many of the opening providences of God. You will also receive more information in reference to these things, which you can present before the brethren. We expect a very much larger contribution this year than was made last year.

These are the two objects that we have before us: the seeking of God for a rich blessing and the outpouring of his Spirit upon us, and contributing liberally as God hath prospered us, to the foreign missionary work.

TAKING UP THE COLLECTION.

This will be arranged for in connection with the meeting on Thursday; and should be proceeded with according to the special instruction given on that subject. The Committee on Program have not prepared an elaborate program. We shall leave that very much to the churches to arrange as they may think proper. We refer you to the instructions given on that subject following the reading for Thursday, December 25.

All we will say here, is, that the objects to be gained during the season of prayer should be very plainly set before the brethren, on the first Sabbath, so that all may enter understandingly into the season of prayer, and that they may have time to prepare their collections, and have them ready by the time appointed for taking up the collection.

UNION OF EFFORT.

The burden of arranging for and conducting the meetings during the week of prayer will naturally fall upon the elders of the churches; but they should consult with other officers and leading members of the church, and with the officers of the Sabbath-school and the Tract Society, so that there may be perfect harmony and union in all the plans for carrying out the above recommendations.

In places where there is no elder, or where the elder is absent, or cannot attend to the matter of planning for and conducting the meetings, a council of the church or of the leading members of the company, should be held, and some one selected to take the lead.

This Extra, containing the readings for the week of prayer, has been sent to the address of each local elder and of each Sabbath-school superintendent, so far as their addresses could be obtained; and in some cases it has been sent to others also. This was done to make it doubly sure that a set of the readings should reach every church and company of Sabbath-keepers. Those who have received these copies should turn them over to the one having

charge of the meetings, that he may have extra copies with which to supply those who are selected to read the addresses.

Even though no minister can be present, you may find it proper and convenient to have more than one meeting a day. In such cases a Bible reading in connection with the prayer-meeting, something touching upon the subject under consideration, would be a very proper thing. And where it is not consistent to have more than one meeting, it might be well for families living near together to come together for seasons of prayer, and have small home prayer-meetings. The object and aim is to make the season one of the greatest profit to each of us spiritually, that

we may be fitted to act our part well in connection with the important work before us, in view of the things that are soon to come on the earth.

We should be glad to hear from you at the close of your meeting, in reference to the interest, how many attended, whether you had any marked spiritual revival, and how much was contributed to the missionary fund. A few words on this subject, giving us an idea of the situation and the interest in your church, would be very much appreciated by us.

Commending you to the mercy of God, and earnestly praying that you may share largely in his blessing, we are yours in the truth,

O. A. OLSEN.