

THE Present Truth

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ONE PENNY.

THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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NEW YEAR'S HYMN.

BENEATH the moonlight and the snow
Lies dead my latest year;
The winter winds are wailing low
Its dirges in my ear.

I grieve not with the moaning wind,
As if a loss befell.
Before me, even as behind,
God is, and all is well!

His light shines on me from above,
His low voice speaks within—
The patience of immortal love
Outwearying mortal sin.

Not mindless of the growing years,
Of care and loss and pain,
My eyes are wet with thankful tears
For blessings which remain.

Be near me in my hour of need,
To soothe, to cheer, or warn,
And down these slopes of sunset lead
As up the hills of morn!

—J. G. Whittier.

General Articles.

"Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things."—Prov. 8:6.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

"I wish you a happy New Year," has been repeated far and near, by parents and children, brothers and sisters, acquaintances and friends. In a world like ours, this New Year's greeting seems far more appropriate than the merry Christmas so lately echoed from lip to lip. On every hand are pale faces, brows furrowed with pain and care, or forms bowed with age. Wherever we turn may be seen the garb of mourning. The suffering, the care-worn, and the aged can no longer be merry. In many a household there is a vacant chair; a beloved child, a husband and father, whose presence gladdened the last Christmas and New Year's festivity, is gone from the circle. A merry

Christmas seems a mockery to that bereaved family.

But whatever the cares and sorrows of life, whatever the mistakes and errors of the past, the "Happy New Year," when uttered as an expression of love or respect, falls pleasantly upon the ear. And yet, are not these kindly wishes often forgotten with the utterance? How often we fail to carry their import into the daily life, and thus to aid in their fulfilment. The New Year's greeting is frequently uttered by insincere lips, from hearts that would not forego one selfish gratification in order to make others happy. Recipients of gifts and favours every new year, many accept these as their due. Receiving daily the bounties of Heaven, sunshine and shower, food and raiment, friends and home,—all the unnoted yet priceless blessings of life,—they forget the claims of the Giver; forget that God has left them a legacy in his poor; and that Christ, the Majesty of Heaven, identifies himself with suffering humanity in the person of his saints.

Says our Saviour, "It was I whom you neglected. While your wardrobe was supplied with costly apparel, I had no comfortable clothing; while you feasted, I was hungry; while you were absorbed in pleasure, I was sick, a stranger, and uncared for." Let those who would have a happy new year, seek to honour God and make all around them happy. Let them share the gifts of Providence with those more needy, and bring to the Lord their offerings of gratitude, their sin-offerings, and their free-will offerings.

Let us review our own course during the past year, and compare our life and character with the Bible-standard. Have we withheld from our gracious Benefactor that which he claims from us in return for all the blessings he has granted? Have we neglected to care for the poor, and comfort the sorrowing? Here, then, is work for us.

Upon many, God has bestowed his gifts with a lavish hand. Will they make corresponding returns? Some of these persons, when in poverty, were faithful in the smallest trust committed to them. They would sooner deny themselves of the comforts, or even the necessaries of life, than to withhold their offerings from the Lord's treasury. God has rewarded their faithfulness by prosperity. But now a change comes over the recipients of his bounty. Their wants increase faster than their income, and they no longer return to God the portion which is his due. Thus is developed that same spirit of

covetousness which proved the ruin of Judas.

Let us each bring our souls to task. Let us see if we have brought all our offerings to God. I would do this for myself as an individual. It may be that I have been remiss during the past year. I know not when or where, but to make sure that I have done my whole duty, I will at the first of the year bring an offering to God to be appropriated as may seem best, to some one of the branches of his work. If any of you, my brethren and sisters, are convicted that you have failed to render to God the things that are his; if you have not kindly considered the wants of the poor; or if you have withheld from any man his due, I entreat you to repent before the Lord, and to restore fourfold. Strict honesty toward God and men will alone meet the divine requirements. Remember that if you have defrauded a neighbour in trade, or in any manner deprived him of his own, or if you have robbed God in tithes and offerings, it is all registered in the books of Heaven.

Many are bemoaning their backsliding, their want of peace and rest in Christ, when the past year's record shows that they have separated themselves from God by their departure from strict integrity. When they will faithfully examine their hearts, when they will open their eyes to see the selfishness of their motives,—then their prayer will be, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." God requires us to have a pure heart and clean hands. Let those who have committed wrong give proof of their repentance by seeking to make full restitution, let them in their after-life give evidence of a genuine reformation, and they will assuredly enjoy the peace of Heaven.

Let us enter upon the new year with a clean record. Let faults be corrected. Let bitterness and malice be uprooted. Let right triumph over wrong. Let envy and jealousy between brethren be put away. Heart-felt, honest confession will heal grave difficulties. Then, with the love of God in the soul, there may flow from sincere lips the greeting, "I wish you a happy New Year."

Many who were with us at the beginning of 1886 are not here to welcome 1887. We ourselves may not live to see another year. Shall we not seek to improve the little time allotted us? Will not the church of Christ turn from their backslidings? Will they not cast aside their idols, repent of their love of the world,

overcome their selfish greed, and open the door of the heart to bid the Saviour welcome? May the beginning of this year be a time that shall never be forgotten,—a time when Christ shall come in among us, and say, "Peace be unto you."

Dear friends, I wish you, one and all, A happy New Year.

"We live in deeds, not years; in thought, not breath;

In feelings, not in figures on the dial.

We should count time by heart-throbs when they beat

For man, for duty. He most lives

Who think most, feels noblest, acts the best."

THE BIBLE OUR GUIDE.

THE Bible contains our whole duty, and, if studied prayerfully, it will guide us into all truth. Our former education may have been contrary to its teachings, and, if we are not in harmony with the perfect standard, then the fault lies in us, and it becomes our duty to bring our lives in harmony with it.

When our habits and practices have been formed, it will take no small struggle to unlearn them, and this accounts for so many remaining in error, because they do not put forth the necessary effort to understand what God requires of them.

All should be learners in the school of Christ, and be willing to examine the character by the perfect standard, by so doing a reformation would immediately follow, and conversion would be the result.

The first step to be taken is faith in the Word of God. We must believe the record which says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. 3:16. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1:21. We must further believe that it is a revelation from Heaven and can be understood, as we learn by the following scripture: "Knowing this first that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Pet. 1:20. Other testimonies reveal the fact that those who have a desire to understand its teachings can be enlightened, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; and the wise shall understand." Dan. 12:10. Here we have a positive statement that those who place themselves in the channel of light shall know their duty and become wise.

In order to be successful in this, we must place ourselves on the platform of faith, believing every word as coming from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Christ has inspired men to pen the sacred pages from Genesis to Revelation, and he is the faithful witness, and not one word will fail of its fulfilment. When faith is firmly fixed, then we have a sure foundation upon which to stand; for "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. 11:6. Faith is the essential element for the foundation of a holy character. Upon faith we begin to build, and then add the other graces necessary to salvation. This will require

diligence and a strong resolution to overcome our natural besetments. It cannot be accomplished in our own strength, therefore fervent prayer will be necessary for success.

But, in order to see the defects in character, it will require a constant study of the Word of God; for it is the mirror by which we can discover defects of character. When it tells us that we are sinners by nature, then it becomes us to ascertain what sin is and the necessary remedy to remove it. If in our researches we find that sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), then we are in duty bound to learn which law this scripture refers to, and if we find by turning to Ex. 20:8-17 that it is the law of God, then it becomes us to measure ourselves by it, and see if we are in harmony with its requirements. Should we find that we come short of the perfect standard, then our education begins.

It was this law that showed St. Paul his condition; for he says, "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7. When Paul used the law of God as a mirror to show him his defects of character, he became convinced of his transgression, and he found the words of the psalmist true in his case, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." Ps. 19:7. This testimony shows us plainly that it takes the law of God to convert; or, in other words, it points out the defects of character, and when these are realized, it brings sorrow to the heart, because of transgression of the law of God. Then a remedy is sought to have the stains of sin removed and to be brought in harmony with our Creator, which will require an intercessor who will take our cases before the one whose law we have transgressed. To secure this advocate will necessitate deep repentance and turning away from sin. If we have the same experience as did the apostle, it will lead us to cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24.

It is Christ that avails in our behalf, and if we have fully seen our wrong and henceforth walk in the ways of righteousness, then we have the promise, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. But this promise is on conditions, as we learn in the ninth verse: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Then it is confession and turning away from sin that will bring us salvation.

The mission of Jesus to this world was to set us an example, to make plain our duty, and to open up a way for sinners to escape the penalty of the transgression of his Father's law, and to cancel our sins by the efficacy of his own blood. His coming to this earth was not to do away with his Father's law, as we learn by his own words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matt. 5:17. The word "fulfil" signifies doing,

as we learn from the following text: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Gal. 6:2. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Gal. 5:14. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." Rom. 13:8.

By the text above quoted we can plainly see what Christ meant by the word "fulfil," it is doing, and this agrees with his testimony, as recorded by the apostle: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John 6:38. And that will is defined more particularly in the following: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." John 15:10. W. Ings.

Basle, Suisse.

THE BIBLE SABBATH.

In speaking of the Sabbath I mean the day which was blessed, sanctified, and thus set apart for man's observance at the close of creation week. "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Gen. 2:3. To Adam, as the representative of the human race, the sabbatic institution was given. The word "sabbath" signifies "rest"; and from the command for its observance (Exodus 20:8-11), as well as from the example of those who religiously regarded it, we learn that its hallowed hours are not to be spent in secular pursuits; but in communion with its Author, in acts of devotion, and in works of love and mercy for his creatures.

It is unnecessary to present an argument to show that this weekly rest is a physical necessity, for it is generally admitted as an axiom that He who created all things knew just what was best for man, both physically and spiritually, hence the sabbatic institution was given.

The Sabbath is in no sense Jewish. Antedating by thousands of years the shrines and idol-temples of Egypt—where the creature was worshipped instead of the Creator—it comes to us as a precious *souvenir* of Paradise, connecting us with man in his sinless state, and thus with Jehovah.

While the Sabbath was observed understandingly, men could not have been allured into the idolatrous worship of the sun, moon, stars, etc., for it would have continually reminded them of the fact that He alone was worthy of praise and adoration who created the sun and all things. For this reason, doubtless, the Lord has said that the Sabbath is a "sign" between him and his people forever (Exodus 31:13-17; Ezek. 20:12, 20).

THE SABBATH A "SIGN."

As a *sign* it must be an institution which is *definite* in every particular and so guarded that man cannot with impunity, knowingly violate, change, or in any way interfere with it. Thus being a sign, *i. e.*, "Some visible transaction, event, or appearance intended as proof or evidence of something else; evidence by sight" (*Webster*), it is only reasonable to suppose that accountable beings need not be in

doubt as to which day of the week is thus distinguished from all others by divine appointment and sanctification, or whether it is important for Christians of the nineteenth century to regard the *particular day* so honoured. To those who accept the Scriptures as their guide, the question is very plain,—“The *seventh day* is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” And nowhere within the lids of the Bible is mention made of another weekly Sabbath, nor intimation, that by divine authority the Sabbath would be changed from the seventh day to the first day of the week.

THE COMMANDMENT.

Enshrined in the bosom of the unchangeable law, from which one “jot” or “tittle” cannot pass till all be fulfilled, we find the command for its observance introduced and emphasized by the word “remember.” For forty years this holy day was guarded by at least three distinct miracles, in connection with the fall of the manna. 1. A double portion fell on the sixth day, so that the people might have food on the Sabbath. 2. This extra portion did not spoil as, on other days, it had done. 3. And no manna fell on the Sabbath. Note the following: At this time its religious observance was made the *test* by which the Lord proved the loyalty of his people (Exodus 16: 4, etc.). In this chapter we have the *record of a test case*, and as such it must be decisive and one to which we can appeal with confidence. Here, no infringement was tolerated, and by no device of crafty men could a day be substituted for the one divinely appointed. When selfish, wilful men presumed to make no distinction between it and other days, which had not been sanctified, in the simple act of gathering manna, they were confronted by the words of Jehovah, “How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” Exodus 16: 28, 29.

In addition to the foregoing, the fact that the particular day of God’s appointing—the seventh day—is the only one of the seven which coincides with the spirit and letter of the law, is shown from Ezek. 22: 26: “Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, . . . and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.” God calls the Sabbath a *holy day*,—“my holy day” (Isa. 58: 13), because he rested on it and sanctified it. The other days were not so distinguished, but were simply ordinary or *profane days*; and because the people made no distinction between them, having hid their eyes from God’s Sabbaths, he said, “I am profaned among them.” We have an illustration of how the Sabbath was desecrated in the time of Nehemiah, and how he “contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?” Neh. 13: 17. See also verses 15–22 and chapter 10: 29–31. Nehemiah, and a few others, could see the evil of not making a difference “between the holy and profane,” between the particular day of God’s ap-

pointing and the days for ordinary labour; yet the multitude, all absorbed in business speculations, were so blinded by covetousness that their wonted traffic and labour were performed on the very day of which God said “in it thou shalt not do any work;” and all this in constant view of the ruins of Jerusalem which had been brought to desolation simply because their fathers had done the same thing,—*profaned the Sabbath*.

And there are men to-day who are making *no difference* between the “holy and profane” in Sabbath observance, teaching that God is so regardless of the world’s birthday, and his honour as its Creator, that he has been pleased, for some time, to allow *man* the privilege of selecting his own day for rest and devotion—any *convenient* seventh portion of time! Astonishing! And there are others who ruthlessly disrobe the Sabbath of the mantle of sanctity and blessing by which the Creator clothed it in Eden, just for the sake of procuring a hallowed garment to use in adorning its man-made rival, the pagan Sunday, which, since the fourth century, has been clad in the “royal purple” of Rome, in the benedictions of her prelates! In other words, men assume the fearful responsibility of attempting to make holy a day which God has never sanctified or blessed. And thus they try to make the seventh day *profane*, and the first day of the week *holy*, all of which is diametrically opposed to the Word of God. FEARFUL RESPONSIBILITY! “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isa. 8: 20. A. A. JOHN.

LIGHT.

“YE are the light of the world.” Matt. 5: 14. Such is the position which all who take upon themselves the name of Christ should occupy. As followers of the Son of God, they should place themselves where they can best be used as light-bearers of God’s holy truth.

We cannot realize the influence we each have upon those we come in contact with while performing our daily duty, more especially those with whom we labour, and who have an opportunity of seeing into our character, which others have not. These take notice of our every word and action; and if we are professing to be followers of Christ and his truth, they will naturally be inclined to judge our faith by the lives of its adherents. A solemn responsibility rests upon us all. Some one is sure to be watching our lives; and oh, how sad if, blest as we are with a knowledge of the truth, we should bring reproach upon the name of Christ by our inconsistent lives!

We may be in possession of all the arguments that go to prove the truth of our doctrine, and yet, if they do not have a sanctifying effect on our lives, others will not feel encouraged to accept them; we must bring Christ into our daily lives. If we would be the humble means in God’s hands of bringing men and women to the truth, we must set a guard upon our words and actions, and as near as possible walk in the footsteps of the great Teacher. The wise man says “The path of the just

is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” In one who professes to be living up to the example set by the Son of God, people expect to see a likeness; and when that one does not live as becomes a follower of Christ, he is doing harm to the progress of the truth, and keeping souls from accepting it. Especially is this so in the case of those who profess to be the means in God’s hands of spreading the last message of mercy over the world. The eyes of all are upon them, and if they do live as they should, and walk humbly before God, treating all around them with that love and respect that should characterize a Christian, then, however unpopular their views may be, by their honest, devoted lives they will draw souls toward them, and thus lead them to become truth searchers.

When the final testing time comes over the law of Jehovah, and the wrath of Satan increases on account of the shortness of his time to work mischief, then it will be that the path of the righteous will shine, then one glance will suffice to convince one as to who is on the Lord’s side and who is not. But now, when it is popular and easy to profess Christianity, owing to the absence of any burden, it is hard to draw the line of demarkation between the true and the sham. O that those who call themselves Christ’s could realize what reproach they are bringing upon the truth by their idle self-indulgence while mixing up with the world! One is grieved at heart to hear men scoff at the name of Christ, and point to those who profess to be his, but are living a worldly, selfish life. A fearful awakening awaits these hypocritical professors. They cannot thus sin and remain unpunished. Christ spoke, in Matt. 7: 22, 23, of some who had taken upon themselves his name and had even laboured for him, but who had never received the love of the truth, and whose hearts had never been renewed by the sweet influence of the Spirit of God. To these it will at last be said, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Sad and discouraging as is the present state of the Christian church, yet we are given more faith in the Word of God by its apostacy; for by reading the prophetic Word, which as a light shining in a dark place, warns us of existing evil, we see that in the last days the church is to become corrupted by the evil practices of those who support it, and who, for worldly gain, take Christianity as a cloak to their evil devices. Paul, writing to Timothy, gave a description of the state of the church in the last days; and, sad as is that description, we who live in the time spoken of are bound to testify to the truthfulness of the account, and to acknowledge that a better could not be written. He commences by saying that “In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.” After naming the sins that would be most prominent, he says that although they would have the form of godliness they should deny the power thereof. Here is an age of great moral darkness; here the light of the true follower of the gospel is needed to light the way for the weary, benighted searcher for truth.

Then let us awaken out of the lethargy in which Satan would have us remain, and "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Thus will our light so shine that others seeing our good works will be led to glorify our Father which is in heaven.

G. W. BOUGHTON.

THANKSGIVING HYMN.

O GOD! of every good thou art
The greater good, the holier part,
The source, the sum, the soul;
The pulse of joy, the breath of prayer,
The heart of hope, the cure of care,
The fountain and the goal.

Being and blessing take their start,
O Rock of Ages, in thy heart!
All fresh springs are in thee;
And thou art, too, the one great goal,
To which Life's many currents roll
Like rivers to the sea.

Ere yet a cloudlet was unfurled,
Kindled a sun, or built a world,
Thou wert our God of grace:
Though hills wax old, and stars decay,
Thou wilt endure, our shield and stay,
Our sun and dwelling-place.

More richly than thy goodness showers
The sky with stars, the world with flowers,
Thy gifts on us descend,
Our pathways crown, our souls renew,
Outcount our thoughts, surpass our due,
And seem to know no end.

The shadowed path, the broken sod,
Know well thy footsteps, Son of God,
Thy pity, Son of Man!
And sin-tossed hearts and wandering feet,
Encircled by thy patience sweet,
Thy tender mercies span.

What can we render, Love Divine,
For gifts so great? Our lives are thine;
Their best can only be
Law's righteous due, Love's tender claim;
The breath with which we praise thy name,
Is but a gift from thee.

O Thou in whose dear human face
Our God unveils his heart of grace;
O Jesus! still the same
As when a trembling sinner poured,
Low at thy feet, her cherished hoard,
With love and tears and shame,—

Accept the hearts that can but plead
Their emptiness and utter need,
And that great love of thine;
The longing, in the lack, discern,
And with thy changeless merit turn
The water into wine!

—Annie R. Stillman, in *Christian at Work*.

HIS GLORIOUS APPEARING..

THE first manifestation was very partial; it was Christ seen through a glass, Christ in the midst of grief and the cloud of humiliation. Christ is yet to appear in the strong sense of the word "appearing." He is to come out and shine forth. He is to leave the robes of scorn and shame behind, and to come in the glory of the Father, and all his holy angels with him. This is the constant teaching of the Word of God, and the constant hope of the church, that Christ will appear. Many questions at once suggest themselves. *How will Christ appear? When will Christ appear? Where will Christ appear?* and so on. What God answers, we may inquire, but some of our questions are mere impertinence.

I believe Christ will appear in *person*. I never can tolerate the idea of his second coming being merely a *spiritual* coming. That always seems to me to be the most transparent folly that can possibly be put together, because Christ cannot come spiritually, he is always here: "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Christ's spiritual coming can never be that which is spoken of in Scripture as the day of our release. I sometimes say to brethren, "Do you think if Christ were to come spiritually now, we should observe the ordinances better?" "Yes, certainly." "Do you think, for instance, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper would be better attended to?" "Yes, no doubt it would."

Yes, but then this proves that this is not the coming which the Bible speaks of, because it is expressly said of the Lord's Supper, that we are to do it in remembrance of him till he come. A spiritual coming would make us do it more zealously; there must be another form of coming which would justify our giving up the Supper altogether, and that must be of a personal character, for then, and then only, might the Supper properly cease. We shall not need to have a Supper to remind us of the person, when the person himself shall be present in our midst, reigning and triumphant in his church.

We believe in a *personal* reign and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But how will he come? He will doubtless come with great splendour; the angels of God shall be his attendants. We gather from Scripture that he will come to reign in the midst of his people, that the house of Israel will acknowledge him as king; yea, that all nations shall bow down before him, and kings shall pay him homage. None shall be able to stand against him. Those that pierced him shall wail because of him.

We look for such a coming, and, without entering into minute details, we are content to believe that he *is* coming in his glory, to show himself to be what he ever was—King of kings, and Lord of lords, God over all, blessed forever; to be adored and worshipped, and no more to be despised and rejected of men.—*Spurgeon*.

THE OBEDIENCE GOD REQUIRES.

ABRAHAM, so we are told, was called the friend of God. His obedience to the command of God was accounted unto him for righteousness. Grave as the occasion was, he never hesitated to do as God had told him. The command was a hard and bitter one; to some extent it must have been the bitterest hour of his life, when he felt that God was being as an enemy to him in thus directing him to slay his only and darling boy. He did not stay to argue with himself, however. Hitherto prompt and unquestioning obedience had been the rule of his life; the habit was not to be set aside now, and God must be obeyed at all cost. Each moment that the lad had to live was like gold to him; but Abraham tarried not. Excruciating must have been the pain in the old man's heart as he set out upon that walk from which he expected to return alone. All rebellion had been subdued; but terrible

doubts must have gnawed his very vitals as he listened to the promptings of his heart, that reminded him of the promise of God that he should be the father of a great nation. How could this be if Isaac must die? God had surely forgotten that he had ever promised this. And to Abraham, as to all faithful souls, the fear that God would be less than his word, was the keenest agony of all. Goliath abounded in strength, but his might was considerably less than that of Abraham in this hour of darkness; for he who can say from his inmost heart, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him," is more than conqueror. And this must have been Abraham's frame of mind.

God spared him the deed for the sake of the submissiveness of spirit in which he set forth to accomplish it. Oh, how many of our own most bitter trials He might be more than willing to spare us, if we accepted them with the unquestioning submission of Abraham! All he requires from us is obedience to his commands; and, if we gave this voluntarily, the need for further discipline would not exist. God will be obeyed, however, in the spirit of loving trust that was shown by Abraham, who hesitated not to give the most cherished of all his possessions, when it was asked for by Him to whose service he was pledged; and not a submission merely to attain our own ends. The obedience he requires is the full and perfect faith that a little child has in the ability and readiness of a loving and watchful parent, the life-long fidelity of a devoted servant, or the instant response of a well-disciplined soldier to his superior's commands. Calculating obedience is not to be thought of for one moment; this is not pleasing to God; Can we ever suppose that it is? God wants our obedience, in order that he may carry out his scheme for each one of us. Oh, how can we refuse it when he asks it only for our own sakes? Until we yield ourselves to him, he cannot be all he wants to be to us.—*The Banner of the King*.

IS DEATH THE GATE TO GLORY?

THAT theory which claims that death transforms the saint into an angel, and transfers him to an angel's home, is subversive of the doctrine of a future resurrection, and either denies, or makes of no importance, the second mission of Christ to earth. If an angel's home can be gained without a resurrection; if eternal life and immortal glory can be gained without a resurrection, what need of a resurrection? If saints go to Christ at death, why need he ever come again? This theory makes death the door to glory. But did the inspired servants of God present death in this light? Nay, verily.

1. God threatened to chastise Moses for acting imprudently at the rock. Because of this Moses was told that he should not enter the land of Canaan, but should die before reaching it. That is, according to the immortal soul theology, God was to chastise Moses by not letting him enter Canaan, but sent him straight to heaven. Would not Moses have been pleased with such chastisement? Would it not have been offering a premium for misdemeanour? [Again, we see Moses

climbing the rugged mount to get one glimpse of the land before dying. But Moses could have saved himself that trouble and labour, if he had only known (which some now pretend to believe) that his keen-eyed ghost was immediately to soar over that land and "view the landscape o'er."

How much of a chastisement would it be to a man who was labouring for twenty pounds to be told that in consequence of a misstep which he had made, he should not have the twenty pounds, but should have two hundred thousand pounds? Just as much as it would have been to Moses, who was labouring to enter Canaan, to tell him, in consequence of a misstep, he should not enter Canaan, but might go to glory.

2. Hezekiah, a man who had a "perfect heart," was informed that he should "die and not live." Isa. 28. If he had believed that death was the door to glory, this would have been a cheering message to his soul; but "Hezekiah wept sore." Would a saint weep when told he should immediately go to heaven? Is an entrance into heaven to be dreaded? But hark! he prays death to be deferred. Thus, if death is the door to glory, he prayed that he might have the privilege of staying out of glory a little longer! In answer to this prayer God "added to his days fifteen years." That is, if death is the door to glory, God permitted him to stay out of glory fifteen years longer.

3. Daniel, "a man greatly beloved," and an inspired prophet of God, received intelligence that he must be put to death with the wise men of Babylon. Dan. 2: 13. If Daniel had believed that death was the door through which his soul or ghost should fly directly to glory, would not this information have elated his heart with transporting delight? But how did it affect him? He goes to praying that he may be empowered with wisdom to reverse the decree that required his death. If death is the door to glory, Daniel is certainly praying to obtain the chance of staying out of glory! Is glory thus to be shunned? Finally, prayer prevails, and Daniel's wisdom removes impending death; that is, if death is the door to glory, God gives Daniel wisdom enough to shut the door of glory against himself!—*Sel.*

THE MINISTRY OF PAIN.

THERE are tender-hearted people who virtually object to the whole scheme of creation, who would have neither force used nor pain suffered, who talk as if love could do every thing, even with natures whence there is no response. There are millions of human beings who but for suffering would never have developed an atom of affection. He who would spare due suffering is not wise with the wisdom that is from above. Because a thing is not pleasant, he is a fool who concludes it ought not to be. There are powers to be born, creations to be perfected, through the ministry of pain, which could be born and perfected no way else.—*George MacDonald.*

It is not from nature, but from education and habits that our wants are chiefly derived.

Home and Temperance.

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

THE NEW CALENDAR.

With careless hand by the mantel-shelf,
Where many a gift from loved ones lay,
The Calendar new in its place I hung
One year ago—on New Year's Day,
Mere blanks, as yet, were its pages twelve,
Enrolling the silent months unborn,
With chequered lines and figured squares
That told the days, as yet to dawn.

And the months have passed in rapid flight,
And as each attained its closing day,
Like a leaf grown sear on the tree of time,
A page has dropped, and fluttered away.
And sitting alone, with thoughts to-night
That ebb and flow like a tidal wave,
I gather them all together again,
Those scattered leaves from the old year's grave.

And scanning them o'er now one by one,
These months and days all passed and flown,
I can but think how full of voice
Those pages twelve now all have grown.
How memory reads between the lines
A record inscribed in tracings clear,
Wherein shall stand, forever sealed,
The chapter of life we call a year.

Through some I live o'er once again
Bright summer hours, long sunny days,
While others tell of winter's chill,
And autumn's blended mist and haze.
And thus on some bright joys are traced;
On others, heart-aches, deep and sore;
In all are mingled pain and peace,
And trouble met and struggled o'er.

And now once more, by the mantel-shelf,
With trembling heart and hand I've placed
Another book of pages twelve
With chequered lines close interlaced.
What may not there for me be inscribed
In Time's own secret ciphers be,
To fill those numbered days to come,
And all those months, with memory!

With what sad heart or joyous touch
Shall I those leaflets, to the last,
Loose from their hold, and watch them drift
Adown the current of the past.
And shall it be my hand that may
Pluck from its stem the twelfth, grown sear?
Ere then, perchance, I too may sleep
Beneath the leaves, with this New Year.
—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE HAPPY NEW YEAR.

"HAPPY New Year, papa!" The sitting-room doors were thrown open, and a sweet little girl came bounding in. Her cheeks were all aglow. Smiles played around her cherry lips, and her eyes were dancing with sunny light.

"Happy New Year, my sweet one!" responded Mr. Edgar, as he clasped the child fondly to his heart. "May all your New Years be happy," he added, in a low voice, and with a prayer in his heart.

Little Ellen laid her head in confiding love against her father's breast, and he bent down his manly cheek until it rested on the soft masses of her golden hair. To her it was a happy New Year's morning, and the words that fell from her lips were heart-echoes. But it was not so with Mr. Edgar. The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, had, like evil weeds, found a rank growth in his heart, while good seeds of truth, which in earlier life had sent forth their fresh, green blades, that lifted themselves in the bright,

invigorating sunshine, gave now but feeble promise for the harvest time.

No; Mr. Edgar was not happy. There was a pressure on his feelings; an unsatisfied reaching out into the future; a vague consciousness of approaching evil. Very tenderly he loved his little one: and as she lay nestling against him, he could not help thinking of the time when he was a child, and when the New Years were happy ones. Ellen loved no place so well as her father's arms. When they were folded tightly around her, she had nothing more to desire; so she lay very still and silent, while the thoughts of her father wandered away from the loving child on his bosom to his own unsatisfied state of mind.

"For years," he said within himself, "I have been in earnest pursuit of the means of happiness, yet happiness itself seems every year to be still farther in the distance. There is something wrong. I cannot be in the true path. My days are busy and restless, my nights burdened with schemes that rarely do more than cheat my glowing fancy. What is the meaning of this?"

And Mr. Edgar fell into a deep reverie, from which he was aroused by the voice of his wife, as she laid her hand upon his shoulder.

"A happy New Year, and many joyful returns;" she said, in loving tones, as she pressed her lips to his forehead.

He did not answer. The tenderly-spoken good wishes of his wife fell very gratefully, like refreshing dew, upon his heart; but he was distinctly conscious of not being happy.

So far as worldly condition was concerned, Mr. Edgar had no cause of mental depression. His business was prosperous under a careful management, and every year he saw himself better off by a few hundred pounds. Always, however, it must be told, the number fell short of his expectations.

"There is something wrong." Mr. Edgar's thoughts were all running in one direction. A startling truth seemed suddenly to have been revealed to him, and he felt inclined to look at it in all possible respects. "Why am I not happy?" That was urging the question home; but the answer was not given.

After breakfast, Mr. Edgar left home and went to his store. As he passed along the street, he saw at a window the face of a most lovely child. Her beauty, that had in it something of heavenly innocence, impressed him so deeply that he turned to gain a second look, and in doing so his eyes saw on the door of the dwelling the name of Abraham James. There was an instant revulsion of feeling; and for the first time that morning Mr. Edgar remembered one of the causes of his uncomfortable state of mind. Abraham James was an unfortunate debtor who had failed to meet his obligations, among which were two notes of one hundred pounds each, given to Mr. Edgar. These had been placed by the latter in the hands of his lawyer, with directions to sue them out, and obtain the most that could be realized. Only the day before—the last day of the year—he had learned that there were two judgments that would take precedence of his, and sweep off a share of the debtor's

property. The fact had chafed him considerably, causing him to indulge in harsh language toward his debtor. This language was not just, as he knew in his heart, but the loss of his money fretted him, and filled him with unkind feelings toward the individual who had occasioned the loss.

No wonder that Mr. Edgar was unhappy. As he continued on his way, the angry impulses that quickened the blood in his veins subsided, and through the mist that obscured his mental vision, he saw the bright face of a child, the child of his unfortunate debtor. His own precious one was no lovelier, no purer; nor had her lips uttered on that morning in sweeter tones, the words, "A happy New Year, papa!"

How the thought thrilled him!

With his face bowed, and his eyes upon the ground, Mr. Edgar walked on. He could not sweep aside the image of that child at the window, nor keep back his thoughts from entering the dwelling where her presence might be the only sunbeam that gave light in its gloomy chambers.

When Mr. Edgar arrived at his store, his feelings toward Mr. James were very different from what they were on the day previous. All anger and all resentment were gone, and kindness had taken their place. What if Mr. James did owe him two hundred pounds? What if he should lose the whole amount of his indebtedness? Was the condition of the former so much better than his own, that he would care to change places with him? The very idea caused a shudder to run along his nerves.

"Poor man," he said to himself, pityingly. "What a terrible thing to be thus involved in debt, thus crippled, thus driven to the wall. It would kill me! Men are very cruel to one another, and I am cruel with the rest. What are two hundred pounds to me, or to my well-to-do neighbour, compared with the ruin of a helpless fellow man? James asked time. In two years he was sure he could recover himself, and make all good. But with a heartlessness that causes my cheek to burn as I think upon it, I answered, 'The first loss is always the best loss. I will get what I can, and let the balance go.' The look he then gave me has troubled my conscience ever since. No wonder it is not a happy New Year."

Scarcely had Mr. Edgar passed the dwelling of his unfortunate debtor, when the latter, who had been walking the floor of his parlour in a troubled state of mind, came to the window and stood by his child, who was dear to him as a child could be to the heart of a father. "Happy New Year, papa!" It was the third time since morning dawned that he had received this greeting from the same sweet lips. Mr. James tried to give back the same glad greeting, but the words seemed to choke him, and he failed in the utterance. As the two stood by the window, the wife and mother came up, and leaning against her husband, looked forth with a sad heart. Oh, no! it was not a happy New Year's morning to them. Long before the dawn of another year, they must go forth from their pleasant home; and both their hearts shrunk back in fear from the dark beyond.

"Good morning, dear," said Mr. James

soon afterward, as, with hat and coat and muffler on, he stood ready to go forth to meet the business trials of the day. His voice was depressed, and his countenance sad.

The business assigned for that day was a painful one for Mr. James. The only creditor who had commenced a suit was Mr. Edgar, he having declined to enter into any arrangement with the other creditors, coldly saying that, in his opinion, "the first loss was always the best loss," and that extensions were in most cases equivalent to the abandonment of a claim, he was willing to take what the law would give him. Pursuant to this view, a suit had been brought, and the debtor, to anticipate the result, confessed judgment to two of his largest creditors, who honourably bound themselves to see that a *pro rata* division was made of all his effects.

The business of this New Year's Day was to draw up as complete a statement as possible of his affairs, and Mr. James went about the work with a heavy heart. He had been engaged in this way for over an hour, when one of the clerks came to the desk where he was sitting, and handed him a letter, which a lad had just brought in. He broke the seal with a nervous foreboding of trouble; for, of late, these letters by the hands of private messengers had been frequent, and rarely of an agreeable character. From the envelope, as he commenced withdrawing the letter, there dropped upon the desk a narrow piece of paper, folded like a bill. He took it up with almost reluctant fingers, and slowly pressed back the ends so as to read its face and comprehend its import. Twice his eyes went over the brief lines, before he was clear as to their meaning. They were as follows:—

"Received Jan. 1, 18—, of Abraham James, Two Hundred Pounds, in full of all demands. "HIRAM EDGAR."

Hurriedly now did Mr. James unfold the letter that accompanied this receipt. Its language moved him deeply:—

"ABRAHAM JAMES, Esq., *Dear Sir*: I was not in a right state of mind when I gave directions to have a suit brought against you. I have seen clearer since, and wish to act from a better principle. My own affairs are prosperous. During the year which has just closed, my profits have been better than in any year since I started business. Your affairs, on the contrary, are unprosperous. Heavy losses, instead of fair profits, are the result of a year's tireless efforts, and you find yourself near the bottom of the wheel, while I am sweeping upward. As I think of this, and of my unfeeling conduct toward you in your misfortune, I am mortified and pained. There is an element in my character which ought not to be there. I am self-convicted of cruelty. Accept, my dear sir, in the inclosed receipt, the best reparation in my power to make. In giving up this claim, I do not abandon an item that goes to complete the sum of my happiness. Not a single comfort will be abridged. It will not shrink the dimensions of my house, nor withdraw from myself or family any portion of food or raiment. Accept, then, the New Year's gift I offer, and believe that I have a purer delight in giving than you in receiving. My best wishes are with you for

the future, and if, in anything, I can aid you in your arrangements with creditors, do not fail to command my service.

"Most truly yours,

"HIRAM EDGAR."

For the space of nearly five minutes Mr. James sat very still, the letter of Mr. Edgar before him. Then he folded it up, with the receipt inside, and placed it in his pocket. Then he put away the inventories he had been examining, and tore up several pieces of paper, on which were sundry calculations. And then he put on his warm overcoat and buttoned it up to the chin.

"Edward," said Mr. James, as he walked down the store, "I shall not return this afternoon. It is New Year's Day, and you can close at two o'clock."

It cost Mr. Edgar a struggle to write the receipt in full. Two hundred pounds was a large sum of money to give away by a single stroke of the pen. Love of gain and selfishness pleaded strongly for the last farthing; but the better reason and the better feelings of the man prevailed, and the good deed was done. How light his heart felt, how suddenly the clouds were lifted from his sky, and the strange pressure from his feelings! It was to him a new experience.

On the evening that closed the day, the first evening of the New Year, Mr. Edgar sat with his wife and children in his elegant home, happier by far than he was in the morning, and almost wondering at the change in his state of mind. Little Ellen was in his arms, and as he looked upon her cherub face, he thought of a face as beautiful, seen by him in the morning, at the window of his unfortunate debtor. The face of an angel it had proved to him; for it prompted the good deed from which had sprung a double blessing. While he sat thus, he heard the door bell ring. In a few minutes the waiter handed in a letter. He broke the seal and read:—

"MY DEAR SIR: This morning my dear little Aggy, the light of our home, greeted me with a joyous 'Happy New Year.' I took her in my arms and kissed her, keeping my face close to hers, that she might not see the sadness of mine. Ah, sir! the day broke in gloom. The words of my child found no echo in my heart. I could have wept over her, if the strength of manhood had not risen above the weakness of nature. But all is changed now. A few minutes ago the 'Happy New Year' was flowing to me from the sweet lips of my child, and the words went thrilling in gladness to my heart. May the day close as happily for you and yours, as it is closing for me and mine. God bless you. "ABRAHAM JAMES."

Mr. Edgar read this letter twice, and then handed it, without a word, to his wife.

The story, to which she listened eagerly, was briefly told. When Mr. Edgar had finished, his wife arose, and, with tears of love and sympathy in her eyes, crossed over to where he was sitting, and throwing her arms around his neck, said, "My good, my generous husband! I feel very proud of you this night. That was a noble deed; and I thank you for it in the name of our common humanity."

Never had words from the lips of his wife sounded so pleasantly in the ears of

Mr. Edgar. Never had he known so happy a New Year's Day as the one which had just closed. And though it saw him poorer than he believed himself in the morning, by nearly two hundred pounds, he was richer in feeling—richer in the heart's unwasting possessions—than he had ever been in his life.—*Selected.*

GROWING AWAY FROM OUR LOVED ONES.

Not going away from them, but growing apart from them, which is surely the sadder experience! When those we love leave us for a journey, for an exile, or the grave, our hearts bridge the chasm between us with a hope of future gladness when we shall meet again. But when there comes "the little rift within the lute, that by and by shall make the music mute," we have no such consolation. What so unsatisfactory as a patched up friendship? What so impossible as the healing of an intangible, unconfessed wound? Love can survive a good honest quarrel, and flourish more thriftily sometimes when a summer storm has cleared the sultry atmosphere and swept away the cobwebs, but woe to love when the frost of indifference settles blighting upon it, or when two who started by being all the world to each other, end by revolving like ivory balls, in orbits of their own. Sometimes this torpor of love, which is simply a slow death, falls on wedded hearts, and then the home suffers. Sometimes brothers and sisters allow the crowding cares of life to separate them. Sometimes friends give each other up, and lose the strength and help and mutual support which comes of congenial intercourse, simply through sheer indolence, inertia, or selfishness. It takes a little time and trouble to go and pay a call or make a visit. To write a letter requires exertion. So the friend is neglected, and naturally, after a while, the friendship becomes like a worn out tree, which no longer offers sweet fruit for the plucking.

It is inevitable that as we go on in life changes shall come to ourselves, our homes, our friends, and our work. Youth is full of fiery impulses, of generous ardour, and of quick decisions. Middle age moves more cautiously and with less enthusiasm. The evening of life is calm, serene, tolerant, and patient. As a rule, when we are young, we make friends easily and often. In maturity we are apt to grow cautious and careful. But we need, as we advance in years, to cultivate our friends, to be careful to show them attention, and to prize at their true worth dear ones who have stood loyally beside us in sorrow, in joy, and through evil and good report.—*Christian at Work.*

THAT heart which cherishes only good and pure thoughts is doubly guarded,—within by the very thoughts themselves, without by heavenly spirits; for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them."

A YEAR of pleasure passes like a floating breeze, but a moment of misfortune seems an age of pain.

THE LOVE AND RESPECT OF CHILDREN.

If mothers could only realize what a critical period their children are passing through from the third to the sixth year, they would exercise more than ordinary care during that time. Not only physically but mentally and morally are they undergoing a change: a change for better or worse, according to the care and attention they receive from their mothers and fathers. A father is no more exempt from certain duties toward his offspring than the mother. He should always bear in mind that his assistance in the control of the children is of more value to the tired wife than the presentation to her of a costly gift. It is at this time that children begin to notice papa's and mamma's bearing toward one another; let this always be one of perfect courtesy and respect. Nothing so quickly destroys respect for parents as constant bickerings in the presence of their children. The first thing a child should be taught is respect for his parents and elders; affection comes naturally with most children, and is the most valuable aid in gaining control of their actions; next to that is respect, without it very little can be accomplished for the child's welfare. Parents should bear this in mind that children lose respect very soon upon hearing them disagree; using cutting words to each other. This is inflicting the first actual pain these baby hearts have been called upon to bear. In the presence of this the child experiences conflicting emotions, which end in pity for one parent and contempt for the other. O parent, pause, consider before you lose this hold on the little being who has heretofore considered you perfect. Let there be unanimity of purpose in act, word, and deed before these little creatures, who are so susceptible to every new impression, if you would preserve their love and respect.—*Mrs. Ellis L. Mumma, in Good House Keeping.*

A HINT FOR THE YOUNG.

I KNOW of no principle which it is of more importance to fix in the habits of young people than that of the most determined resistance to the encroachments of ridicule. Give not up to the world, nor to the ridicule with which the world enforces its dominion over every trifling question of manner and appearance. Learn from the earliest days to insure your principles against the perils of ridicule. If you think it right to differ from the times, and to make a stand for any valuable point of morals, do it, however rustic, however antiquated, however pedantic it may appear; do it, not for insolence, but seriously and grandly, as a man who has a soul of his own in his bosom, and does not wait till it shall be breathed into him by the breath of fashion. Let men call you mean if you know you are just; hypocritical, if you are honestly religious; pusillanimous, if you know you are firm. Resistance soon converts unprincipled wit into sincere respect; and no after time can tear from you those feelings which every man carries within him, who has made a noble and successful execution in a virtuous cause.—*Sydney Smith.*

BOYS AND TOBACCO.

THE *British Medical Journal* says that a certain doctor, noticing that a large number of boys under fifteen years of age were tobacco users, was led to inquire into the effect the habit had upon their general health. He took for his purpose thirty-eight boys, aged from nine to fifteen, and carefully examined them. In twenty-seven of them he observed injurious traces of the habit. In twenty-two there were various disorders of circulation, digestion, palpitation of the heart, and a more or less marked taste for strong drink. In twelve there was frequent bleeding at the nose; ten had disturbed sleep; twelve had slight ulceration of the mucous membrane of the mouth, which disappeared on ceasing from the use of tobacco for some days. The doctor treated them all for weakness, but with little effect until the smoking was discontinued, when health and strength were soon restored. Scientific investigation shows also that the use of tobacco by boys is decidedly injurious to the brain and mind. In 1862 the Emperor Napoleon, learning that paralysis had increased with the increase of the tobacco revenue, ordered an examination of the schools and colleges, and, finding that the average standing in both scholarship and character was higher among the abstainers, issued an edict forbidding its use in all the national institutions.—*Sel.*

A FREE TEMPERANCE MEETING.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON gives an account of a country temperance meeting where all present had a free and easy time. Every body felt at liberty to express his mind. "Three excellent clergymen spoke. They harped on the elastic and indefinite word 'moderation,' condemning intemperance, but setting up Timothy as their model man, morally and constitutionally; lauding and magnifying sobriety, but commending the temperate consumption of alcohol. When they had concluded, an elderly farmer rose and said: 'I've heard that kind of talk for the last forty years, and I can't see that people are a bit more sober now than when it commenced. It reminds me of what I once saw take place at a retreat for imbeciles. It is the custom there, after the patients have been in residence for a certain time, to put them to a kind of test to see whether they are fit to leave the asylum or not. They are taken to a trough full of water, with a small pipe continually running into it and supplying it. They are given a ladle and told to empty it. Those who have not regained their senses keep ladling away, while the water flows in as fast as they ladle it out; but them as is n't idiots stop the tap.'"—*Exchange.*

BE cheerful. It is better to live in sunshine than in gloom. If a cloud rests upon your heart, turn its silver lining to your friends, and the glow of cheer it will cast upon them will be reflected on you; and the cloud will give way before the brightness and joy its own light has begotten.

A CLEAR conscience is a wall of brass.

THE PRESENT TRUTH.

"And be Established in the Present Truth."—Bible.

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"THE PRESENT TRUTH."

By the above we do not refer to the especial truth for our time, but to this journal. As we review its past history of nearly three years, we are grateful to God for his blessings which have attended its publication thus far. It was published to meet a want, a *real* want. God has given us in his holy Word many lines of prophecy which mark great events in this world's history, predict the rise and fall of mighty nations, and culminate in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the close of the present dispensation. These prophecies are revelations of God to men (Amos 3:7); they are warnings to the inhabitants of earth of the dangers which surround them at particular periods (Matt. 24:15); they point out to the people of God the foes they must meet, the things they must suffer (Luke 21:12-16); and they cheer the weary soldier in the fray with the promised reward and coming rest (Dan. 7:27).

The greater part of the prophecies which apply to the period antecedent to our Lord's second coming historians record have been fulfilled. We trace down line after line,—Dan. 2, 7, 8, and 11; six lines in the Revelation; Matt. 24; Mark 13; and Luke 21,—all proclaim with united voice that we have reached the "last days," that the close of probation is at hand, that the "great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hasteth greatly," that the coming of the Christ is nigh at hand. Besides these lines of prophecy there are many signs given of the last days which are being fulfilled in our day. The "sure word of prophecy" is flashing its bright rays athwart the dense darkness of the world, pointing the weary pilgrim to the path of safety. 2 Pet. 1:19.

But are these great prophetic truths to ever lay dormant in the Word of God? Do they bear no message for the people of this day and this generation? Are we to ignore the study of that part of the Book of God? Because men have erroneously interpreted these prophecies, because they have wrested them to their own destruction, should we despise them? Because others have wandered from the right path, and declare the wrong right, is it any reason why we should sit still, pursuing no way? If God has given the "sure word of prophecy" to be a light in the darkness, can we turn from that light, ignore its beneficent rays and yet walk in a plain path? To these queries all candid students of the Word of God must reply in the negative.

"But," some will say, "these prophecies were given to generations long ago, and have been fulfilled in the past." True they were given long ago, but many of them were given for all time. A part of the prophecy may have an immediate fulfilment, while another part may predict events far in the future, and yet these events be widely separated. As an instance of this we cite Isa. 61:1-3. The prophecy itself has unmistakable reference to Christ. Our Saviour quotes the first verse and part of the second and applies

it to himself and his mission. Luke 4:18, 19. But notice that he quotes only the following from the second verse of Isa. 61: "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Then our Saviour closed the book and sat down, and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:21. But he did not read the latter part of Isa. 61: 2, or the statement last quoted could not be true; for our Saviour did not come at his first advent to proclaim "the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn." The prophet sees in his vast sweep of vision our Lord's whole mission at both his first and second advents. Jesus proclaimed "the acceptable year of the Lord," and his ambassadors have ever since proclaimed "Now is the accepted time." Vengeance was not then pending; Jesus, the sacrifice, the Saviour, had come. And just prior to his second advent the second part of Isa. 61:2 will be fulfilled by those, who "rightly divide the Word of truth," who will proclaim "the day of vengeance of our God." That connected prophecy lay silent from the time it was penned by the prophet till the first advent, 700 years; then the first part only was fulfilled. We pass down the current of time 1,800 years further, and the latter part is to be fulfilled, the day of the Lord's judgment is to be proclaimed.

For, surely, we have a right to expect this. God will not visit upon an unwarned world his judgments. He has not done this in past ages. The antediluvian world becomes so heinous in God's sight, that it must be destroyed; but the merciful God first sends "Noah, a preacher of righteousness," with a message of warning to that generation. Sodom's sin came up before the Arbitrator of the Universe, and in the court of Eternal Justice the licentious city is doomed to destruction; but messengers from heaven are sent to warn its inhabitants. Ancient Israel fill up their cup of iniquity; but the Lord leaves them not to meet their just doom without warning. John the Baptist is sent to them, and he lays down his life in his mission of mercy. Jesus, the Son of God, leaves the glory of heaven and comes to a people who had killed his prophets to make to them one last appeal. He had cherished them in the past even as a mother her child, and at last he comes himself to warn and entreat them ere the judgments of God fall upon the nation and their devoted city.

It is thus that God has dealt with his people and with the world in time past; and will that "great day" when the probation of mankind shall close, when the destiny of all shall be decided, when the wicked shall be punished and the righteous rewarded, when Christ the Lord shall come and the long conflict shall be over—will it be true that this great day of all days will come unheralded, that no warning message will be given? It is not reasonable, it is not scriptural, it is not just, to believe that God will send judgments unheralded.

In Rev. 14:6-14 we have a most solemn threefold message to every kingdom, nation, tongue, and people; in short, it goes to all the world. The message must be given through human beings, symbolized by the angels. It proclaims that the hour of God's "judgment is come." This message has not been fulfilled in the past centuries of the Christian era. Paul preached of a "judgment to come" (Acts 24:25), and placed it in the future, connected with

Christ's coming. 1 Cor. 4:5. Martin Luther believed that the time of God's judgment was three hundred years in the future from his day. The third angel's message has not been fulfilled. It bears a most solemn warning, it has attached to it a most fearful penalty to be visited upon those who reject or ignore the warning. Can it be that God will pour out his unmixed wrath upon a world for rejecting a message that has not been given, that no one can understand? Such an idea is a libel on God's government.

And may not these prophecies be fulfilled in our day? They will be met sometime in all their specifications. What do they mean? What kingdoms are brought to view under the symbols and terms of the prophecies? Against what powers are we warned? Why may they not be fulfilled in this generation? Why are they not in process of fulfilment? No reason can be given that they will not be fulfilled in our day. No one can show that they are not in the process of fulfilling. On the other hand there are many proofs that we have neared that time to which all these prophecies have pointed so long, "the last days," the time when the coming of the Lord "draweth nigh."

These messages of warning which precede the Lord's coming are also messages of reform. The whole of the Christian world recognize the need of this reform. The Sabbath is desecrated. Men are divided regarding the day of the Sabbath. The nature of man is a debatable question. Has he an immortal soul, or is he dependent for his immortality through faith in Christ? The general standard of Christian character has been lowered. Sins once considered heinous are now tolerated or condoned in our churches. Real conversion is but little known. A lamentable lack is everywhere deplored. Men in all religious denominations are calling for a thorough reform in doctrine and practice.

Another fact of moment is the rapidly increasing power of the papacy. It is extending its arms everywhere. Its devotees were never more earnest, never more zealous. It is gaining power among the nations. Deference is paid to the wishes of the Roman See that is paid to no other religious organization or organizations in the world. What does it mean? Has the Roman Catholic Church changed in nature? Is it to become a valuable ally in the great warfare against evil? or has it the same persecuting character which it ever has manifested in the past when it persecuted the people of God? These are important questions.

It was to consider these great truths, to bring men to the Word of God on all these points, that the PRESENT TRUTH was established. During its existence it has endeavoured to set the truth of God before its readers in a plain and simple manner. Its managers have not striven for effect or for applause. They have not aimed or desired to make the journal great or learned. They have not pandered to popular sentiment, nor kept back that which is "profitable" for the sake of gain. They have earnestly endeavoured to set forth in this paper the plain, simple, saving truth of God, as they believe it is contained in his Word. They realize that the truth which God has given for to-day is unpopular, it strikes against dear and received customs. It is contrary to many hoary traditions which would usurp its place, which "make void the commandments of God."

But the PRESENT TRUTH occupies no such position in order to differ from any position held by others. Its truths are proclaimed from a sense of duty, and with the desire that they may do others eternal good. God has revealed his truth in his holy Word. The only true reform is that which is based on that Word. And it is such a reform as this that the conductors of the PRESENT TRUTH desire. It is for such that they will still labour. While there will be a continual call to the "old paths" of the primitive church, the special truths for our day will not be neglected.

We believe that all of its old subscribers and patrons will welcome the first number for 1887, and we hope to make each succeeding number better than its predecessor. To do this we must have the help of God, and we ask the prayers of our readers and subscribers that God may help us in our work. And we hope for their response to this in the increased number of our subscribers. It will do us good, and we will try by the Lord's help to present to them the truth of God in due season.

THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE.

We have read with some interest Dr. Parker's recent sermon on "Conscience," published in the *Christian Commonwealth* of October 21. The Doctor said many good things, made some excellent points, taught some wholesome truths. We heartily indorse what he says as to the necessity of the new birth,—a heart and conscience made clean through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,—before the deeds are pure and the life-work right. But this is only the beginning. Conscience is not *the* guide for the future. Conscience itself must have a standard. No time-piece can be a standard to itself. It must be regulated by something outside of itself. So no conscience can be a standard to itself. It must have a fixed and unalterable standard by which its motions are to be regulated. And the use of conscience, we maintain, is to point or to bring the individual to this standard, rather than to set up a standard for itself. If the heart were pure, if the mind possessed all knowledge, no other guide than conscience would be necessary. We could turn to that inward monitor at all times for wisdom, as to the course we should pursue, and conscience would never point us astray. But we find ourselves on a different plane of action, with "perverted heart," with a "defiled conscience," with limited knowledge of truth and right; hence, the need of some higher standard.

We have this standard given in God's Word; and this Word contains not only a higher standard, but *the* perfect standard in God's holy law and the inspired comments thereon, wrought out in the perfect life and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet there are many things which conscience must decide. God's Word is not a detailed classification of duties devolving upon every individual. There are many things which the individual must decide for himself. Here the conscience has liberty, but that liberty is circumscribed. It has no right to decide contrary to the principles of God's holy law. In such cases man has no right to judge his brother. For instance, what would be a legitimate quantity of food for one to eat would be sin for another, but he who could not take the greater quantity has no right to judge him who can. God has not revealed in his Word just how much each individual should eat, but he has given us a principle by which the consci-

ence should be guided in the decision of this matter, and that principle is to eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do it to God's glory (1 Cor. 10:31). If the quantity of the food causes weakness or disease to the system, less should be eaten, that the powers of the body may be in a better condition to honour God.

The right to decide such questions as these may properly be called the inherent right of conscience. But it has no right to go out of this sphere; that is, where the Word of God has plainly laid down certain duties to be done in a certain way, at a certain time, conscience has no right to determine for itself some other way, or some other time. If God says, "Honour thy father and thy mother," man's conscience has no more right to pervert that commandment, than had the Jews anciently, who made it *void* through their perverted, traditionally educated conscience.

It is right here that Dr. Parker, with all his "analytical discrimination," fails to discriminate, and hence is not "saved from perversions the most disastrous." We believe that there are secondary and eternal rights, but we believe that one of the Doctor's illustrations was a most unfortunate, misleading one, which tends only to exalt conscience above the sphere in which God has placed it, and to degrade and destroy the force of the Word of God. We give below one of his illustrations on a very important and much agitated question, that of the Sabbath. The Doctor says:—

"Now we must in the uses of conscience distinguish between the eternal right and the secondary right. The word 'right' requires continual definition. It does not always stand for the same thing. Like the term 'law,' in the apostolic reasoning, it must be distinguished in its uses, and only by an analytical discrimination can it be saved from perversions the most disastrous. But how are we to ascertain the eternal right? There should be no difficulty about that? How are we to ascertain the institutional or secondary right? There ought to be no difficulty about that. Let us see whether we can render one another any little assistance in that direction. I should say that rest is the eternal right; that the time when it should be taken is the institutional right. Never must we trifle with the eternal right of every human being to rest. As to whether it shall be on the first day, or on the last, or in the middle of the week, there you touch what is secondary and institutional; there you may have change, modification to your heart's content; there, indeed, you may enjoy fullest liberty: but you have no liberty in the matter of treating the rest itself. One man esteemeth one day, another man esteemeth another day: let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind; but let no man lay wicked or violent hands upon the divine gift and ordinance of rest to every human creature."

We certainly agree that no one has a right to trifle with his neighbour concerning his right to rest or the time when that rest shall be taken. No man nor society of men has a right to legislate concerning these, they are God-given rights—duties which lie between man and his Creator alone. In neither of these, as far as our duty relates to God, may we, as Dr. Parker says, enjoy the "fullest liberty." The same divine law which declares man's duty to rest, declares the time when that rest shall be taken (Ex. 20:8-10).

That law has not been changed or receded from, in a single jot or tittle; but it declares

still that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord our God,—an eternal right, an eternal duty, as old as creation, and binding as long as man has a Creator to remember. And it is a perversion of Scripture to use the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 14, which apply only to Jewish festival days, in a way that would weaken the force of the plainly expressed command of God, which says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. . . . The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." It is this exaltation of the conscience above the Word of God which has weakened and divided the Christian church. It is hard for poor humanity to learn, what all will sometime learn, that God says what he means and means what he says. His Word, his law, will judge us in the last day, and not a misguided conscience. Some will realize it too late. There will be those who will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?" etc.; but the answer of the Judge will be, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The words of Christ are, "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:21. May God help us to realize the truthfulness of the Word of God.

NOTES ON THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

In our last we spoke of the opening of this important meeting, which is now over. In connection with the General Conference were held the yearly meetings of the S. D. A. Publishing Association, International Tract and Missionary Society, Sabbath-school Association, Health Institute, Sanitarium Improvement Company, and American Health and Temperance Association. All these meetings were of great interest and their reports showed a prosperous year.

The Sanitarium, located in Battle Creek, has never had a better patronage. Its net profits were over £8,000. It is now, since its magnificent addition of 1884, the largest health institution of its kind in America, in fact, in the world. It was established in 1867 as the Medical and Surgical Sanitarium. It has at present four male and three female physicians, Dr. J. H. Kellogg being superintendent. This last-named physician is well known to many of our readers as the author of many excellent works on health, and the editor of *Good Health*, the leading health journal in America. The business of the Sanitarium has increased wonderfully under the superintendence of Dr. Kellogg. From a small wooden building, which at first served to accommodate all patients and patrons, it has increased to a substantial brick structure four hundred and seventy-five feet in length, eighty-four feet in height, and forty, forty-six, and fifty-four feet in width. The length of promenade in verandas and halls is more than four hundred and forty yards; floor space, over two acres.

It is one of the best ventilated structures in the world, heated by steam and lighted by electricity—the Edison incandescent light. The ventilation of each room is independent of the others, and the atmosphere of each can be made moist or dry at will. The ventilation is independent of the windows. The sewerage could not be better. No unpleasant odours are perceptible in any part of the building.

All those remedies which have been proved

most useful in helping nature to restore the diseased system to its nominal condition are here used. And not only is the worn-out system restored, but the individual is taught by daily lectures and practical demonstrations how to keep well.

The Sanitarium and its adjoining cottages can accommodate about four hundred patients. The average number of patients the past year has been larger than ever before, being about two hundred and twenty-five. There have been twelve hundred treated during the year. The number of helpers range from one hundred and forty to one hundred and sixty. In the year are used over 1,200 barrels (200 pounds to the barrel) of flour, 1,000 bushels of potatoes, and seven hundred barrels of apples. About one hundred and sixty gallons of milk are used daily.

The institution is not sectarian. All classes are admitted, irrespective of religious belief, and rights of conscience are not interfered with. While morning and evening worship are regularly held, none are compelled to attend. There is usually a sermon Sunday evening. The Sabbath-school, held chiefly for the benefit of the workers, numbers one hundred and sixty members. There is also a missionary society among the workers, which uses three hundred copies of the health journal, *Good Health*, monthly, and over two hundred copies of religious papers weekly, chiefly the *Signs of the Times*, known to many of our British readers. The institution is a real home, and has proved a blessing to thousands.

The International Tract and Missionary Society has been doing a noble work the past year. The Lord is, in his providence, opening places of labour all over the world. The Society has in the past year distributed over 1,250,000 pages of tracts. In addition to this over six hundred copies of the *Signs of the Times* are used weekly, three hundred and fifty *Gospel Sickles* bi-weekly, and two hundred and fifty *American Sentinels*, and one hundred *Good Healths* monthly. This does not include the work done by the branch societies, but is general work outside the territory of all local societies.

Over thirty city missions have been in operation during the past year, employing over one hundred workers, who have held over 19,250 Bible-readings, in the missionary rooms and with families. Thousands of subscriptions have been taken for our denominational periodicals. In connection with these missions over 6,200 ships have been visited, and 1,100,353 pages of books and tracts, and 97,411 papers have been supplied to them; two hundred and twenty-nine ships are regularly supplied with some denominational journal or journals. These publications are gladly received. Since the mission was opened in Brooklyn, not quite a year since, seventeen have embraced the truth.

There were many important committees appointed at the Conference, but the reports of none were of more interest than that of the Committee on Distribution of Labour. Some of the recommendations which were adopted were as follows:—

1. That Eld. S. N. Haskell go to Great Britain.
2. That Eld. E. W. Whitney, of New York, go to Central Europe.
3. That W. L. H. Baker and wife, of Pacific

Press, Oakland, go to Melbourne, Australia, to labour in the office of the *Bible Echo*.

4. That Eld. E. W. Farnsworth, go with Eld. Haskell to England:

5. That Eld. S. Fulton, of Tennessee, labour in Florida:

6. That Eld. G. G. Rupert, of Kentucky, go to British Guiana, S. A., and visit other parts of the southern field as he may think best.

7. That Eld. W. D. Curtis, of Kansas, go to Australia.

8. That Eld. J. F. Hanson, of Chicago, labour among the Scandinavians of New York City and Brooklyn.

9. That Eld. J. H. Cook, of Kansas, go to Kentucky at his earliest convenience to take the place of Eld. G. G. Rupert, who goes to South America.

10. That Elds. C. L. Boyd, of Oregon and D. A. Robinson, of Massachusetts, go to South Africa as soon as they can leave their present fields of labour.

11. That Eld. John Fulton, now in California, go to the North Pacific Conference to labour with Eld. Boyd, and to take the place of the latter when he shall go to South Africa.

The instructions on health and temperance given by Dr. Kellogg to a large class of ministers and workers each morning have been of much interest. This people are not only a temperance people but a temperate people. True science demonstrates the necessity of temperance; the Bible inculcates the same; and he who goes forth armed with both these weapons—true science and Scripture—can wield a power which no mere enthusiast knows. The Doctor teaches a health and temperance system based on both these. If natural laws, the laws that regulate the system, are transgressed, the inevitable consequence, disease, is sure to follow. Good health is almost a positive necessity to a good Christian experience. The gospel of health prepares the way for the gospel of Christ.

The American Health and Temperance Association, organized some eight years ago by Dr. Kellogg and fellow-workers, now numbers more than 80,000 members. Its object is to teach the principles of health and temperance on a broader platform than has before been placed before the world. Its temperance department has three pledges; the anti-*rum* pledge, the anti-*rum* and tobacco pledge, and the teetotal pledge, which includes the foregoing and pledges against the indulgence of tea, coffee, opium, and all other narcotics and stimulants. The 80,000 members mentioned above are all subscribers to the teetotal pledge. These pledges and this society have under God been the means of striking the shackles from many a habit and appetite-bound prisoner. But our limits forbid more at this time, so we will leave other items of interest till our next.

JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT DAY. NO. 7.

OUR last article closed with a recapitulation of the important events that transpire under the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

So momentous and solemn are these truths that we cannot forbear to remind the reader again of our present position. Prophetic time ended in 1844. There the seventh angel began to sound, the most holy place of the temple in heaven was opened, the judicial thrones of the investigative judgment (Dan. 7: 9, 10)

were set (Hebrew), and Christ began the final examination of the cases of his people before the Father, to make the atonement, to cleanse the sanctuary, and to finish the mystery of God. More than forty years already have elapsed since we entered this solemn period, and this work began.

And what follows?—The close of Christ's priesthood; the end of probation; the utterance of that solemn fiat which fixes every man's destiny, "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still" (Rev. 22: 11, 12); the coronation of Christ upon the holy hill of Zion (Ps. 2: 6); the wrath of God in the seven last plagues, upon the living wicked; the convulsions of the great day; the revelation of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords in the clouds of heaven; the giving of immortality to every overcomer; and the destruction of all his incorrigible enemies then living upon the earth. Luke 19: 27.

When our Lord ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of his Father, as mediator between him and his people, he also had another work to accomplish. He revealed to the disciples this work in the following comforting words: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14: 2, 3. This doubtless refers to the glorious city, the New Jerusalem, which is being prepared to be the metropolis of Christ's kingdom, and the palatial abode of those who humbly follow him in this lower world. And in view of the language just quoted, we cannot doubt that the work is wrought under the personal supervision of our Lord, during the period of his priesthood. And his people will enter those mansions when that which Christ wills is brought to pass, and they are taken into his presence to behold his glory. Such was his prayer: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." John 17: 24.

The Saviour being crowned king at the close of his priestly office, begins the exercise of his kingly power by delivering his people, and by bringing to trial, and pronouncing judgment upon, and executing his enemies. This is clearly brought to view in the 110th psalm, which speaks of both his kingly and priestly offices. Thus in verse 1 he is assigned a place of honour at the Father's right hand: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand." It is important to observe that there are two personages brought to view in the psalm, to whom the word "Lord" is applied,—the Father and the Son. The first is from the original "Jehovah," referring to the Father, and is printed in the text, as the reader will observe, in small capitals; the second is from "Adonai," and refers to the Son. Thus "Jehovah said to Adonai," or the Father said unto the Son, Sit thou at my right hand. But the time he is to continue in this position is limited by an event which changes his office from that of priest to that of king. It is expressed in these words, which immediately follow: "Till I make thine enemies thy footstool." Verse 2 states the very act of making Christ king, and placing his enemies under him as his footstool.

"The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine

enemies." The first clause of this verse is parallel to Ps. 2 : 6 : " Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." The heavenly Zion (Heb. 12 : 22; Rev. 14 : 1) is the place of Christ's coronation. The last clause, " Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies," expresses the very words of the Father to the Son when he crowns him king. This is obvious from our common English version, but is made still more evident from the French translation of David Martin, in which the two clauses are connected by the words " in saying;" thus " The Lord shall transmit out of Zion the sceptre of thy strength *in saying*, Rule in the midst of thy enemies."

The next verse states the sympathy of Christ's people with his work when he is thus inducted into his kingly office, and proceeds to exercise his power against his enemies : " Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning ; thou hast the dew of thy youth." Instead of " the day of thy power," Martin's French Bible reads, " The day that thou shalt assemble thy army in holy pomp." This is the time when the Son of Man descends in power and great glory, and the armies of heaven, that is, all the holy angels, attend and surround him. Matt. 24 : 30, 31 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 16-18 ; Rev. 19 : 11, 12. The people of God are to unite with Christ in his rule over the nations of wicked men. Rev. 2 : 26, 27 ; Ps. 2 : 6-9. The *morning* of this verse must be the morning of the *day* which it mentions. One of the earliest events of that day is the resurrection of the just, when, like their Lord, they are born from the dead to life immortal. Rev. 20 : 4-6 ; Luke 20 : 35, 36 ; Col. 1 : 18 ; Hos. 13 : 13, 14 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 42-44, 51-54.

By virtue of the authority vested in our Lord when inducted into his kingly office, he proceeds to judge his enemies, or pass sentence of destruction upon the living nations of those who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. So verse 6 of the 110th psalm reads : " He shall *judge* among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies ; he shall wound the heads over many countries." This is his work in the day of his power, to which his people give their willing assent. Verse 3. This is the great day of his wrath, when he shall dash the nations in pieces like a potter's vessel (Ps. 2 : 9), and none will be able to stand except those whose sins are blotted out. The wicked kings of the earth shall fall before him when he is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Instead of the reading given in the English version, " He shall wound the heads over many countries," Martin's Bible has the singular number, and translates thus ; " He shall wound the *chief* who rules over a great country." Thus the text is made to refer unmistakably to Satan. The Hebrew word rendered " wound " is defined by Gesenius thus : " To smite through and through ; to dash in pieces ; to crush." And thus shall our great adversary be treated when the God of peace shall bruise the prince of darkness under the feet of his people. Rom. 16 : 20 ; Gen. 3 : 15 ; 1 John 3 : 8 ; Heb. 2 : 14.

Thus the transition of Christ from his priestly to his kingly office is clearly marked. Human probation closes when Christ ceases to be priest. Those who are found in their sins after our Lord has been crowned king upon his own throne, must be destroyed as his enemies. And the priesthood of Christ

terminates when he has obtained the acquittal of his people, and secured the blotting out of their sins at the tribunal of his Father. Then and there he is crowned king (Dan. 7 : 9, 10, 13, 15) ; and from that coronation scene he shortly comes to our earth as king, to deliver all who at that examination of the books, are accounted worthy to have part in the world to come, and in the resurrection of the just. Dan. 12 : 1 ; Luke 20 : 35, 36 ; 21 : 36.

U. S.

The Watch Tower.

" Watchman, what of the night ? Watchman, what of the night ? The morning cometh, and also the night : if ye will enquire, enquire ye : return, come."—Isa. 21 : 11, 12.

IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER ?

IN many respects, yes. We, with the most optimistical, mourn not

" for the days that are gone
When a noble could do as he liked with his own ;"
" When difference of creed was the vilest of crime,
And martyrs were burned half a score at a time."
" And the stealer of sheep and the slayer of men
Were strung up together again and again."

We mourn not for the things which Mackay has so graphically pictured, " the *darkness* of days " in the centuries past. In many things the world has moved. The influence of Christianity has made itself felt. The gross darkness of idolatry has passed away. The mighty influence of the Reformation made itself felt throughout the civilized world. Had the church of God paused not there, had she not been content with the victories she then gained, she would have been a power to-day, irresistible in her strength. But forgetting her Source of strength, she united herself with the world, and, pursuing a worldly policy, she finds herself, though increased in numbers, weakened in power. There have been true revivals since, which have to some extent made themselves felt throughout Christendom, notably so was the revival which gave birth to Methodism. But the new faith soon became stereotyped ; a new class of teachers succeeded, who sought for the spasmodic effects of Wesley's preaching, for the multitude of converts, but not for the practical piety of every-day life, and the doctrinal teaching of the truth of God, which is absolutely necessary for the frame-work of a strong, healthy Christian character. God has more truth in his holy Word, as was remarked by Robinson to the Pilgrim Fathers, but the church of God as a whole have closed their eyes to its light. Their advance has been in the realms of science, worldly policies, and human schemes, while the simple truth of God, which through Christ is able to save, has been neglected.

The Jewish age presents a parallel to the Christian. We see them in their first strength. God was with them in mighty power. We find them during the first centuries of their existence measurably prosperous, till the height of their prosperity is reached under the reign of Solomon. Then comes the Dark Ages of the Levitical dispensation. It is an age of true and false worship, the service of God mingled with the service of the heathen, sometimes the one predominating, sometimes the other. But in the main it was an age of idolatry. The multitude of priests chanted their idolatrous songs, the prophets predicted peace, and few indeed were those who stood strong and true to God. But those who did, prophesied not of

peace, but of the wrath of God, which that people had brought upon them by their wickedness. The prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel are sad records of the sins of that age, and the earnest and repeated efforts made by the God of heaven to induce them to repent. But for these merciful messages of warning the prophets of God received only scorn and contumely, and were accused of being disturbers of the peace, and growling pessimists.

Following this corrupt age came the Reformation of the Levitical dispensation under such sturdy reformers as Nehemiah and Ezra. It was not a complete reform, but most of the errors of the past were thrown off, and a great step was taken toward the light. Immediately after this came a period of severe struggles, a series of victories and defeats. Many noble examples of devotion to duty marked this period. There were also many examples of an opposite character. Just such a period followed the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.

We come to the time pointed out by the " sure word of prophecy " when the first advent of our blessed Lord was to take place, and what do we find ? Optimists of that day would have told us that it was an age of progress. Idols were not worshipped, intercourse with heathen was largely broken off, and the prophets were no longer killed. The traditions of the church were observed with scrupulous fidelity, and " we be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man," was shouted forth with all the assurance of certainty. Great efforts were put forth to convert those outside the pale of the Jewish fold, and many illustrious persons were gathered in. Truly it looked like a time of prosperity to the Jewish church. It seemed to be gaining influence and power in the world. But underneath it all, underneath the outward pomp, the seeming prosperity, the rigid adherence to custom and tradition, even to " making void " one of the commandments of God (Matt. 15 : 3-6), underneath the Pharisaic piety dwelt that selfishness, that sinfulness, which culminated in crucifying the Son of God, and bringing upon that generation " all the righteous blood shed upon the earth." Matt. 23 : 35. Christ, the Saviour of the world, could discern the hypocrisy, could look right through the thin veneer, and discern the utter selfishness and worthlessness within. To themselves, to those who knew not the truth, it was a pious, prosperous, advancing, enlightened age ; but to Jesus they were " whited sepulchres," " beautiful outward," but " within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Matt. 23 : 27.

And the same Divine Wisdom, who saw the motives of hearts in that age, is the Inspirer of the prophets of all ages (1 Pet. 1 : 10, 11), and they through the inspiration of his Holy Spirit have pointed out the condition of the professed people of God in " the last days." Line upon line of prophecy indicates that we have reached that period, and that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The apostle in speaking of that time describes it as " perilous." It is not perilous because of the physical dangers, but on account of its spiritual darkness. He says (2 Tim. 3 : 1-5) : " This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded,

lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." And these sins are not referred to as characteristic of the world, but are found among those "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Says our Lord, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many [Rev. Ver., the many] shall wax cold." Matt. 24: 12. Again he tells us that as it was in the days of Noah and the days of Lot, so it will be in the day when the Son of Man appears. Luke 17: 22-30. The prophecies of the Revelation point out the same sad facts; and these testimonies concerning the present age might be multiplied from the prophetic word; but we see no promise of a triumphant church till Christ the Lord has come, sinners are destroyed, and he has taken to himself his great power and reigned.

We are aware that this is called pessimism, but it is not, unless looking at facts as they are, can be called pessimism. If so, we plead guilty. But we cannot ignore the clearly expressed declarations of our Lord. That there are many faithful, devoted souls in the world, we do not deny; we believe that they are found in all denominations, in all the walks of life. But they will not regenerate the world. God will call them out of the world, and from a worldly church. We cannot ignore the facts of every-day life as they appear on every hand showing the wide departure from God and his Word. The nominal Christian church seems prosperous, it is popular and rich, it is eminently great and powerful, judged by its own standard; but judged by the increased light of the age, the light of God's Word which has shone so freely upon her pathway and entered into hut and palace,—judged by this, there is fatal weakness and inward rottenness. "Defamers of our Century" we may be called, or growling pessimists, but so they spake of the messengers of God anciently. Said Ahab of Micaiah, "He never prophesied good unto me, but always evil." 2 Chron. 18: 7. So said the Jews of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but the prophets were true nevertheless.

And is not the church, the professed church, repeating the same sad history? Has not the form taken the place of the power? Has not profession taken the place of possession largely? Are not flagrant sins condoned and passed over, especially if the offender be a man of wealth and influence, and he allowed to continue in his sin? We wish to press these questions upon our readers. And while we are not only willing to admit but contend that the world is better than it was three centuries since when judged by the same standard, we are by no means prepared to admit that the professed religionists of to-day are relatively better. Given the light we have to-day, and the spirit of the Reformers, and there would be a marked difference in the age. But we do not desire to present our own testimony as to the state of religion at present, but that of a prominent journal, an optimistic journal, which seems to take much pleasure in scolding journals and preachers of a pessimistic tendency. We refer to the *Christian Commonwealth*. Our readers will freely pardon the long quotation taken therefrom, for the matter is an important one. We hope it will be well weighed. The italics are ours. In its issue of Nov. 25, 1886, in speaking of the Guinness brewery business and the rush to take stock in the concern, the *Commonwealth* speaks as follows:—

"A still more serious matter, however, is the

fact that the bulk of professed Christians among us are little better in this respect than the vast masses of irreligious people around them. For aught that appears to the contrary, most of them are as self-indulgent, as averse to self-denial, as much under the dominion of the degrading lust for gold, as entirely absorbed in the pursuit and worship of mammon. Yet if there is one sin against which the New Testament thunders forth its anathemas more than another, it is covetousness. Jesus adjured his followers not to set their affections upon earthly treasure, since life does not consist in the abundance of one's possessions, and some of the most appalling things he ever said were about rich men. But modern Christians do not concern themselves about all this. What Jesus Christ taught matters very little to them, or what his apostles taught either. Simple-minded people imagine that modern Christians are persons who follow the Lord Jesus Christ, and live by the New Testament. It would be more correct to say that they are persons who have some regard for Christ, who think he was right in some of his teaching, but wrong in a good deal of it, and who undertake, with their superior light and knowledge, to correct his mistakes, and also to set right the apostles who were instructed by him. This they do in regard to matters which vitally affect salvation, and, therefore, it is no wonder that they should act in a similar spirit in relation to affairs of conduct of far less moment. People who are too wise to be taught how they are to be saved are hardly likely to submit to instruction as to how they should spend their money.

"The result of this flagrant disobedience is that the average Christian professor does 'what is right in his own eyes,' and never troubles himself about his Lord's will. Freedom has degenerated into license. With respect to the matter now especially under consideration this is notoriously the case. Who expects a Christian man to spend his money as he is taught to do it in the New Testament? Who that does expect it, finds it? Since we wrote on this subject before, the stock market of London has been thrown into a panic by the Guinness brewery transaction. Men of business, who are supposed to be cool and imperturbable, clean lost their heads over speculations in a concern which is spreading ruin and death. A more scandalous spectacle was never witnessed even in 'the City' than that of hundreds of men scrambling and fighting for the privilege of putting their money into a manufactory of disease and pauperism and crime. How many of that crowd are devout church-goers every Sunday? How many church-wardens and officials? How many professed Christians? We know not, but it is exceedingly probable that there were some. If the lists of share-holders in Guinness and Co., Spiers and Pond, and other similar concerns throughout the country, could be published, it would be a revelation. Not only should we find there the names of many professed Christians, but also, as we have reason to believe, of many ministers of the gospel. And no doubt all these men would be prepared to justify their investment as a legitimate and Christian use of money. It is the simple truth that the liquor traffic, which is the most awful curse of this country, is largely upheld by the money of people who profess to be Christians, the Established Church itself being the largest owner of public-houses in England. Is any further evidence required to show the anti-Christian character of much that passes for Christianity among us? When Christian men and churches begin to palter with the Word of God in regard to one matter, they will soon do it in regard to many matters. The corruption of the Christian faith is speedily followed by the debasement of Christian conduct."

The only hope for the people of God is to return to the Lord with fasting and sackcloth and ashes, with hearts rent because of their sins. The Word of God has been "paltered" with in more than one matter, the law of God has been forgotten. But we rejoice in the thought that there are many who have not bowed their knee at the shrine of gold or lust or pleasure. Such are the "salt of the earth." Yet a little while and the faithful will be taken home by the coming King. Blessed indeed will be those servants who are found with their "loins girded about," and their "lights burning." Such will not put far off the coming Lord, but will wait and welcome his coming.

AN EVIDENCE OF WHAT?

If it be true that we are nearing that time when, through the influence of Christian work, the world will be converted, would not there be evidences of it on every hand? Would we not see more zeal on the part of Christians? With the millions upon millions of unconverted heathen, with the want, the woe, the vice, the misery everywhere present in civilized nations, it would seem that there would be such examples of liberality as would astonish the world; that men would pour their means into the treasury of God's house, would invest in shares of stock in the bank of heaven. But how is this? As an example of present-day investments we present the following from the *Christian Commonwealth* of Oct. 28:—

"The monetary world has been in a state of great excitement during the week in consequence of the formation of the brewing business of Guinness and Co., of Dublin, into a limited liability company. Let it be noted that this business is in Ireland, of whose poverty and woes we constantly hear so much, and yet the profits of the concern have for some years verged on half a million per annum. The depression of trade and agriculture evidently does not affect the profits of the brewing trade. It is equally evident that multitudes of people, many of them moving in respectable and religious circles, are fiercely eager to make money out of this degrading traffic. When the shares of Guinness and Co. were put in the market there were soon 10,000 applications for them. The office of Baring Bros. was besieged by a clamorous crowd anxious to invest their money in the liquor business, and on the Stock Exchange all other business was temporarily suspended. London dealers alone applied for £11,000,000 of capital, and some of the shares went up to 65 per cent. premium. The estimates of the subscriptions tendered vary from £80,000,000 to £120,000,000 nominal. The Dublin Grocers and Vintners' Association have passed a resolution asking Sir Edward Guinness to have an equitable proportion of shares allotted to Irish applicants, having regard to the immense Irish trade done by his firm. The subscription list was not advertised to open before Monday morning; but by noon on Saturday it was computed that the whole of the £5,200,000 demanded had been applied for twenty times over. In face of these facts it is absurd to talk of money's being scarce in the country. Money can be found for any purpose except for the cause of Christ and for purposes of benevolence, and much of it is found by professed Christian people too."

Of what is the above an evidence? Is the world so nearly converted that Christian benevolence is so little needed, that intemperance is so little to be feared, that millions upon millions are eagerly invested in one week in one of the great agents of crime and misery, and that all other business is suspended on its account? Where the treasures are, there is the heart also, is the principle laid down by our divine Lord. Taking this as an example of what is everywhere seen in the financial world, what conclusions are to be drawn from the evidence? Is it not that much of what is called philanthropy and Christian liberality is a mere sham? that the investments of men, of society, prove that the affections of their hearts are set on the world and its gain? Mammon is worshipped, and Christ's cause is left to languish. May God help the honest in heart to discern the false from the true.

PAPAL INFLUENCE.

It is not in the Old World alone that the papacy is gaining influence, but in the New World as well, and in that part of the New World which is the most enlightened. The following item from a recent number of the *Christian Leader* is another small instalment

of the great amount of evidence that might be brought and has been brought:—

"In the States, as in Canada, the government weakly concede honours to papal dignitaries which they would never dream of extending to ministers of other religious bodies. At the investiture of the bishop of Baltimore with the cardinal's baretta a member of the cabinet attended the ceremony, President Cleveland sent a letter of congratulation, and the marine band of Washington headed the procession of Romish societies. One editor asks, 'Are we living in New Ireland or in the United States?'"

The Missionary.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."—Ecc. 11: 1.

BE IN EARNEST.

LIFE is brief, its days are fleeting
As the bird on swiftest wing,
As the pearly dew of morning,
Or the rill from mountain spring;
Hastes the bird through skies of azure
Dew exhales in morning's sun,
Down into the grand old ocean,
Mountain streams unceasing run.

Be in earnest, souls are dying,
Souls for whom a Saviour died:
Satan with his wiles is trying
To increase the blinded tide,
Who, by night and day, are passing,
Downward to the realms of death,
Where the wail of woe distressing,
Upward floats on every breath.

Be in earnest, hourly nearer
Comes the solemn judgment day,
When, with vision purer, clearer,
We'll review life's wending way.
Vain all effort then to borrow
One excuse for sloth while here;
Still more vain remorse or sorrow—
Just one sentence will appear.

Be in earnest; it is glorious
On life's battle-field to stand,
With the Spirit's sword victorious.
In our waiting, willing hand;
Soon the fierce and fiery struggle
In the flesh with sin shall cease;
Following close the din of battle,
Dawns the day of rest and peace.

—Selected.

ENCOURAGING.

THE publishers of PRESENT TRUTH are much encouraged from time to time by the words of encouragement they receive from many of its patrons. The journal has given no uncertain sound in the past, and I can assure its readers that it shall not in the future. Its views are distinctive, and are those which we conscientiously believe applicable to the days in which we live.

Its articles are largely of an explanatory nature, elucidating many doctrines of the Word of God which are not usually explained from the pulpit, or through the columns of the religious journals of the day. Although the positions taken on some Bible doctrines are unpopular, yet they reach a responsive chord in many hearts, and carry conviction to many others. That the reader may see that such is the case, and that our journal and the books that are sent from the office of publication are accomplishing much good, I present a few selections from some of the letters we have of late received from our correspondents.

The following is from a lady who has recently received a few copies of PRESENT TRUTH. In sending her subscription for the paper, she says:—

"We were both pleased and obliged by your sending us PRESENT TRUTH, which we have carefully read, and being conversant with Bible teaching and doctrine, are delighted to find teaching in a cheap form being disseminated among the masses. We had not heard of the

existence of such a society until PRESENT TRUTH arrived to enlighten us. We rejoice in hope of coming glory when our Lord returns, also that he is our life. We do not believe in the natural immortality of the soul, which is the popular teaching of all denominations at the present day."

"We are also much interested in the idea of the seventh day being the Sabbath. We do not see what right man had to alter it unless commanded by God, although the first is almost universally kept as the Sabbath."

For some months the office of publication has been sending scores of PRESENT TRUTH to as many free reading-rooms in various parts of the Kingdom. Many persons have become deeply interested in reading them, some so much that they have sent orders to the office for works. The following is an extract from one of these. He writes:—

"I saw your paper in the — library. Let me know if you have any church in or near — who keep the seventh day in place of the first day. To me as a news agent it would be a great sacrifice to worship God on the seventh day as it is the best in the week for me, yet if I were convinced it is right, I can trust my God to supply my wants.

"I will be glad of any information you can give me on the subject, as I am anxious to get the truth."

A few months since a minister in South Africa ordered some books, which were sent to him. Not long after he wrote for more, and speaking of those he had received, he said:—

"The books and papers I ordered from you have been received, and I have read a good deal of them with much pleasure. I was already convinced that Christians are still obliged to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment, but by all these books I have become more confirmed in this doctrine."

I might give other quotations, but space forbids. We are receiving from our correspondents and others much evidence of an encouraging nature to convince us that the truth sent out through our publications is accomplishing much good, not only throughout the United Kingdom, but in foreign countries. We shall be glad to hear at any time from our interested readers. I feel to praise the Lord that the truth, though unpopular, is capable of reaching hearts everywhere.

S. H. LANE.

THE WORK IN THE BRITISH ISLES.

DURING the past month the good work has made some progress. Pastor Durland and the writer laboured together nearly three weeks at and near Kettering, in Northamptonshire. At Rothwell we engaged a hall and advertised extensively, but our turnout was so small that we did not feel justified in incurring the expense of continuing our effort. We held nine meetings. A few became interested. We visited such and supplied them with some reading matter and held a few Bible-readings. They will be further furnished with reading matter by our missionary workers at Kettering.

Our meetings at Kettering were encouraging. Concluding that the time had come to organize a church, we gave a number of discourses relating to organization, the duty of church officers, the support of the ministry, the ordinances, and other subjects. When these had been explained, we organized a church of seventeen members. An elder and deacon were ordained. All seem united, and love the truth, and have an anxious desire to do what they can to advance it. Seven were baptized by Pastor Durland.

Previous to the organization, a Sabbath-school and tract society had been organized. The Sabbath-school numbers some thirty. Twelve have united with the tract society, and have commenced the work of loaning tracts to every house in the town, and have also commenced work in the villages near. All are now fully united in the work. May the Lord bless them in their efforts.

On Dec. 14, 15 the writer held two meetings

at Riseley in Bedfordshire. The work there was hindered on account of rain and flood, yet I gave two discourses and held one Bible-reading, which were appreciated. Four at Riseley united with the Kettering church. The friends there are still faithful, and seem anxious to see the truth advance. As I left those who love the truth at these places, I could but thank the Lord that the truth has found a home in some honest hearts in that part of the Kingdom.

The friends in Ireland are still active in the truth. Since my last report one more has commenced to keep the Sabbath. We have received from them some money for books, not only to be sent to Ireland, but to New Zealand. Thus, step by step, the good work advances, and we rejoice that such is the case.

S. H. LANE.

THE WORK IN SCANDINAVIA.

SWEDEN.—Since my former report I have continued my tour among the churches in Sweden, and in company with Bro. O. Johnson I have visited Grythytted, Langban-shyttan, Rättvick, and Boda. We have had very interesting meetings in all these places. We have organized Sabbath-schools and T. and M. Societies, where they have not had them before. Our brethren and sisters seem desirous to understand all about the work, so that they can adapt themselves to it. In several places where we held one or two meetings, where some of our scattered brethren live, there seemed to be a good interest to hear, as large numbers attended our meetings and listened with close attention. Rättvick and Boda are in a part of the country called "Dalarne" (valleys). This field seems to be the most favourable of any that we have seen since coming to this country. Here the people are farmers, and each has his own land, thus they are independent of each other. Neither did we find much prejudice here. Mission-houses, and even school-houses are opened to us for meetings. The truth has already got a good foot-hold. I separated from Bro. Johnson here; he is to remain and follow up the interest, and I go on and visit others. Since I left him, I have heard that he has a good hearing with a good interest.

I came to Stockholm on the 30th of November. Bro. Matteson lives here. We have had some good meetings at this time. The Sabbath-school is very interesting, and they are gathering in quite a number of children whose parents are not Sabbath-keepers. The T. and M. Society is also in a prosperous condition. After New Year's Bro. Matteson is to begin a school of instruction for colporteurs and Bible workers. We can thank God for some encouragement here in Sweden.

Eld. J. G. Matteson writes from Stockholm, Dec. 6, as follows: "The work in this place is onward. Some colporteur work is being done, and there is a fair attendance at the meetings. A few have lately commenced to keep the Sabbath, and the outward interest is increasing. About one hundred persons attend our Sabbath meetings. The Sabbath-school has also advanced in number and interest. We have lately been encouraged by Eld. O. A. Olsen's presence and help. He stayed with us a little more than a week. We appreciate his earnest labours, and are very thankful for his good counsel.

"We have held a few meetings in Upsala, where one of the universities of Sweden is located. Two of our sisters have done colporteur work here for nearly three months. Some have become interested in the truth besides the few that are keeping the Sabbath. There are invitations from other places to come and labour. We have now established a branch office in Stockholm, and hope by this means to be better enabled to spread the truth in Sweden. But it is a work of no small magnitude to get this in good working order. We have also succeeded in getting a Swedish physician who will help us in the Swedish health paper, and then we will be better prepared to

spread the knowledge in Sweden on the subject of health. The new works (in Norwegian) on 'The Millennium,' 'The Visions of Daniel and John,' and 'The Prophecies of our Saviour and the Apostles' are being translated into Swedish and will soon appear in print."

DENMARK.—Eld. E. G. Olsen writes from Copenhagen: "During the month of November I have laboured in Copenhagen with the exception of one Sabbath and Sunday, which I spent with the church at Valsømagle. I held four meetings. The Lord came near by his Holy Spirit, and good interest was manifested by the hearers. May God bless this church and add to their number such as shall be saved. I am glad to say that the interest is increasing in Copenhagen. On the Sabbath our meetings are of especial interest to the church. Friday evening, from 6-7 o'clock, we hold a missionary meeting, in which the brethren and sisters give a report of their labour during the week, and afterwards we have a Bible-reading. Sabbath forenoon, at nine o'clock, we hold our Sabbath-school, and at 10:30 we have preaching, and in the afternoon prayer and social meeting. The Lord comes very near to us, as we seek to draw near to him and speak of his goodness."

NORWAY.—Eld. K. Brorsen writes from Moss, Nov. 30: "I have just returned from Laurvig, and will send a short report of my labour the past month. I have held twenty-three meetings, thirty-one Bible-readings, attended in all by one hundred and sixty-three persons, written fourteen missionary letters, visited eighty-eight families, sold books and tracts to the amount of kr. 13 (14s. 6d.), distributed and loaned out one thousand four hundred and sixty pages of books, and obtained two subscribers for *Tidernes Tegn*. Two have commenced to obey the commandments of God. In Laurvig I found more interest than here in Moss. In the last two meetings I held, the hall was full of attentive hearers. Our brethren have had some trials, but have remained true to the faith. The danger that we see and ask God for help to escape, does not hurt us, but the danger that we do not realize, and that we seek to go through without the Lord, can easily work to our injury. The old saying, 'Our necessity is God's opportunity,' still holds good. 'Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you.'"

O. A. OLSEN.

Bible Readings.

"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."—Neh. 8:8.

DOES THE GOSPEL SUPERSEDE THE LAW?

1. IS THE LAW MADE VOID BY FAITH?
"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31
2. WHAT LAW IS THE THEME OF THIS EPISTLE?
"I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7.
3. HOW DOES HE CHARACTERIZE THAT LAW?
"The law is holy, . . . just, and good." Verse 12.
"The law is spiritual." Verse 14.
4. WAS IT A LAW TO THE JEWS ONLY?
"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Rom. 3:19.
5. WILL JEWS AND GENTILES BE JUDGED BY IT?
"But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good: to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall so perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." Rom. 2:10-12.
6. WHEN WILL THEY BE JUDGED BY THE LAW?
"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Verse 16.
7. WHO WILL BE JUSTIFIED IN THE JUDGMENT?
"The doers of the law shall be justified." Verse 13.
8. WHAT PROVES THAT BY THE TERM "LAW" THE APOSTLE HERE MEANS THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?
"Behold thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law. . . . Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?" Verses 17-22.

9. Did the Author of the gospel teach the perpetuity of the law?

"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Matt 5:17-19.

10. Did he teach the keeping of the commandments as the way to eternal life?

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matt. 19:16-19.

11. Did James teach obedience to every precept of that law?

"If ye fulfil the royal law, . . . ye do well. . . . Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Chap. 2:8-10.

12. What shows that he meant the ten commandments?

"For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." Verse 11.

13. Shall we be judged by that law?

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." Verse 12.

14. What is sin?

"Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

15. By what is the knowledge of sin?

"By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20.

16. What is the wages of sin?

"The wages of sin is death." Chap. 6:23.

17. Did Christ suffer the penalty due to our sins?

"Christ died for our sins." 1 Cor. 15:3. He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." 1 Pet. 2:24.

18. Why did he give himself for us?

"That he might redeem us from all iniquity." Titus 2:14.

19. What sacrifice did the Father make for us?

"He gave his only begotten Son." John 3:16.

20. Why make the infinite sacrifice of his own beloved and sinless Son?

"That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26. To save the sinner and at the same time vindicate the righteousness of the law which condemned him, the penalty was inflicted on God's own beloved Son as our substitute. To save sinners, the righteous law must be dishonoured, abolished, sacrificed, or his Son must die a sacrifice for sin. The broken law justly demanded the life of the sinner, or a sinless substitute. He died for our transgressions. Is it reasonable to suppose that the law died at the same time, and that by the same stroke? Was not the law divinely honoured?

21. To what conclusion are we brought?

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31.

R. F. COTTRELL.

Interesting Items.

—Merlati successfully completed his fifty days' fast at Paris.

—A fire occurred at Philadelphia, Dec. 27. Loss, \$1,000,000.

—Mr. Goschen has accepted the office as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

—The Crown Prince of Denmark fell while at gymnastics, breaking a knee and a rib.

—Mr. Gladstone is said to be occupied upon a work dealing with the Olympian religion.

—A man, supposed to be extremely destitute, died in New York recently, worth £70,000.

—M. de Lesseps again declares that the Panama Canal will be open for traffic in 1889.

—The Lord Mayor unveiled the new statue of Queen Anne in St. Paul's Churchyard, Dec. 15.

—Mr. H. M. Stanley has been recalled to Belgium by King Leopold, in relation to the Congo.

—Some eighty persons while skating at Dublin were suddenly immersed through the ice's giving way.

—The notices in the obituary column of the London *Times* of Dec. 12, gave the unprecedented average of 72½ years.

—Two young children died in Dublin through having been forced by their friends to drink whisky at Christmas.

—The boatswain and seven of the crew of the French war vessel *Pengouin* were recently massacred by the Somalis at Ambadu.

—A dinner party was given by Mr. and Mrs. A. Crowther to six hundred poor children, at the Field-lane Ragged School, London.

—It is stated that Mr. Gladstone received a thousand letters and telegrams congratulating him upon attaining his 77th birthday.

—In the Colin Campbell divorce case the jury stated that neither of the charges was proved. Both petitions were accordingly dismissed.

—The whaling barque *Atlantic*, of New Bedford, has been wrecked near San Francisco. About twenty-five of those on board perished.

—The steamship *Fawn*, of Llanelly, which recently left that port for Liverpool, has foundered off Holyhead, all hands, numbering twelve, being lost.

—The water used for the christening of Princess Beatrice's infant son was brought from the River Jordan by a lady who recently visited the Holy Land.

—The Southport Life-boat Disaster Fund, for the benefit of the families of the brave men who lost their lives in trying to save others, already exceeds £20,000.

—Alderman McQuade, who was convicted for the American bribery cases, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and a fine of five thousand dollars.

—A box containing 200 lbs. of dynamite was exploded near the summer residence of King Charles of Roumania, with the design, it was believed, of destroying it.

—On Dec. 19, Canseau, Nova Scotia, was put in direct circuit with New Westminster, British Columbia, an unbroken land line of 4,600 miles over the wires of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

—Father McGlyn, one of the leading Catholic clergymen at New York, has been summoned to Rome to explain his socialistic speeches and his disregard of his superior's orders to cease supporting Mr. Henry George.

—While a man was travelling to Radcliffe by train, recently, with a bag containing over £600 for paying wages, he was robbed by two men travelling with him, who left him a similar looking bag containing iron nuts.

—The trial of the *Nautilus*, a submarine boat, took place at the deep-water dock, Tilbury, Dec. 20. The boat is cigar shaped, and is propelled noiselessly by twin electric engines, worked from storage batteries of large capacity.

—Her Majesty's ship *Sultan* collided with the French steamer *Ville de Victoria*, anchored in the Tagus. The steamer sank almost immediately. She had two hundred and fifty persons on board, thirty-two of whom were drowned.

—A public meeting in aid of the movement for raising £100,000 to meet the deficiency in the funds of Guy's Hospital, caused by the agricultural depression, was held at the Mansion House, Dec. 20. Subscriptions were announced amounting to about £17,000.

—A fire occurred in the booths at the People's Park, Madras, while a fair was being held on New Year's Eve. The natives were panic-stricken; 405 lost their lives, and many others were severely injured.

—A movement has been commenced having for its object the presentation to the Queen of a personal Jubilee Offering from the Women and Girls of the United Kingdom as a mark of their loyal appreciation of her Majesty's public and private character. The names of the contributors will be presented to her Majesty, who will herself be invited to decide upon the form which the accumulated offering shall take.

—At the Newcastle Diocesan Conference, held some two months since, it was reported that "the subject of the observation of the Sabbath came in for a long discussion." This is the case in most of the large and long conferences among religious denominations. If one-half of the time was spent in studying the Word of God to find out which was the true Sabbath, the Sabbath supported by that Word, there would be less effort put forth to bolster up and maintain the heathen "wild solar holiday."

—A fire occurred on the morning of the 24th ult., at Lewis' clothing establishment, Liverpool. There was a menagerie in the basement, and the animals perished. The loss is estimated at £400,000. Six hundred hands were thrown out of employment. Another fire occurred about the same time at W. Almond and Co's mill, Blackburn. Six hundred men were thrown out of employment. The damage is estimated at £10,000. On Dec. 22, the saw-mill of Messrs. Illingworth and Ingram, Leeds, was destroyed by fire. The loss is estimated at £15,000.

—Two serious railway disasters occurred Jan. 4, in the United States. The worst was on the Baltimore and Ohio Railway, near Tiffin, a small town in Ohio. A fast train comprising five carriages and four sleeping cars, all filled with passengers, while going sixty miles an hour, dashed into a goods train which the driver saw only when he was within one hundred feet of it. He reversed the engine and applied the brake, but the train struck with such force that the carriages were telescoped and piled one upon the other. Twelve passengers were roasted alive, and a number of others were killed. The second disaster occurred near Springfield, Massachusetts, about the same time, and in much the same way. Two passengers were killed, one being burned to death, and ten seriously injured.

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Formerly Missionary of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

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"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."—Rev. 22:12.

GRIMSBY, JANUARY 6, 1887.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Any one receiving this Periodical, not having subscribed for it, will not be called upon by us or our agents to pay for what he has not ordered. The paper has probably been sent by some friend or missionary society. Please read them and give them to your friends to read.

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Returning.—The readers of this journal will be glad to learn that the editor, Pastor M. C. Wilcox, has nearly completed his visit in America, and hopes to return to the work in Great Britain about the middle of this month.

Notice.—Having been advised by the editor that a new heading had been expressed from America for the PRESENT TRUTH, this number has waited a week hoping to appear at the beginning of the volume in its new dress complete.

Errata.—In our last-page note, "The Roman Curia," in Vol. 2, No. 22, we referred to Lord Montagu's book as "Recent Events and a Clue to their Fulfilment;" it should have been "Recent Events and a Clue to their Solution." The article, "The Judgment of the Great Day, No. 4," was uncredited; it should have been signed "U. S."

Is Prophecy Important?—It is not if we are to believe many of our religious teachers and journals of to-day. If an earnest seeker after truth makes inquiry concerning the prophecies of Daniel and John, he is told that the prophecy is obscure, the books are sealed, that none but the most learned can understand them, that they do not amount to much any way. And this teaching has permeated the majority of Christians, so that now, in the

language of the prophet, "The vision of all is become . . . as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned." Isa. 29:11, 12. Thus it is in the majority of cases. The watchmen are many of them dumb, the shepherds are asleep, and the flock are ignorant. Does God design that these prophecies should not be understood? Has he given them for no other purpose than to obscure and darken, and to raise useless inquiry?

We cannot believe that God has given prophecy for any such purpose as is implied in the above questions. The reasons why we do not believe this are, (1) The Bible expressly declares that visions and lines of prophecies were given that men might know what shall come to pass (Dan. 2:28, 29; 8:19; 10:14; Rev. 1:3); (2) Our Saviour expressly declares that it is the duty of the people to understand the prophecies of Daniel (Matt. 24:15); and hence all prophecies; for the same Spirit gave them all for the same purpose; (3) God has given prophecy to be a light to the world during the time when the pall-cloud of sin and darkness and delusion hangs over the world. So says the apostle, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Pet. 1:19. Is not prophecy important? Ought it not to be studied earnestly, faithfully, gratefully?

Would We Resist Satan?—The way is plain if not easy. "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed," are the words of the apostle. Jas. 1:14. Satan and his agents are the *enticers*, and they draw the soul away by placing temptations before it. But the only means by which Satan can do this is through man's lust, or inordinate desire. The moment that man's desire takes hold upon the temptation so as to control the thoughts or the will, as soon as that desire becomes predominant, sin begins. Satan has gained an entrance into the heart which cherishes desire for the sin presented in the temptation of the enemy. The only way to resist the enemy is to cherish no sin in the heart. Every sin cherished there is an open door through which Satan can enter and take possession. In fact the cherished sin invited him. There is an affinity with evil, a longing to indulge the propensities of the natural heart, and Satan will place every temptation before the soul which cherishes the sin, to entice him away. Why did Satan's temptations have no power over our Redeemer? Because Jesus had no affinity with evil. His heart was pure, self-reigned not there, and there was no room for Satan to enter, no longing for anything but the pure, the good, the holy, nothing but the ever predominant desire to do his Father's will. This is all that will keep us from the power of the enemy—to have a clean heart which cherishes no sin. How is it with thee, Christian brother and sister—soldiers of our King? Do you cherish pride, base passions, love of the world, enmity or hatred toward any, covetousness, selfishness in any form? Do you cherish these? Then you have an open place in your

armour, a vulnerable point where the darts of Satan may strike a fatal blow. A sin cherished there opens the gates of the heart's citadel to the powers of evil. A pure heart, a constant heart, is our only hope. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. 4:23.

Sincerity.—How often do we hear it said when religious beliefs and doctrines are called in question, "It makes no difference if I am only sincere." We never hear the expression used in any other than a religious sense. When travelling a road at right angles to the one which leads to our destination, or finding ourselves pursuing an opposite direction, we do not say when apprised of this, It makes no difference if we are only sincere. We would never be so foolish as that. We know that going east would not take us south, neither would going south take us north. If our way were questioned it would not awaken the indifference of "sincerity" (?) but the anxiety of truth. Had we a dose of medicine to our lips, and some one should say it was poison, we would not say, It matters not if I am only sincere. We would become assured of the character of the medicine before we proceeded with it.

Why not be as wise in regard to the way which leads to eternal life? There is but one way, Jesus. He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6. We can have forgiveness only through repentance toward God, whose law we have transgressed, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12; and 20:21. We are sanctified through the truth (John 17:17); we are made free by the truth. John 8:32. We can only be Christ's disciples by continuing in his Word, and his Word is truth. John 8:31; and 17:17. This must include God's holy law, for that is the truth. Ps. 119:142. And "no lie is of the truth." Now can we willingly neglect one single portion of God's practical truth, one duty, one sanctifying principle? If we are to be sanctified through the truth, if the truth is to make us free, if we are to worship God in the Spirit and in the truth, can we wilfully ignore that truth and still be sanctified, still be free, still worship God acceptably? If it is unwise to trust to our "sincerity" in the small matters of life, is it not heaven-daring presumption to ignore God's way of saving men and still expect to be saved? Such an excuse as the above of *sincerity* may answer our conscience, but it will not answer at the bar of Eternal Judgment, where every man will be judged by his deeds. Sincerity is an excellent thing if one is sincere in the truth.

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