

PRESENT TRUTH

I AM THE WAY. THE TRUTH. AND THE LIFE. LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS.

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NO. 36.

Face to Face with God.

(Gen. xxxii 1-32.)†



WHEN Jacob had by treachery secured the birthright and the father's blessing, "Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him; and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob." Rebekah heard of Esau's purpose, and she told Jacob of it, and said to him:—

"Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban, my brother, to Haran; and tarry with him a few days until thy brother's fury turn away; until thy brother's anger turn from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him; then will

I send and fetch thee from thence." Gen. xxvii. 41-45.

Alas, poor woman, she little knew the depth of fury that was in Esau's heart. He was a "profane person," and "did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever." Amos i. 11. The "few days" had lengthened into twenty years, but never had Rebekah dared send for Jacob. Now, after long exile, he was venturing

back, driven by unbearable oppression in the place whither he had fled for safety.

Uncertain as to the state of Esau's mind, Jacob sent messengers ahead to greet him, and to seek his favour; but these had returned, bringing the alarming news that they had met Esau coming to meet him with four hundred men. The situation was most critical, and Jacob might well be "greatly afraid and distressed."

But Esau's company was not the only

vincible without striking a blow. What a blessed thing to know ourselves as part of "the whole family in heaven and earth." Jacob saw the angels of God, and called it God's host—*mahaneh*; then he saw his own feeble company, and straightway doubled it—*Mahanaim*—two hosts. It is as though God's hosts of angels, strong and mighty as they are alone, have double power when doing service for those who shall be heirs of salvation.

It was night, and the next day Jacob

must meet his revengeful brother. How could he face him? There was only one way: he must first meet God. So, having done all that lay in his power to provide for the safety of his family, he remained alone by the brook Jabbok, to have a season of secret prayer. He must know that there was no separation between himself and God, before he could meet his



THE JABBOK—WHERE JACOB WRESTLED.

band that was ahead of Jacob and his family. Before this, as he went on his way, "the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host; and he called the name of the place Mahanaim," that is, "two hosts, or camps."

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." There were two companies encamped on the plain,—one with no strength at all, and the other with all power,—and between them they were in-

angry brother. Now it is sin alone that separates men from God, and prevents Him from exercising His strong arm in their defence; therefore we know that Jacob went to the secret place of prayer to confess his sin to God, and to receive the assurance of pardon and of union with God. What a grand thing it was that years before he had learned the way into the house of God.

"AND Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a Man with him until the break-

†International Sunday-school Lesson for Sept. 15.

ing of the day. And when He saw that He prevailed not against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, Let Me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me. And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked Him, and said, Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy name. And He said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after My name? And He blessed him there."

WE read of Jacob that "by his strength he had power with God. Yea, he had power over the Angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto Him; he found Him in Bethel, and there He spake with us; even the Lord of hosts; the Lord is His memorial." Hosea xii. 3-5. It was "by his strength" that Jacob prevailed. And what was his strength? It was his helplessness. Jacob wrestled all night with one whom he supposed was a man seeking to take his life; but when that mysterious stranger touched his thigh and put it out of joint, he knew that he was in the presence of God. Then what did he do? He most certainly did the only thing that a man under such circumstances, with his thigh suddenly put out of joint, could do—he threw his arms round the neck of the angel for support.

And now a wonderful thing happens: the victor turns suppliant. He who had power utterly to disable Jacob with a light touch, begs the stricken, clinging man to let Him go. What does this show?—That God cannot tear Himself away from the helpless one that clings to Him for support. He is the Almighty, and can easily loose the joints of the stoutest wrestler, but He cannot unloose the arms that confidently clasp His neck. Jacob caught at that word, "Let Me go," and declared, "I will not." Ah, with what boldness we may draw near to God. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

Do not fail to notice how Jacob first began His request to God. He said, "Thou saidst, Lord, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." Gen. xxxii. 12. He pleaded God's promise. He told God what He had said; and when one does that, and

remembers that God cannot lie, he has the things that he asked for. Only one thing is necessary to enable anyone to have all good things that He needs, and that is to believe that God is true.

FROM henceforth Jacob had a new name. Up to that time he had been the "supplanter,"—the one who in the battle of life would stoop to take a mean advantage of his brother, and, catching him by the heel, would trip him up. But that method could not give him a real victory. He earned the name Israel—prince, overcomer, by yielding himself up.

Now we know who are Israel. They are the sons who overcome. No matter what the nationality—the man who has power in prayer with God, is an Israelite. The first one who received the name was a Syrian; since then men of every nation under heaven have been enrolled by that name in God's book.

SUCH ones have power indeed. "He that overcometh, and keepeth My words unto the end," says the Lord, "to him will I give power over the nations." Rev. ii. 26, 27. No enemy can stand before the face of the man who can stand before the face of God. He who can see God face to face and have his life preserved, need have no fear of man. Esau's fury was disarmed while Jacob was weeping in the arms of God. Before that Jacob was afraid, but he said, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee;" and then, having seen the Lord, he could say, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid."

"I TELL YOU OF THEM."

BEHOLD, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." Isa. xlii. 9. The foregoing is the Word of the Lord, and it is both true and encouraging. The Lord declares "new things." And the most wonderful part of it is that our heavenly Father can say in truth, "Before they spring forth I tell you of them."

This infinite foreknowledge is not seen alone in the field of prophecy. While it is true that the Lord has foretold the history of the world in advance, it is also true that He has foreseen every perplexity, and need, and sin, and failure of mankind, and has caused a Book to be written that meets every case.

The man who is well-nigh sinking in despair may turn to God's great Book, and find principles set forth, and unfailing promises given, that will fill his soul with an unconquerable courage. And it makes no difference what is the nature of the trouble, or what the varied temperaments and dispositions that are called to pass through these afflictions; the Lord foresaw it all, and caused promises to be set as gems in His Word to meet the peculiarities of each. And thus does the Lord show how much He has thought about us. He has gone into the details of each life so as to discover every difficulty that would arise, and then framed power-laden promises to meet them. How wonderful this is! And how it should fill our souls with confidence in the Lord! It is not alone in the great affairs that go to make up the history of the nations that the Lord has exercised His foreknowledge, but in every one of the individual trials that we each have to meet, He has made it strikingly manifest that "before they spring forth I tell you of them."

The individual who has a living experience in the truth of the Lord finds indescribable delight in his personal knowledge of these Divine facts. The one who does not have this personal experience, and who is naturally inclined to quibble, may wish to argue the matter. But it is not a matter for argument; it is a matter of fact and experience. We do not argue with men to convince them that there is a moon; we simply point them to the orb of night when she is shining in her strength, and tell them to behold her. If a man should desire to argue with us against the reality of the moon's being in the heavens, we would consider the matter too ridiculous for serious consideration. A fact is a fact, and the only thing we can do is to accept it. It is a waste of time and also a manifest weakness to indulge in arguments about the authenticity of established facts.

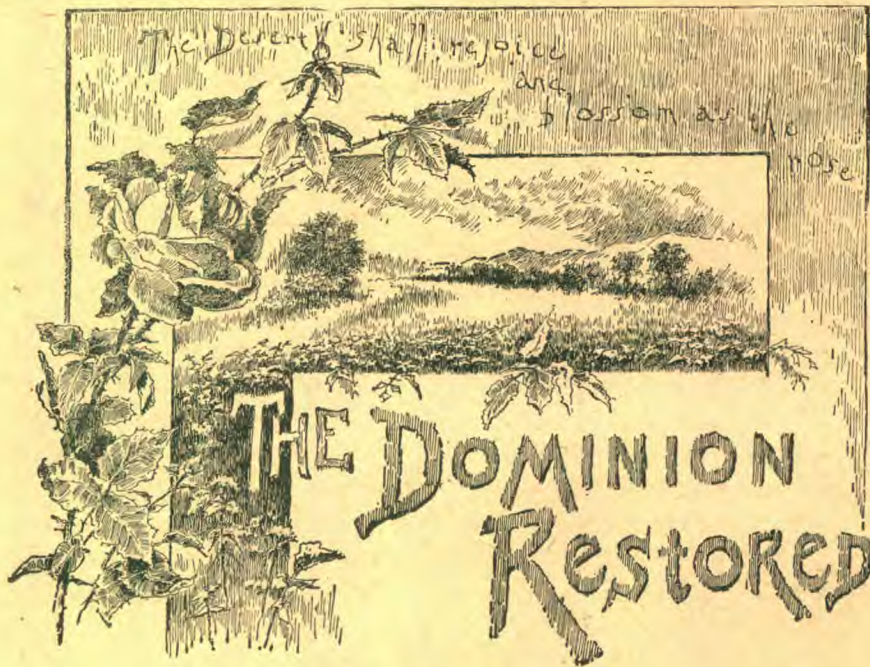
Christians should spend their time in learning the truths of God's Word, and as they do this they will be gaining experiences day by day that will enable them to affirm these truths so clearly that they will carry a conviction that cannot be made by mere argument. It is said of Christ, "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Matt. vii. 29. When the Master taught, He told them what He knew to be true; consequently He could speak with "authority." He is our Example in all things. We should learn His methods of presenting the Gospel.

As we learn more and more of the breadth and fulness of the Lord's foreknowledge; as we see more and more how fully this applies to every detail of our lives; as we read God's promises, our minds filled with amazement at the thought of their being so framed thousands of years ago that they apply accurately to our cases just now, how ardently can we say, "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise

from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit; let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise in the islands." Isa. xlii. 10-12. A. O. TAIT.

spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, *changed the ordinance*, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." Isa. xxiv. 3-6. He further says: "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and *not rise again*." Verses 19, 20.

Again: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but My salvation shall be for ever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished." Chap. li. 6. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," says Christ; "but My words shall not pass away." Luke xxi. 33.



A NEW EARTH.

WHEN any essential article becomes seriously damaged or destroyed, it is necessary to replace it with a new one. The earth is not an exception to this rule. A clean, pure earth, inhabited by a righteous people, is essential to the eternal purpose of God. In accordance with this purpose, He made the earth "good" in the first place, and made the first man and woman "upright." His purpose has not yet changed; for although the first pair fell from their high estate, entailing sin and death upon the race and a curse upon the earth, He still promises an earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, an earth that abideth for ever, an earth whose foundations shall not be removed, an earth filled with the glory of the Lord, an earth peopled with the saints of the Most High, and upon which there shall be no more curse.

"THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD."

In contrast with this eternal purpose and these infallible promises, let us note some of the things that are said of the present earth, and of its inhabitants.

Because of the fall, death passed upon

all men, because all have sinned. Rom. v. 12. The earth was cursed three times because of sin; first, because of Adam's sin, and again because of Cain's conduct, and a third time by the action of the flood, which greatly marred its beauty and depreciated its fertility. Before the flood, because of sin, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. vi. 5. And that under the present conditions there can be no better state of affairs, is seen by the fact that Satan holds the dominion, being the "prince of this world," even of the "power of the air." John xiv. 30; Eph. ii. 2. Job's testimony is that "the earth is given into the hand of the wicked; he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?" Job ix. 24. A further proof is found in the prophecy of Christ, that as it was in the days of Noah, so it would be at His coming again to earth. Matt. xxiv. 37-39.

DESTRUCTION OF THIS EARTH.

ISAIAH prophesied of the present earth, that "the land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath

A NEW EARTH A NECESSITY.

In view of all these conditions and prophecies and promises, a new earth is a foregone conclusion, an absolute necessity. And this is contemplated in the plan of redemption. When the Lord redeems a man, He makes of him a "new creature." While in this life he retains the same appearance, but he is a new creature by virtue of having the Spirit of Christ in him. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. v. 17. But in the resurrection he comes up with a new, glorified body by virtue of the same Spirit. Rom. viii. 11. "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [the living] shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. xv. 51-53. This is how the righteous are finally and fully prepared for their everlasting inheritance. The process, from conversion to the full fruition of their hope, is a new creation—the passing of the old and the creation of the new.

As with the sinner, so it is with the old

sin-cursed, decaying earth; in its present marred and polluted condition it must pass away. It must be renovated and cleansed of every sign that sin ever reigned upon it, and be recreated, or made "very good," as in the original creation. The terrible consequences of disobedience of the law of God, and of Satanic opposition to all righteousness, will then have been fully demonstrated before all the universe, and the whole drama of wickedness will be closed. The justice and the love of God will have been fully vindicated and appreciated, and never again will there be a dissenting voice from His absolute rule. All will realise that His "yoke is easy" and "His burden is light," and that "His commandments are not grievous." "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. v. 13.

GOD'S PURPOSE NOT DEFEATED.

THE purpose of God was not defeated by sin. Satan, who rebelled and made war, and was cast out of heaven (Rev. xii. 7-10), obtained by deceit the dominion of earth for a time. He was allowed to run a short race, that his true character might be revealed to all the universe. But his time is short (verse 12), and his utter overthrow is assured by the unfailing Word. The time is set; this even his angels know. Matt. viii. 28, 29; Mark i. 23, 24. Then the second Adam will take the dominion which the first Adam lost. Micah iv. 8. This was the declaration of God to the serpent in Eden (Gen. iii. 15), and it was repeated to the church at Rome by Paul (Rom. xvi. 20).

The few thousand years necessary to allow Satan's character to be fully exposed, and to gather a faithful people to populate the new earth—out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people on this sin-stricken earth—is a very short period in the eternity of God's great plan. Through the sure Word of prophecy the Lord has said: "Behold, I *create* new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I *create*; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." Not only is the earth new, but the inhabitants are a new creation, and the Jerusalem capital is new, created in heaven and brought down bodily.

Peter tells us very plainly that the world before the flood, "being overflowed with water, *perished*." The people all perished but faithful Noah and his family, and the earth never appeared again in its former condition. Then he adds: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Passing on, he tells when and how: it will be "in the day of the Lord," and the "heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. . . . Nevertheless we, according to His promise, *look for* new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." See 2 Peter iii. 5-13.

Peter also reminds us that "there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?" Verses 3, 4. They will be scoffing at this very doctrine, which is so essential to the work of the Gospel. But his solemn advice to the church, in view of God's plain instruction on the subject, is: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." Verses 14, 15.

W. N. GLENN.

THE TWO SIDES IN THE GREAT CONTROVERSY.

SELF-SACRIFICE OR SELF-DEFENCE.

SELF-PRESERVATION is the first law of nature."

But self-sacrifice is the first law of grace.

In order to self-preservation, self-defence is essential.

In order to self-sacrifice, self-surrender is essential.

In self-defence, the only thing that can be employed is force.

In self-surrender, the only thing that can be employed is love.

In self-preservation, by self-defence, through the employment of force, force meets force, and this means only war.

In self-sacrifice, by self-surrender, through love, force is met by love, and this means only peace.

Self-preservation, then, means only war; while self-sacrifice means only peace.

But war means only death. Self-preservation, then, meaning only war, means only death; while self-sacrifice, meaning only peace, means only life.

Self-preservation being the first law of nature, nature then means only death; while self-sacrifice being the first law of grace, grace means only life.

But death only is the wages of sin; nature, then, meaning only death, it is so only because nature means sin; while life, being only the reward of righteousness; grace, meaning only life, it is so only because grace means righteousness.

Sin and righteousness, nature and grace, are directly opposite and antagonistic elements. They occupy realms absolutely distinct. Nature, self-preservation, self-defence, force, war, and death occupy only the realm of sin; grace, self-sacrifice, self-surrender, love, peace, and life occupy only the realm of righteousness.

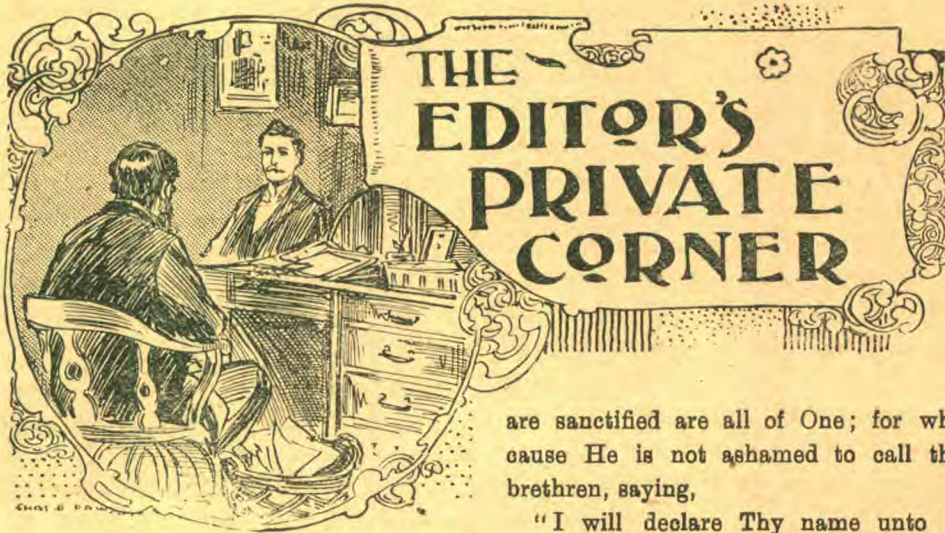
The realm of sin is the realm of Satan. The realm of grace is the realm of God. All the power of the domain of grace is devoted to saving men from the dominion of sin. This in order that, "as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

On which side do you stand in this great controversy? A. T. JONES.

SUPERSTITION IN RUSSIA.

A WRITER in *Scribner's Magazine* says of the Russian people that they are "illiterate in the strict sense of the word, and millions upon millions of people who read no books and no newspapers, write and receive no letters, must inevitably be the helpless victims of superstition and prejudice.

"Russia is the home for more religious manias and crazy notions than could be enumerated. A friend told me of a travelling imposter he had seen, who went from village to village offering, for a small fee, to show some hairs from the head of the Virgin Mary. One person at a time was admitted; a small parcel was produced, and many wrappings taken off in succession, until in the last paper of all the visitor was invited to gaze upon the miraculous hairs. The paper was quite empty, and the peasant would aver that he saw nothing. Then the imposter would sorrowfully explain that the hairs were invisible to sinful eyes, and that only the pious could see them. In order to escape the reproach, the customers would loudly and proudly assert that they saw them clearly, and so he did a brisk trade."



CHRIST OUR BROTHER.

"Who is the 'him' spoken of in Heb. ii. 13? The reason why I ask this question is this: to me it seems, from the context, that 'him' must refer to man. From a human standpoint at least, it seems exceedingly strange that God, Christ, could put His trust in man,—and still that is just what it seems to me He did when He risked everything to save him. I have asked several concerning this word, and nearly all, including our very best Bible students, or readers, have thought that 'him' has reference to the Father, in whom Christ put His trust when He took upon Himself to save man. Now I do not doubt for a moment that Christ always trusted in the Father, but I fail to see the logic of Paul's presenting that fact in such a connection, for he is just giving some Scripture evidences that Christ is not ashamed to call man His brother.

"I would be very thankful for an answer to this question. If it is *man*, it is plain enough to me, and a most wonderful thought; while if it be *God*, I would be glad to have a word of explanation as to how that can be harmonised with the context."

LET us first ascertain from the text and the context exactly what the writer says, and then we can take a little time to consider the reason why he says it, and the lesson that it contains for us.

The passage, as you well know, sets forth Christ's oneness with man. The first chapter of Hebrews presents Christ as greater than the angels,—the effulgence of God, and having by birthright inheritance the name of God,—while the second chapter presents Him in man's place, in all things "made like unto His brethren." Man, crowned in the beginning with glory and honour, a king, has lost his crown of glory, and well-nigh obliterated the Divine likeness from his soul. Still, however far he has wandered, the prodigal is the Father's son, having the same Source of life as Christ, the only-begotten Son. It is this that is stated, and supported by citations from Christ's words, in the following verses:—

"Both He that sanctifieth and they who

are sanctified are all of One; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying,

"I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee.

"And again, I will put My trust in Him.

"And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given Me."

Here are three distinct sayings of Christ. The first one is from Ps. xxii. 22. The last is from Isa. viii. 18. The second one we must find if we can.

Note first the exact words. "I will put My trust in"—whom? "in *Him*," not in *them*. If the brethren were referred to, we should expect it to read, "I will put My trust in *them*;" but it is not so. He says, "I will put My trust in *Him*," evidently in the One of whom are both "He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified."

Let us now see if we can find any place where these words here quoted are used. Negatively, we may read John ii. 23–25:—

"Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in His name, because they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man." Or, as in the Revision, "Jesus did not trust Himself unto them."

This seems quite conclusive. We may add to it the frequent warnings against putting trust in man. For instance: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help." Ps. cxlvi. 3. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Ps. cxviii. 8.

"We are the circumcision [the true children of faith], which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil. iii. 3. And so far is this carried, that it applies even to Christ's flesh; for the same apostle says: "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now

henceforth know we Him no more." 2 Cor. v. 16.

Christ did not even trust in Himself as man, for He said: "I can of Mine own self do nothing;" and, "Verily, verily I say, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do." John v. 30, 19.

These statements are sufficient on the one side; let us now look at the other side.

Jesus did trust absolutely in God. Even His enemies admitted this. When He hung on the cross, they said: "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him." Matt. xxvii. 43. It is significant that these words are an exact fulfilment of Ps. xxii. 7, 8. That psalm is the expression of Christ's sufferings, and it is from it that we have the first of the sayings quoted in Heb. ii. 11–13. In it we find several plain statements to the effect that Christ put His trust in God. Thus: "Thou art He that took Me out of the womb; Thou didst make Me trust when I was upon My mother's breasts." Verse 9.

Read also Ps. xxi. 7: "For the King trusteth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High He shall not be moved."

The sixty-ninth psalm, which is manifestly the utterance of Christ, is a psalm of trust.

Read also Isa. l. 7–9, the words of Him who gave His back to the smiters, and His cheek to those that plucked off the hair; that hid not His face from shame and spitting: "The Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be moved."

Here is a plain statement concerning Christ, "who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1 Peter ii. 23.

And lastly, as showing how absolutely He was in all things like unto His brethren, we read in Heb. v. that "in the days of His flesh" He prayed for deliverance "with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him," just as the weakest one of us is constrained to do.

Now I know that you have been almost impatient while we have been reading these texts, because your real difficulty has not been touched. The fact that Christ trusted in God for everything here on earth, even for deliverance from the power of temptation, you know as well as I; your question is, "What reason is there for mentioning that fact in the second

chapter of Hebrews, to show that He is not ashamed to call man His brother?" Why, that is just what most strikingly shows His relationship to us,—His oneness with humanity. If He had nothing in common with us, He might be ashamed to call us brethren; but "compassed with infirmity," compelled to trust God for deliverance just as we must,—His nature our nature,—He is our Brother; He is one with us in all things. We can go to Him with our confidences more freely than to any earthly friend, because we know that by painful experience He can sympathise with us better than anybody on earth. He will not despise us on account of our weakness, because He Himself knows by experience how utterly helpless is humanity. Nothing of myself that I can reveal to Him will surprise Him, or cause Him to turn away in scorn; for He has struggled with all the besetments of our common human nature.

But He sinned not; and as surely as He is our Brother, His victory is our victory. Nothing can bring Him more lovingly and tenderly and helpfully near to us than these words of His, "I will put My trust in Him." In this He identifies Himself absolutely with us, and that is our assurance of perfect victory. "As He is, so are we in this world," because as we are, so is He.



"READY TO EVERY GOOD WORK."

It is sheer stupidity, with our present knowledge, to eat and drink in a fashion that will prematurely clog our arteries with lime, or induce, in good Cowper's words, the

Pangs arthritic that infest the toe
Of libertine excess.

Stupidity is it also, on life's working side, because we cannot do everything we did of old, to decide to do nothing. What mean you, brother worker, by your talk of "retiring"? Has your brain retired from ideas, or your nerve and muscular system from its functions? What are they here for but for work, and the best they can do? If you are retiring from a lower work to a higher, from a narrow to a broader, well. But let none of us commit the treason to the kingdom in us of base surrender to idleness and sloth.—*Christian World.*

LOVE'S SHADOW.

STANDING in sunny garden-peace one day,
I heard a lisping voice, and looking down,
Saw, childwise-lifted, pleading face
And eyes of brown
Of my sweet baby daughter, May.
"Tiss me," she said,
And balanced tiptoe in her birdlike grace,
The bonnet tumbling from her golden head.
I stooped, with sudden rapture wild,
To kiss my child,
When, with a little sobbing start of dread,
"O papa! 'oo put out my sun!" she cried,
"And I's a'fraid!"
Ah, true! to kiss my little maid
I needs had flung my shadow over her:
And, lo! the earth, the flow'rs, the heaven
darkened were,
And her child-soul was terrified!

So God, sometimes—aye, very oft!—
Stooping to kiss His child, His precious one,
With tenderness so swift and soft,
Shuts out with face divine the earthly sun,
And seems to shadow whom He loves. Ah me,
We are so blind unto His way!
Like baby May,
Love's passing shade is all of love we see.

O gracious Father! pity these our ways.
Our childish ways and thoughts! here at thy feet
Like babes we stand,
Loving Thee with a love not yet complete,
So easily offended, sensitive,
Yet unto Thee, like child's love, very sweet,
The pearl of all that we can give
Into Thy hand.
Better, perhaps, our love should not be wise,
Thou seest us through and through
With Thy so pitiful and tender eyes,
And smilest, as we do
On children, loving them the more
For sweet allowances made o'er and o'er.
—James Buckham.

HOW DO YOU REGARD TRIALS AND DIFFICULTIES?

THE thorn and the thistle—the difficulties and trials that make his life one of toil and care—were appointed for his good, as a part of the training needful in God's plan." The greatest blessings do not necessarily come to us on the Mount of Transfiguration. Frequently some Garden of Gethsemane, where, forsaken of men, our hearts are crushed because of the agony that weighs upon them, and our courage grows faint, is the very experience that brings an angel to our side to strengthen us.

We know that "all things work together for good to them that love God." The trials and temptations that even the wicked man has to pass through are the best experiences the Lord can trust him with, but he sees in them only disadvantages and obstructions, and becomes more embittered by them; while the righteous

man knows that they are sent for his good, to help bring out some trait of character that has before lain dormant. "Occasions of stumbling; . . . it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh." Matt. xviii. 7, R.V.

In his gymnastic training the athlete has hurdles placed before him, to test his ability to leap over them. They are necessary for his development. In the same way God permits stumbling-blocks to be put in our way, simply to develop our spiritual muscles. They must "needs be." When we have acquired the strength and ability and moral courage to surmount the highest one that the devil can invent, the Lord will say, "It is enough; come up higher."

May we all be able to say, with Paul, "But I would that ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel." Phil. i. 12.

DAVID PAULSON, M.D.

WITH POWER AND GREAT GLORY.

CHRIST'S second coming will be in marked contrast with His first coming. Then His glory was veiled with the garb of humanity. He came with no outward manifestation of glory. When He comes the second time, His divinity will not be concealed. He will come with His own glory and the glory of His Father. He will come as One equal with God, as His beloved Son, the Prince of heaven and earth. Instead of a crown of thorns, He will wear a crown of glory. Instead of a garment of humility, He will be clad in a garment of royalty. Upon His vesture will be written the name, "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

At His first coming, Christ was denied and rejected of men, and by them dragged as a criminal to Pilate's bar, where they charged Him with blasphemy. He was scourged and crucified. Nails were driven through His hands and feet. For three hours He hung on the cross, while His enemies said, tauntingly: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God."

At His second coming, the scene is changed. He is acknowledged by all as the King of Glory. At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Lord of heaven and earth, to the glory of God the Father. The angels bow in adoration before Him. His enemies see the mistake they have made, and every tongue confesses His divinity.

Christ's glory did not appear when He

was upon this earth. He was then a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Men hid their faces from Him. But He was following the path God had marked out for Him. Still bearing humanity, He ascended to heaven, triumphant and victorious. He has taken the blood of His atonement into the Holiest of all, sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat and His own garments, and blessed the people. Soon He will appear the second time to declare that there is no more sacrifice for sin. His believing ones have made their calling and their election sure. They come forth at the first resurrection, and by innumerable voices is sung the song: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Christ is soon to come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Are we preparing to meet Him in peace, to be among that number in whom, when He comes, He can be admired? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

AND THE REFORMATION IS NOT ENDED YET.

M^R. C. H. SPURGEON once graphically described the process by which the early church was paganised. He said:—

The greatest curse, perhaps, that ever visited the world came upon it in this way: Certain vain-glorious preachers desired to convert the world at a stroke, and to make converts without the work of the Spirit. They saw the people worshipping their gods, and they thought that if they could call these by the names of saints and martyrs the people would not mind the change, and so they would be converted. The idea was to Christianise heathenism.

They virtually said to idolaters, "Now, good people, you may keep on with your worship, and yet you can be Christians at the same time. This image of the Queen of Heaven at your door need not be moved. Light the lamp still; only call the image 'our Lady' and 'the Blessed Virgin.' Here is another image; don't pull it down, but change its name from Jupiter to Peter." Thus with a mere change of names they perpetuated idolatry; they set up their altars in the groves, and upon every high hill, and the people were converted without knowing it—converted to a baser heathen-

ism than their own. They wanted priests, and lo, there they were, robed like those who served at the altars of Jove. The people saw the same altars and sniffed the same incense, kept the same holy days, and observed the same carnivals as aforetime, and called everything by Christian names.

Hence came what is now called the Roman Catholic religion, which is simply fearing God and serving other gods. Every village has its own peculiar saint, and often its own particular black or white image of the Virgin, with miracles and wonders to sanctify the shrine. This evil wrought so universally that Christianity seemed in danger of extinction from the prevalence of idolatry, and it would have utterly expired had it not been of God, and had He not therefore once more put forth His hand and raised up reformers, who cried out, "There is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man." Brave voices called the church back to her allegiance and to the purity of her faith. As for any of you who are trying to link good and evil, truth and falsehood together, beware of the monstrous birth which will come of such an alliance: it will bring on you a curse from the Most High.

A KINDRED SPIRIT.

OH, the blessing it is to have a friend to whom we can speak fearlessly on any subject, with whom one's deepest, as well as one's most foolish thoughts come out simply and safely! Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort, of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all right out just as they come, chaff or grain together, certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keeping what is worth keeping, and then, with the breath of kindness, blow the rest away!—*Dinah Mulock Craik.*

CHRIST KNOWS THE CROWD.

H^E knows the crowd with all its sin, with all its sorrow, with all its secrets. You remember the remarkable words written in the second chapter of the Gospel of John—"He Himself knew what was in man." Have you never said to a person about a third person, "Oh, but if you only knew, you would not be so friendly"? You never can say that to Christ about anyone. He does know, and He is friendly.

It was Charles Kingsley who said, "We may choose to look at the masses in the gross as subjects of statistics, and of course, where possible, for profit; but there is One who knows every thirst and ache and sorrow and temptation of every slattern and gin-drinker and street boy." I would to God the Church would begin to believe

that great Gospel which Kingsley so powerfully preached.

He knows; there is nothing you can tell Him about man that He does not understand, and there is nothing in your heart that He does not understand; no secret passion subdued for the sake of outward respectability but still reigning, that He does not know. His eyes are eyes of flame, and although they fall upon you with the gentleness of the sunlight they pierce and see into the deepest recesses of your nature; and not yours alone, not mine alone, but all the crowd.

While sometimes we are meeting together and talking to one another, and wondering whether after all it is worth while going on, whether it is worth while spending ourselves to save these ungrateful sort of people, wondering whether after all the masses are not unworthy, He has answered the question for ever, He who knows the masses as we never can know them, every person composing them as we can know no single person, to the last inch of the territory of their being, to the last possibility of evil that lurks within.

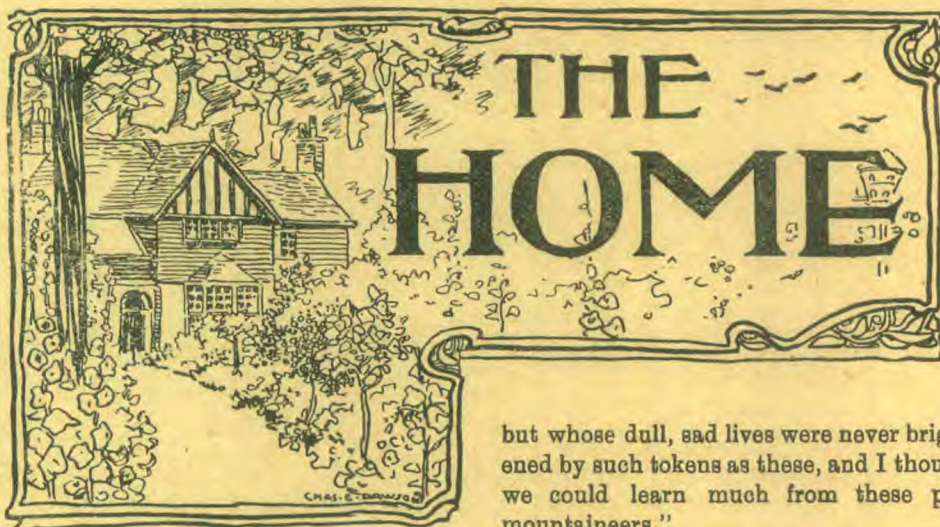
And yet, knowing everything, what did He do? He said to heaven and earth and hell, "These people are worth dying for," and He died. He knew, He knows; and remember, dear worker for God, when you have got a hard case to deal with—that man that signed the pledge a hundred times and has broken out again—Christ knows him, and died for him. And never forget when after some sacrificial service on behalf of some girl, and that girl has proved ungrateful and unkind to you, never forget Christ knows and loves that girl and died for her.

Oh, to have the vision of Christ, to have His estimate of human nature, is also to have His passion for men, and to be ready with Him, in some far-off distant way, to die for men.—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

A TRUST FROM GOD.

ALL that we receive from God is a trust for the good of others. We are not released from obedience to the law of Christ, which is to bear one another's burdens. We are to avoid a perilous example by which the weaker brother is injured; we are not to wrap ourselves in the robes of a self-indulgent life. It is only Cain-like hypocrisy and selfishness and un-Christ-like indifference that can ask to-day, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The soul is lost that wishes to be saved alone.—*Selected.*

"It requires pluck to be patient. Perhaps you don't believe this, but just try it the next time a tedious task is before you, or a wearisome pain to be borne. Patience isn't a tame, colourless virtue. It is born of courage and will power. There is a pluck to bear as fine as any pluck to do."



"A TONE of pride or petulance repressed,
A selfish inclination firmly fought,
A shadow of annoyance set at naught,
A measure of disquietude suppressed,
A peace in importunity possessed,
A reconciliation generously sought,
A purpose put aside, a banished thought,
A word of self-explaining unexpressed,—
Trifles they seem, these petty soul restraints;
Yet he who proves them so must needs possess
A constancy and courage, grand and bold;
They are the trifles which have made the saints.
Give me to practise them in humbleness,
And nobler power doth no man hold."

RESPECT FOR THE AGED.

NOT long since I read the following beautiful little story, which I wish to repeat. A private letter from a lady who was spending some time among the peasants of Tyrol, said:—

"The morning after our arrival we were awakened by the sound of violin and flutes under the window, and hurrying down, found the little house adorned as for a feast—garlands over the door and wreathing a high chair which was set in state.

"The table was already covered with gifts brought by the young people whose music we had heard.

"The whole neighbourhood were kins-folks, and these gifts came from uncles, aunts, and cousins in every far-off degree. They were very simple, for the donors are poor—knitted gloves, a shawl, baskets of flowers, jars of fruit, loaves of bread, but upon all some little message of love was pinned. 'Is there a bride in this house?' I asked my landlady.

"'Ach nein!' she said. 'We do not make such doings for our young people. It is the grandmother's birthday.'

"The grandmother, in her spectacles, white apron, and high velvet cap, was a queen all day, sitting in state, to receive visits, and deal out slices from a loaf of sweet bread to all who came. I could not but remember certain grandmothers at home, just as much loved as she, probably,

but whose dull, sad lives were never brightened by such tokens as these, and I thought we could learn much from these poor mountaineers."

Yes, indeed. Let us each learn a lesson from this peasant custom. In this age of rush and hurry, we are apt to forget these delicate tender attentions to the aged. If their general wants are supplied, we feel our duty is done. We leave the old folks to entertain themselves. We may think because grandpa and grandma are old, they care for naught outside their room. This, I think, is a mistake. True, the great, busy, outside world is fast fading from their view. They are, in a certain sense, no longer a part of it. They no longer stand upon life's busy highway. They cannot take their place in life's hardest battles. No, they are now on the retired list, as it were; but do not for a moment think they have lost all interest in the great outside world.

I once knew a man who made no profession of religion, who opened his fine home to prayer-meetings, that his aged father, nearly one hundred years old, might enjoy the society of the praying people in that community.

Old people often experience a loneliness the young are strangers to. Especially is this the case if the partner of early life is gone, and the aged husband or wife is left alone. Perhaps not one friend of their early life is left with whom they may speak of events which transpired in their younger days; and a feeling of loneliness comes over them which can be realised only by those who have experienced it. Their eyes may have become dim, so that it is hard for them to read; their hands palsied, so that they can no longer work; their feet feeble, so they cannot walk. True, such may sit in an easy chair in a warm corner; but unless something is also done to interest their mind, or their social wants are met, they will experience many lonely hours, much heart-hunger and yearning for companionship. Right here is where so many fail in their care of old people; having provided for their physical wants, some feel their whole duty is done.

Such provisions are right, and should be made to the extent of one's means; but their temporal comforts are not all they need. If the aged ones are under your

own roof, or in the home of your childhood, visit them as often as possible. Tell bits of cheery news; carry some little token of love to lay in their hands. Bring all the sunshine you can into their lives. If you are out, away from the dear old folks, write to them often, bright, cheering letters. Let them know you do not forget them. It will help to brighten their life wonderfully. Treat the aged, wherever you meet them, with tenderness and respect, whether they are your kin or not.

I know full well that all old people are not saints. Some are hard to get along with, are unreasonable and selfish, the same as are younger people. Nevertheless treat them with kind consideration. Love is more effectual than coldness and neglect. Treat them as you will wish you had, when called to render an account unto God.

Mrs. M. C. DuBois.

WHAT TO CARRY.

IF you are going to a neighbour's, child, carry something worth while," said the dear old grandmother, looking out from the kitchen window.

I was a very small girl, delighted with a bright little basket which someone had given me, and eager to show it to a play-mate next door. I was filling it with hard, green peaches, which the wind had swept from the trees.

"I'm only playing take her something," I explained; but the wise old grandmother insisted on the basket being emptied.

"Think what you can share with her that is worth carrying," she said. "There are too many folks travelling to and fro with trash that the wind brings to their doors—things fit for nobody's mouth. Mind what grandma tells you, dearie,—you'll understand it better when you grow older,—don't run with every bitter windfall you can gather up, but learn to carry things worth carrying."

She filled the basket with cakes and rosy apples, and sent me on my way rejoicing. The incident, like the grandmother's life, is long since past, but many a time I have remembered it when visitors have brought me things worthless, or worse than worthless—flying rumours, inquisitive intermeddlings, articulated bits of somebody's family skeleton, if not, indeed, positive scandal.

Why should we carry unpleasant things when the world is so full of bright and helpful ones? The sad and sinful things exist, and we cannot shut our eyes to them. No law of charity requires us to call black white, and no law of kindness requires us to part with our common sense. The wrong is wrong, and we must face it, and deal with it as best we may; but why treat it as a dainty to be served at the family table, or carry it about for the delectation of our friends?

The beautiful poem we have read, the bright story that brings a healthful laugh, the brave deed that has deepened our faith in humanity, the good tidings that have come to an acquaintance, the wonderful discoveries of science, the mighty forces that are sweeping and changing the world, —surely there is enough of all these to fill the baskets we carry to our neighbours, and to make our visits bring a breath of cheer and inspiration instead of poisoning all the atmosphere.—*Forward.*

ADVICE ON READING.

NOBODY can be sure, says Mr. John Morley, that he has got clear ideas on a subject unless he has tried to put them down on a piece of paper in independent words of his own. It is an excellent plan, too, when you have read a good book, to sit down and write a short abstract of what you can remember of it.

It is a still better plan, if you can make up your mind to a slight extra labour, to do what Lord Strafford, and Gibbon, and Daniel Webster did. After glancing over the title, subject, or design of a book, these eminent men would take a pen and write roughly what questions they expected to find answered in it, what difficulties solved, what kind of information imparted. Such practices keep us from reading with the eye only, gliding vaguely over the page; and they help us to place our new acquisitions in relation with what we knew before.

It is almost always worth while to read a thing twice over, to make sure that nothing has been missed or dropped on the way, or wrongly conceived or interpreted. And if the subject be serious, it is often well to let an interval elapse. Ideas, relations, statements of facts are not to be taken by storm. We have to steep them in the mind, in the hope of thus extracting their inmost essence and significance. If one lets an interval pass, and then returns, it is surprising how clear and ripe that has become which, when we left it, seemed crude, obscure, full of perplexity.

All this takes trouble, no doubt; but, then, it will not do to deal with ideas that we find in books or elsewhere as a certain bird does with its eggs—leave them in the sand for the sun to hatch and chance to rear. People who follow this plan possess nothing better than ideas half-hatched and convictions reared by accident. They are like a man who should pace up and down the world in the delusion that he is clad in sumptuous robes of purple and velvet, when in truth he is only half covered by the rags and tatters of other people's cast-off clothes.

Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the way of the holy cross.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE TEACHER'S DREAM.

THE weary teacher sat alone
While twilight gathered on;
And not a sound was heard around;
The boys and girls were gone.

The weary teacher sat alone,
Unnerved and pale was he;
Bowed 'neath a yoke of care, he spoke
In sad soliloquy:

"Another round, another round,
Of labour thrown away—
Another chain of toil and pain
Dragged through a tedious day.

"Of no avail is constant zeal,
Love's sacrifice is loss,
The hopes of morn, so golden, turn
Each evening into dross.

"I squander on a barren field
My strength, my life, my all;
The seeds I sow will never grow,
They perish where they fall."

He sighed, and low upon his hands
His aching brow he pressed:
And o'er his frame ere long there came
A soothing sense of rest.

And then he lifted up his face,
But started back aghast—
The room by strange and sudden change
Assumed proportions vast.

It seemed a Senate hall, and one
Addressed a listening throng;
Each burning word all bosoms stirred,
Applause rose loud and long.

The 'wildered teacher thought he knew
The speaker's voice and look,
"And for his name," said he, "the same
Is in my record book."

The stately Senate hall dissolved—
A church rose in its place,
Wherein there stood a man of God,
Dispensing words of grace.

And though he spoke in solemn tone,
And though his hair was grey,
The teacher's thought was strongly wrought
—"I whipped that boy to-day."

The church, a phantasm, vanished soon—
What saw the teacher then?
In classic gloom of alcoved room
An author plied his pen.

"My idlest lad!" the teacher said,
Filled with a new surprise—
"Shall I behold his name enrolled
Among the great and wise?"

The vision of a cottage home
The teacher now descried;
A mother's face illumed the place,
Her influence sanctified.

"A miracle! a miracle!
This matron well I know
Was but a wild and careless child
Not half an hour ago.

"And when she to her children speaks
Of duty's golden rule,
Her lips repeat, in accents sweet,
My words to her at school."

The scene was changed again, and lo!
The schoolhouse rude and old,
Upon the wall did darkness fall,
The evening air was cold.

"A dream!" the sleeper, waking, said,
Then passed along the floor,
And whistling slow and soft and low,
He locked the schoolhouse door.

And walking home his heart was full
Of peace and trust and love and praise,
And singing slow and soft and low,
He murmured, "After many days."

—*Selected.*

THROUGH JAPANESE EYES.

MANY men have many minds," and it is sometimes impossible for one race to comprehend the likings of another. A writer on Japanese customs shows how different the art instinct may be according as it is found in the East or West, the older or younger civilisation. He says:

It is an interesting occupation to study Western facial expression through Oriental eyes. I have frequently amused myself by showing European or American illustrations to Japanese children, and hearing their artless comments upon the faces therein depicted. One evening, I placed before a little boy, nine years old, several numbers of an illustrated magazine. After turning over a few of the pages, he exclaimed:

"Why do foreign artists like to draw horrible things?"

"What horrible things?" I inquired.

"These!" he said, pointing to a group of figures representing voters at the polls.

"Why, those are not horrible!" I answered. "We think those drawings very good."

"But the faces! There cannot really be such faces in the world."

"We think those are ordinary men. Really horrible faces we never draw."

He stared in surprise, evidently thinking that I was not in earnest.

Again, I showed some engravings, representing European beauties, to a little girl of eleven.

"They do not look bad," was her comment; "but they seem so much like men, and their eyes are so big! but their mouths are pretty."

Then I showed her some drawings from life, in a New York periodical.

"Is it true," she asked, "that there are people like those pictures?"

"Plenty," I said. "Those are good, common faces, mostly country folks—farmers."

"Farmers! They are like demons."

"No," I answered, "there is nothing very bad in those faces. We have faces in the West which are very much worse."

"Only to see them," she exclaimed, "I should die! I do not like this book."

I set before her a Japanese picture-book, and she clapped her hands joyously, and pushed my poor foreign magazine out of the way.

If you have lost a child, remember that for the one that is gone there is no more to do; for those remaining, everything; hide your grief for their sakes,



BOBBY'S POCKET.

OUR Bobby is a little boy of six years or so:
And every kind of rubbish in his pocket he will
stow.
One day he thought he'd empty it (so he again
could stock it),
And 'here's an alphabet of what was found in
Bobby's pocket:

- A was a rosy apple, with some bites out here and there;
- B was a bouncing rubber ball that bounded in the air.
- C was a crispy, crusty cake, with citron on the top;
- D was a dancing donkey that could jump around and hop.
- E was a little robin's egg, all speckled blue and brown;
- F was a fluffy feather that was white and soft as down.
- G was a lively grasshopper, whose legs and wings were green;
- H was a grimy handkerchief that once perhaps was clean.
- I was a plaster image that had lost its plaster head;
- J was a jolly jumping-jack all painted blue and red.
- K was a keen and shining knife, 'twould out the toughest bark;
- L was a little wooden lion, strayed out of Noah's ark.
- M was a marble, large and round, with colours bright and clear;
- N was a bent and rusty nail, of little use, I fear.
- O was a tiny oil-can, which was always upside down;
- P was a penny Bob had saved to spend some day in town.
- Q was a quilted ear-tab, which had lost its velvet mate;
- R was a ring with glassy gem of wondrous size and weight.
- S was a string, a piece of soap, a stone, a sponge, a stick;
- T was a lump of toffy, exceeding soft and thick.
- U, an umbrella-handle of silver-mounted horn;
- V was a comic valentine, a little creased and worn.
- W was some sticky wax, lovely to pinch and mould;
- X was an old express receipt, worn out in every fold.
- Y was a lot of yellow yarn, all bunched up like a mop;
- Z was a jagged piece of zinc, found in a plumber's shop.

All these are Bob's possessions; he loves each single thing.
And owning all these treasures, he is happy as a king.

—Carolyn Wells, in *Little Folks*.

"A HANDFUL OF CORN."



HERE shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains." Ps. lxxii. 16.

This is a Psalm about Jesus and His Kingdom.

It is full of the splendour of His reign. We see Him sitting on the throne of His glory, whilst the kings fall down before Him, and lay their crowns at His feet. The long train of camels and asses comes bringing the gold of Sheba, and gifts from the isles. His enemies are led in triumph, and are made to lick the dust.

But suddenly, amidst all the glittering pomp and splendour, the Psalmist takes us away to the bleak mountaintop. And standing there, he does not show us the great extent of the Lord's Kingdom, reaching from the river to the ends of the earth; he does not tell us of the gold in the rock, or the gems that will adorn the Saviour's crown. He shows only, "a handful of corn!"

A very little thing to talk about, this—"a handful of corn!"—to leave off singing about gold and kings and costly presents, to speak about a little thing like this! It seems very strange at first.

But, you know, corn is worth more than gold and all this splendour. Everybody wants bread. The king cannot do without it, and the poor beggar must have his crust. It does not matter how rich, or wise, or strong men are, they must have bread, just as much as the poor and weak.

There is a scene in the Bible that you can find, showing that once there was a great scarcity of bread in a country. And the people got out all they had, their golden cups and plates, and all their

precious treasure, and they flung it down before the king, and cried, "Take these; but give us bread, that we may live, and not die!"

Again the cry was for bread. Then they drove up their cattle and sheep and horses and asses, and said, "Take these; but give us bread, that we may live and not die!"

Yet again they needed corn, and they came, saying, "Take us and our lands; we will be slaves; only give us corn for us and our little ones!" Ah, dear children, "a handful of corn" was worth more than all the mountains. It was more than all the gold and all the kingdoms.

And this is like Jesus. *We all need Him.* Children and old folk, the weak and the strong, the rich and the poor,—none can do without Jesus.

And we need Him more than everything. The king in his palace needs Him more than all that He has. There are times when his crown can't help him, and all his wise men are of no avail, and all his wealth and splendour can do nothing for him; but if he has found Jesus, he has more than all the world. So we need not wonder that the Psalmist sang of "a handful of corn."

And there is another reason why the Psalmist chooses to sing about it,—*because it has life in it.* Here is the handful of little, hard, withered seeds—not much to look at. One comes by, and he wonders



what that man can be looking at them for. "Don't waste your time over them," he says, "there is gold in this mountain; you had much better dig for that!" And another comes by, "You'll never make much out of that 'handful of corn,' up in this bleak place; there are diamonds to be had here—much better look for them."

But the man quietly sows his handful of seed, and each seed sends up many stalks, and each stalk has the "full ear," so that his handful of seed has come to a nice little harvest. He brings it home and thrashes it, and next year he sows it again. This time he sows quite a little field of corn, and again there are many stalks and again the full ears, and now he has a stack of corn. And when it is thrashed he needs a barn to keep it in.

Now he begins to enclose new fields, and to plough up new places. Again he

sows it, and again it grows. Now he stands on the top of the mountain to look at it waving in the wind, or still, like fields of ruddy gold in the summer sun. And this year there are many stacks, and the many barns are full. Next year the fields reach down over the mountain side and across the valley. And the man who has dug for gold, comes to change his gold for bread, and the man who has found a diamond sells his diamond to buy bread. And gold and diamonds belong to him who sowed the "handful of corn!"

And so Jesus is like the handful of corn upon the top of the mountains: the prophet tells us that we "esteemed Him not," and "hid as it were our faces from Him;" there was no appearance of greatness in Him, or of power. *But in Him is life.* He comes into our hearts, and we are made like Him, and from us others catch a grain of the good seed, and the life spreads from heart to heart and from soul to soul, until "the whole earth shall be filled with His glory."—*Mark Guy Pearse, in Sermons for Children.*

HIS COMPANIONS.

I KNOW a happy little child,
His years scarce number eight,
Who has no one to play with him,
Not even one small mate.

You'd think he would be lonely?
Ah, that's the strangest part;
Day after day this little boy
Lives close to nature's heart.

He goes into the wind-swept fields,
While yet 'tis early morn,
And wades waist-deep in grass, to say
"Good morning" to the corn.

He fancies that the waving heads
All bow with courteous charm,
And thinks each leaf the breezes sway
A friendly, beckoning arm.

The smiling sunflowers by the fence
Look down with faces gay,
And so he gives them smile for smile,
A hundred times a day.

He's learned in all the mysteries
The maple trees unfold;
They talk to him all summer long,
Till green leaves turn to gold.

He knows and loves the pretty flowers
That bloom beneath his feet;
And e'en the stars look down on him
In benediction sweet.

He's safe in such companionship,
And wiser grows each hour;
For God Himself is teaching him,
Through star and tree and flower.

VIOLA E. SMITH.



TEDDY'S SCHOOL.

TIME for garden work, isn't it, mamma?" called Teddy from the kitchen.

The morning's work was all done; and Teddy, with Ben and Ray, had helped do it.

Mamma was in the dining-room. She had just seated herself in the rocker at the large window to do some sewing.

Teddy had been so busy he had not noticed that it was raining. He did not even hear her tell the boys to take the big umbrella to school with them.

"Come, dear," said mamma, in answer to Teddy's question, "and look out the window."

Teddy bounded joyfully into the room.

"Look out of the window," repeated mamma.

When Teddy stepped to the window, and saw the little raindrops pitter-pattering against the glass, a gloom spread over his face. Just then mamma saw two big tears rolling down his cheeks.

"Oh, I wanted to work in the garden," sobbed Teddy, "and now I can't!"

"Don't cry, dear," said mamma; "let us be very happy for this nice rain. Think how much good it will do the seeds we have planted. We can be happy for that, can't we? And then you know there are many other things that we can do to-day."

Teddy was a little home-school boy. His mamma did not care to send him to day-school: she wished to teach Teddy his first lessons herself. Teddy thought his home school was the best school there could be. Mamma let him play in the big garden every pleasant day.

When mamma said, "There are so many other things that we can do to-day," Teddy smiled and brushed the tears from his eyes.

"Get your marrowfat peas and assorted wires," said mamma. The peas had been soaking in water all night. When Teddy had found them, he sat down in his little red chair by mamma's side.

"A long, long time ago," said she, "the first man was made. God made him, and put him in a garden to work."

Teddy thought that now mamma was going to tell him again about Adam and the garden of Eden. But no; she had another story to tell—a new one, that Teddy had never heard.

"Of all the creatures that were made at

that time, man is the most wonderful," she continued.

"God, who knows all things, saw that man would find true joy in working. He gave man a body so nicely arranged that he could work with ease and comfort. He gave him a head in which was a mind to think, eyes with which to see, ears with which to hear, a nose with which to smell, and a mouth with which to taste. He gave him arms and hands with which to work, and legs and feet with which to walk.

"He put joints in different places in man's body, so he could move the different parts to aid him in his work.

"Did you ever notice any of these joints at work, Teddy? Just bend your arm. Ah, how nicely this joint allows your arm to move backward and forward! Not a creak nor crack do I hear. In machines, joints have to be oiled often, or they will get dry and creak; but God has made the joints in our bodies to oil themselves.

"There are many joints in our bodies. Wherever you can bend any part of your body, you may be sure a joint is to be found.

"I wonder if you can find some of these joints. I think you can. With your peas and wires you may now make some little skeletons. Use the wires for bones, and the peas where you think there should be joints."

Teddy was delighted with his lesson story on joints, and with a few hints from mamma he soon had a little skeleton made. When she had finished her sewing, mamma was surprised to see what a number of



skeletons, in different positions, Teddy had put together. That afternoon at the lesson hour she gave him a piece of heavy, white paper, and suggested that he get his brush and black water-colour paint, and make pictures of some of the best skeletons. Teddy enjoyed this; and after he had made a number of pictures, mamma showed him how, with a few wide strokes of the brush, to make his skeleton-pictures look like dressed boys. This pleased Teddy; and by and by, when he had made all the skeleton-pictures look like dressed boys, he asked, "Mamma, may I make some joint-pictures in my nature painting-book?"

When mamma looked at the pictures he had made, and said, "Yes, you may," Teddy was delighted.

"I b'l'ieve I'll keep two whole pages for skeletons, just to see the different ways the body can be in, on account of joints," he declared.

LYDIA M. DROLL.



SOUTH AFRICAN RAIN.

IN a description of the veld and its people, Julian Ralph, who was a looker-on during the Boer War, says in "An American with Lord Roberts," that the most extraordinary characteristic of the country is its weather. There are remarkable variations of heat and cold, wet and dry. It is unbearably hot all day, chilly half an hour after sunset, and colder and colder as the earth throws off its heat. By two o'clock in the morning you need all the blankets and furs you can live under, as at two o'clock in the afternoon you would throw off your skin if you could.

Nature's manner of making rain is here a very difficult and complicated operation. She does not float a few dark bags of water overhead, according to her usual method, and then empty them on the earth. No; she begins by raising the dust in a peculiarly outrageous form. Suddenly a little corkscrew-shaped column begins whirling in front of you. It whirls and grows, and grows and whirls, until it is as big as a tent, and something near the same shape, except that the point at the top may reach straight up in a brown thread, sixty or eighty feet high.

It whirls and grows, and grows and whirls, until it is half an acre in size, and begins to pick up big planks, and men's coats and hats, and heavy waterproof waggon-covers, and to fling them round in its outermost circle.

At last, when it is full-grown, it turns right about and makes for the camp. Everybody except the sentries rushes for shelter, only to find that shelter from such a demon is unavailing. The dust squeezes under tents, into windows, through crannies and cracks, between the doors and their frames. It sifts through outer clothes and underclothes, and paints every man's skin khaki-coloured. It forces its way under the lids of the cooking-pots, aye, and drives its way into the watch in your pocket and clogs its wheels.

In five minutes it has gone, and then we have an hour of dust-storm, which is the same thing, except that it drives straight ahead and does not whirl.

Then crash comes the thunder, and almost at the same instant a lightning flash which seems to singe the eyeballs. The heavens open and the rain pours down in torrents, with more thunder and lightning to punctuate the showers. The rivers are in flood. Whenever we saw the shallow stream, the Modder, suddenly choking with

liquefied mud, rushing along at twelve miles an hour, and playing havoc with ferries and pontoons, we knew that somewhere in the Free State there had been a deluge.

HOW CHINAMEN KEEP WARM.

A CHINAMAN renders himself independent of floors and carpets by putting a two-inch sole on his shoes, making sure in this way of having a floor under his own feet. A New York paper comments upon the methods by which the Chinese keep warm.

In winter a Chinaman piles garment over garment upon his own back, slips furlined cases over his ears, and envelops his head and neck in a monstrous hood. If driven by cold to the use of fuel, he does not light a fire for the sake of the family at large, but puts his red-hot charcoal balls into the metal vessels which he uses as a footstool, and into the smaller one which he carries in his capacious sleeve for the warming of his hands.

A stout Chinaman is a sight on a cold day, and a little child clad in its winter clothes becomes a most comical object.

He cannot get his arms down to his side; they stick out horizontally; and should he fall, he is as incapable of getting up again as an overturned turtle. However, he is Chinese, and he wastes no strength in vain struggles. He lies where he falls, calm and contented, with his four limbs in mid-air, till some passer-by thinks it worth while to pick him up.

A LAND OF MUSIC-LOVERS.

THE Hungarians are essentially a musical people. The chief pleasure in life to them is music. Hungarians always weep when they hear music. At least, this is the testimony of the leader of a Hungarian band of Gypsy musicians in New York, who has been telling the *Commercial Advertiser* some of the joys of his native land.

Hungarians go off to have a good time, to hear music and weep. It all goes together. At every occasion, every ceremony,—a birth, a marriage, a holiday,—the Gypsy musicians must be present and lead in the joy and weeping. Gypsy music is the passion of the Hungarians.

As you go higher in society it is the same. The nobleman has musicians at his house or castle, and on them he cannot lavish enough. The poor peasant will spend his last cent when moved to tears by Gypsy strains, and young noblemen will spend a fortune on these wandering artists. Many of them become bankrupt in this way.

The Gypsy language is similar to that of the North American Indian. In fact, there

is a strong resemblance between the Indian and the Gypsy. The Gypsy is more intelligent, because he wanders among more intelligent people. There are cultivated or civilised Gypsies and cultivated or civilised Indians, and there are many Gypsies who settle down to civilised life, particularly the Gypsy musicians who go to America to make a fortune.

A story is told of an old nobleman, whose son had been ruined through love of the Gypsies and their music. Just before his death the old man had a party, and invited his friends to come and see him for the last time.

It is a custom in Hungary for dying nobles to receive their friends, and they are always very generous on such occasions, and usually have Gypsies to play for them. The leader of the orchestra upon which the nobleman's son had ruined himself went to the old man's funeral party, expecting to receive a large gift. But judge of his astonishment when the old nobleman, instead of being moved to tears and generosity, was indignant at the sight of him and thought it mere impudence. Quite naturally, too, according to our way of looking at it, whatever the custom may be in Hungary.—*Youth's Companion*.

A DECREASING RACE.

THE aborigines of Australia occupy a lower place in the grade of national life than most of the other native races. When Captain Cook landed at Botany Bay, and took possession of Australia in the name of the British Empire, there were numerous tribes of natives found, all living in a state of benighted savagery.

The natives appear to be somewhat closely allied to the Papuan races of the Malay Archipelago. When first discovered they were found to be a very degraded race, and but little advance has been made in the way of their civilisation. In some parts of Western Australia they are still in a state of savagery, and commit frequent depredations on European life. Their ideas of religion are of the most vague and scanty order. With but few exceptions they have no desire for agriculture or cultivation of any kind. They live chiefly by hunting and fishing. Their ideas of food are of the grossest kind, as they will devour worms, snakes, in fact almost any insect or reptile that they can find in earth, air, forest, or sea.

Several mission stations have been started among them, but for the most part at present these are in a languishing condition. Still there has been some good work done by missionaries among this people. The want of response seems almost to be a national failing.

Early in 1842, when Sir George Gray was Governor of South Australia, he formed a plan of civilising the natives, and

then teaching them Christianity. With this object in view a number of brick cottages were built between Adelaide and Port Augusta for the natives. Efforts were made to induce the natives to live in these houses, but they had finally to be driven into them, and after remaining in these habitations for one night only, they departed, and no power could induce those sons of the forest to enter the cottages again.

Over two hundred tribes of these natives are said to have existed in the early days. Each tribe had a dialect of its own. The spear, the club, and the boomerang were the weapons mostly used in their tribal wars. These implements were also used in hunting.

A boomerang is a peculiar instrument, formed something like an elbow. When thrown by the native, if it does not strike the object aimed at, it returns to the place from which it was thrown.

This race, once numerous, is now rapidly decreasing. The white man's curse, in the shape of rum and tobacco, with social vices, has worked a sad work of death among them.—*Bible Echo*.

THE HOT WATER ORDEAL.

IT is not often that a human being gets through life without learning by experience how great a "power to injure" is contained in a single drop of boiling water. For this reason an article in the *Wide World Magazine*, on the Hot Water Ordeal of the Shintos, will appeal to most people with double force.

It takes place in a peaceful looking temple. Some thirty priests, in gorgeous raiment, conduct a long and elaborate religious service as a preliminary to the ceremony. In front of the temple, in a square bounded by bamboos, two iron cauldrons are set up over crackling wood fires. Drums throb, banners flutter, priests chant, and coolies flit to and fro as attendant spirits on the leaping flames, the hissing, spluttering water.

When all is ready, the devotees who are about to undergo the ordeal appear upon the scene, clad in white. After various preliminaries they seize bamboo branches tightly fastened together, dip them into the boiling water, and then drench themselves with a scalding shower-bath by means of these branches. Again and many times again this performance is repeated, till all the water in the cauldrons is used, the devotees dancing a wild dance all the time, and coming out of the ordeal unhurt, unscalded. The high priest, in his robes of white and gold, gives it as his opinion that the boiling water, if used in faith for a religious purpose, loses its power to hurt.



M. PICTET, a Genevese inventor, has discovered a process which will revolutionise the metallurgical trade. His invention consists of a method for manufacturing oxygen gas at a cost of less than a farthing per cubic yard. Messrs. Galloway, a Manchester firm, have bought the patent at a fabulous price, outbidding American and French firms.

THERE is now in actual operation a new system of telegraphy between Budapest and Fiume, a distance of 375 miles, by which 40,000 words an hour can be transmitted. This is three times faster than the fastest Morse apparatus, and what is more, requires no skilled transcription, as the messages are written in Roman characters. Negotiations are in progress for establishing the system in France and Germany.

IN his report for 1900 the British Consul at Frankfurt (Germany) says the number of post-cards dealt with by the German authorities reached the colossal figure of 736,000,000. "This can only be accounted for," he adds, "by the German mania for souvenir cards. Between August 9 and August 16, although the travelling season was not at its height, the daily average of souvenir post-cards sent was 1,446,938.

Now that the great strike of the Grimsby fishermen has reduced the business of the port almost to nothing, and thousands of its once prosperous inhabitants almost to starvation, it may be interesting to read how the fishing industry has grown within the last fifty years. "In 1854 there were less than five hundred tons of fish landed at the port: in 1860 there were over four thousand, and from then Grimsby carried all before it. In 1870 the fish tonnage had increased to 26,324; in 1880 it was 46,981; in 1890 it reached 71,382; and now it has turned the six-figure corner. The Board of Trade estimated the value of the fish which Grimsby caught in 1899 at no less than a million and three quarters sterling."

WHEN we know that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," the outlook for a country that is so devoted to the sword, and to all that it signifies, as the following item from a Berlin correspondent to a daily paper would indicate, is not at all exhilarating:—

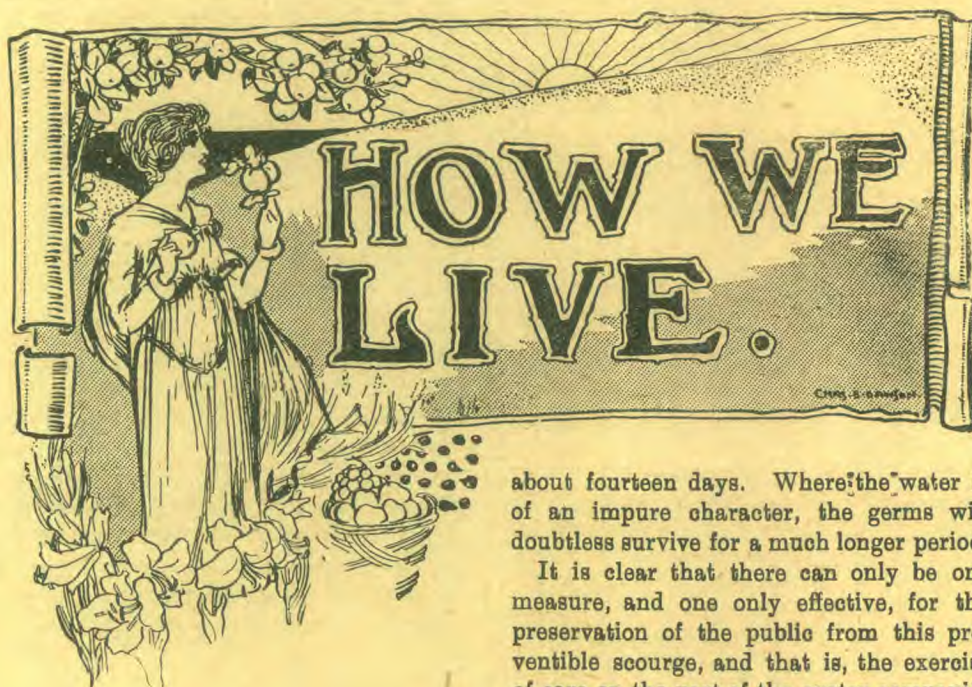
As illustrative of the position assumed by military officers in their dealings with civilians, I might mention an affair which recently happened in the garrison town of Thorn. An officer brought an action against a civilian for an alleged insult, giving his evidence on oath. The civilian was supported by three other witnesses, who denied the accuracy of the officer's statement. The judge, however, declared that the sworn evidence of a Prussian officer could not be impugned, and declined to administer the oath to the defendant's witnesses, giving judgment for the plaintiff.

THE ninety-seventh annual report of the British and Foreign Bible Society has just been issued,

and it contains some very interesting items. The total number of copies of Scripture issued by the Society since its foundation amounts to no fewer than 169,971,554. Last year 845,597 Bibles, 1,308,176 New Testaments, and 2,760,586 portions of the Bible were issued. The Society's list now contains complete Bibles in 100 languages, complete New Testaments in nearly 100 others, and some portion of Scripture in more than 150 others. To print these over 50 different sets of characters are required. Appealing for funds to make up a deficit, the report says: "Hitherto no genuine application from the foreign field for a grant of Scriptures has ever been denied. Hitherto no missionary society's request to print and publish a properly authenticated version of the Scriptures in a new tongue has ever been refused. There is also this significant statement: "As a rule we still experience the cordial and steady co-operation of the Russian Church, in contrast with the sleepless opposition of the Roman Church in all countries where it has power."

It is reported that the fires by which a great part of Russia has been visited this summer are becoming more and more numerous. "Whole towns and villages, manufactories, woods, and moors are being burned, and the extent of the damage which will be suffered by the Government and private uninsured individuals is, according to the estimate of reliable authorities, reaching the vast figure of £10,000,000 sterling." It is estimated that a quarter of a million acres of timber in the imperial forests have been destroyed within the past eight weeks, and that no fewer than 187 villages have been completely or partially burned this summer. There is no doubt but that these fires are incendiary in their origin, and, as usual, the crime is charged to the Jews. This has made the condition of that people much more serious, and several lynchings have occurred.

THE inexorable tyranny of military rule is becoming more and more manifest. Not long since two German soldiers were charged with the murder of an officer. The chief evidence against them was the fact that the dead officer had treated them so outrageously that they might naturally be expected to kill him. One of the accused men has been twice tried and acquitted, but, according to the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, "it is widely felt in army circles that the immunity from punishment of the murderers of Captain Krosigk would be so terrible a blow against discipline, that it is better an innocent man should be executed than no one." It says: "The interests of a solitary individual like Marten must be subordinated to the general interests of the army. Even were he innocent his execution would cause a wholesome fear among the men." Yes, and also such a wholesome hatred of the machine that so relentlessly crushes the life out of individuals as will some day lead to a terrible outbreak of anarchy.



THE TYPHOID SEASON AND OYSTERS.

THE *Daily Chronicle* has an occasional column entitled, "Science of the Day," conducted by Dr. Andrew Wilson. In the issue of August 22 the Doctor had the following concerning the subject at the head of this article:—

The season of the year when typhoid fever is mostly with us is fast approaching. It is a fever which attains its maximum yearly development in the fall of the year. Hence it may be well to remind my readers of their greater liability to infection during September and October. It is then specially that our water supplies demand attention, and I should advise paterfamilias that on his return from holidaying the cisterns of the domicile should be specially seen to, and the local plumber instructed to clean them out. This domestic precaution will not be thrown away in a sanitary sense.

There is no doubt whatever that typhoid fever is liable to be conveyed to us also by infected shell-fish. Before me lies a report of a case of this ailment occurring at Kingsbridge, Devon, the medical officer of health attributing the ailment to the patient having eaten cockles taken from the estuary of the river. The sewage, it is added, was carried where the cockles were found.

Recently the public were informed that all British oyster-beds, save two, could be guaranteed to be free from contamination by sewage, which of course is liable to contain the germs or bacilli of typhoid. I should very much like to learn the names of the two beds alluded to. Perhaps some of my readers will be able to notify them to me.

The observations of scientists on typhoid germs in oysters have shown that the bacilli live in the oyster in pure water for

about fourteen days. Where the water is of an impure character, the germs will doubtless survive for a much longer period.

It is clear that there can only be one measure, and one only effective, for the preservation of the public from this preventable scourge, and that is, the exercise of care on the part of the oyster companies in order to prevent any access of sewage to their beds.

With this last statement we can by no means agree. There is another most effective measure that can be taken "for the preservation of the public from this preventable scourge," and that is to leave the oysters to repose in their beds, and not swallow them. This is the one and only sure safeguard against disease from them. And it is the course that ought to be preserved, even though the molluscs are enjoying the best of health; for such unclean creatures as shell-fish are unfit for the human stomach. Man is made largely of what he eats; and the most superficial thought should be sufficient to convince anyone that good human brain and muscle, capable of thinking the highest, purest thoughts, and doing the best work, cannot be built out of such low-grade material as is found in the mud at the bottom of the sea. All those creatures are scavengers, so that at the best those who eat them feed on refuse matter.

MEAT EATERS AND VEGETARIANS COMPARED.

WHEREIN does the meat-eater excel the vegetarian?

Not in endurance, as is proved by the porters of Smyrna and Constantinople, the runners of the Andes, India, and China, and the experience of hunters, who withhold meat from their dogs in order that they may have good wind. In pedestrian matches, and latterly in bicycle races and other tests of endurance, the vegetarians have come to the front, and have been carrying off the prizes.

Not in strength, for the vegetarian

animals are admittedly the toughest, the strongest, and the fleetest; witness the elephant, the hippopotamus, the rhinoceros, the American bison, and that marvellous creature, the real king of the forest, the gorilla.

Not in power to endure hardship and to resist disease; witness the endurance and the comparative immunity to grave injury from wounds of the Turkish soldiers as compared with the Greeks in the late Turko-Grecian War. Meat may make a fierce soldier, but certainly does not make a healthy or enduring man.

A second-hand garment has less wear in it than a new one; so second-hand food has less energy in it than original and natural food.

The more one studies this question, the deeper becomes the conviction that man was never intended to be a flesh-eater, but that his natural diet is fruits, grains, and nuts.—*Good Health*.

ALCOHOL IN FRANCE.

A FEW years ago France was one of the European nations credited with the smallest consumption of alcohol, but at the present time, according to a recent article by M. Théophile Janvrais in *La Figaro*, it stands unenviably at the head of the list. As in England, those with "vested interests" in the traffic have grown to be a mighty army. The growers number 2½ millions, the retailers in cafés and drink shops 533,000, the provision dealers with off-licences 300,000. The total consumption in France last year was 1,188½ million gallons of wine, 343½ million gallons of cider, 52½ million gallons of pure alcohol, and 2½ million gallons of liqueurs. In this disastrous development Paris takes the lead, the Hautes-Pyrénées and Cantal, where the average consumption is no more than in 1830, being at the other extreme. Normandy and Brittany come out badly; and, broadly speaking, the districts of cider, sparkling wines, and beer come out worst. The following table gives the progress of alcoholic consumption in France during the past century:

Time of Revolution	(approximately)	8 million gallons.		
1830	"	10	"	"
1850 (introduction of "industrial alcohols")		(approximately)	17½	million gallons.
1880	"	35½	"	"
1890	"	44	"	"
1900	"	49½	"	"

Commenting on these figures, M. Janvrais says, "One might say of the twentieth century that it is truly 'the age of alcohol;' for never have we seen the consumption of this intoxicant make such progress as since the introduction everywhere of the cheap industrial alcohols—the most dangerous of all."—*The Christian World*.

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HERE is an excellent example to be followed by all who find themselves the subject of gossip or slander: "They that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long. But I, as a deaf man hear not; I am as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Yea, I am as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no arguments." Ps. xxxviii. 12-14, R.V., margin. No end of trouble would be saved if more would learn the art of being deaf and dumb; and if we truly suffer with Christ we shall learn it.

ARE you in trouble? If so, hear this gracious invitation and promise: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Ps. l. 15.

But you say that your trouble is peculiar. That makes no difference; "He comforteth us in *all* our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Cor. i. 4. He knows all our troubles; He cares for us in our infirmities; and He is abundantly able to save all that put their trust in Him.

Can God Defend Himself?—In Ps. xvii. 7 we read, "Show Thy marvellous lovingkindness, O Thou that savest by Thy right hand them which put their trust in Thee from those that rise up against them." This is very comforting, for "the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly" (Ps. cxviii. 16); but if you will look at the marginal reading you will find an exact translation of the Hebrew of the last part of this verse, which is much stronger than the paraphrase which the translators thought best to put in the body of the text. Thus we may read it: "Show [or, make distinguished, prominent] Thy lovingkindness, O Thou that savest them which trust in Thee from those that rise up against Thy right hand." God counts every attack on us as directed against

Himself, and so it indeed is, since "in Him we live." Then the oft-repeated, and oftener thought query, "Can God save me?" may be changed for, "Can God successfully defend Himself?" But to ask such a question is to answer it, and so there is an end to doubt and fear. What a blessed thing it is to know that our life is "bound in the bundle of life with the Lord," and is as safe as His.

"LET him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Nobody stands by inherent strength. Nobody can by a life of virtue become so firmly established in it that he cannot fall away. Past victories, however great and precious, are not sufficient for to-day. "Thou standest by thy faith. Be not highminded, but fear." God is our strength, and all the strength we have, and it is our present relation to Him that determines whether or not we stand. Trusting Him, building on Him, we are secure; but the one who loses his sense of dependence on God, and who thinks himself strong enough to stand alone, will instantly fall, though he may have lived uprightly for many years. Therefore, "my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

A SURE DWELLING PLACE.

LORD, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Ps. xc. 1.

What the Lord always has been, He is still, for He changes not. Because He changes not, we are not consumed. Mal. iii. 6.

If the Lord should change, should cast us out, and cease to be our dwelling place, we should cease to be; for only "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28.

But "the Lord will not cast off for ever." Lam. iii. 31. Even though He chasten us, and cause grief, "yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies." His chastenings are in tender love, being only the washing and cleansing of the wounds that sin has made.

He will not cast off, and no one can pluck us out of His bosom—our dwelling place. We may, like prodigal sons, attempt to shake off home restraints, and choose to live independently, but we cannot succeed; for even the portion which we

call our own, and which we squander, is His provision for us, and wander where we will, we are never out of the grasp of His loving, sustaining hand.

What a blessed, joyful assurance that He is "not far from every one of us"! Though we fly to the ends of the earth, or go into its depths, His salvation is near, for "all the ends of the earth" are called on to behold the salvation of our God. He saves with His right hand and His mighty, outstretched arm—the arm that encircles the universe.

Then how easy it is always to find salvation. "Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land." No matter how far we have wandered away, at no time need it take a minute to find ourselves safe in the sheltering bosom of the Father. Although no soul on earth is out of His hand, that is not our dwelling place. The soul can never find rest and peace while so far separated from God as to be merely in His hand; it is *in Him* that we find peace—in absolute union with Him, our whole soul, body, and spirit swallowed up in His. "In returning and rest shall ye be saved." When our will is wholly lost in His, and we find our delight solely in Him, then shall the promise be fulfilled: "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."

THE Christian must live above sensual indulgence; yet he who looks upon sensual pleasures with stoical contempt, has never experienced the perfection and joy of Christian victory. The Christian is not, as the ancient heathen thought, an ascetic, having nothing in common with human kind, and despising all human feeling. On the contrary, the real Christian is in closest touch and fullest sympathy with mankind, and is more keenly susceptible to pleasurable emotions than anybody else; and that is just why he scorns sensuality. He knows joys so infinitely higher and more lasting than merely carnal, sensual pleasures are less attractive to him than the toys of childhood are to the mature man. It is the joy of the Lord, that is the Christian's strength against temptation. Will-power, or the adherence to right solely because it is right, that is, a mere sense of duty, will not long avail to keep a man from falling a victim to some one or more of the lusts of the flesh; but the fullness of the joy of acquaintance and association with the Lord will draw a man away from earthly pleasures, and keep him faithful to the end.