

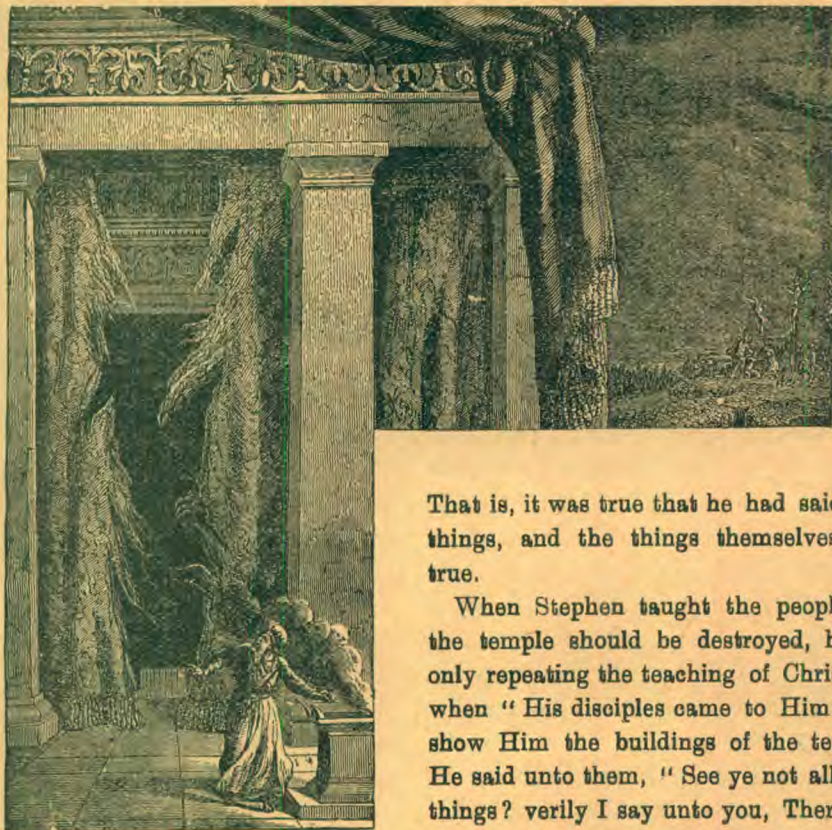
PRESENT TRUTH

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

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NO. 7



CHANGING THE CUSTOMS.

(Acts vi. 1-15.) †

WHEN the men of the various synagogues in Jerusalem were not able to resist the Spirit by which Stephen spoke, nor to overthrow his teaching, they arrested him and brought him before the judges, and hired false witnesses to say :—

"This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place [the temple] and the law. For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."

This charge was false in that it declared that Stephen had spoken blasphemous words, and that he had depreciated Moses and his work. It was false in spirit; but the specific things charged against Stephen were true, as his own discourse shows.

That is, it was true that he had said such things, and the things themselves were true.

When Stephen taught the people that the temple should be destroyed, he was only repeating the teaching of Christ; for when "His disciples came to Him for to show Him the buildings of the temple," He said unto them, "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matt. xxiv. 1, 2.

"And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke xix. 41-44.

If the Jews had grasped the meaning of something that Jesus said about the temple, near the beginning of His ministry, they would have seen how natural it was that that building should be destroyed. When they asked Him for a sign as proof of His authority to drive traders out of the

temple courts, He said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

"Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days?"

"But He spake of the temple of His body."

Jesus stood in the temple, "greater than the temple." He Himself was the veritable temple of God, and that building erected by Herod was not. It was the house of prayer to God, and as such was to be regarded as sacred; but it was not the real temple of God, and never had been. So self-evident was the truth that Jesus Himself, and not that structure, was the temple, that, standing in the house, He did not consider it necessary to make any explanation when He spoke about "this temple." He had a right to take it for granted that the people would know that he meant His body, and not the house in which they were standing, when He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." In the presence of Jesus of Nazareth, no building ever erected by man could have any claim to be called the temple of God.

But the body of Jesus was not different from the bodies of other men. God had told Moses (Deut. xviii. 18) that He would raise up to the people a Prophet "from among their brethren;" and Paul wrote: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same," and added that He was of the nature of Abraham. Heb. ii. 14, 16. He also wrote that He was "born of the seed of David according to the flesh." Rom. i. 3, R.V. He was "born of a woman, born under the law." Gal. iv. 4. "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." Heb. ii. 17.

What do we learn from this?—That since Christ's body was the true temple, the same thing is true of ours. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that

† International Sunday-School lesson for Feb. 23.

the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" 1 Cor. vi. 19.

"What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them." 2 Cor. vi. 16.

David recognised the truth that the human body is the true dwelling-place of God, when "he swore unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob: Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." Ps. cxxxii. 2-5.

Did David mean that he would not go to his house, nor go to sleep, until he had built a temple for the Lord? Was he so foolish as to suppose that he could build a temple in one day? Surely not. It took him a long time to collect money and materials for Solomon to work with, and then, with thousands of men employed, seven years were required for the task. David was not so wild as to suppose that he could build a temple for God before nightfall. What then did he mean?

Note that David, in the psalm quoted from, did not say anything about *building* a temple for the Lord. He vowed that he would not go to sleep until he had *found out a place* for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. This same vow can be made and performed by anybody, and ought to be made and kept by every reader of this article. He meant that he would not sleep until he had God dwelling in him; he was consecrating to the Lord's use the temple which God Himself had built without hands; for "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

Solomon, who built the first and most glorious Jewish temple, knew that it was not capable of accommodating the Lord. In his prayer at the dedication of the temple, he said: "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house which I have built?" 2 Chron. v. 18. See also ii. 6.

No; a house built by man, however

grand it may be, cannot be the Lord's real dwelling-place; but the man himself, not made with hands, can be. The High and Lofty One, whose name is holy, "inhabith eternity," and dwells at the same time "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Isa. lvii. 15. Thus it is that He has put eternity into the hearts of men. Eccl. iii. 11, R.V., margin.

Now we may read why Moses built the tabernacle, which was the movable temple. God instructed Moses to tell the people to bring offerings of gold, silver, brass, linen, skins, etc., and said: "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." Ex. xxv. 8. God calls His people out from connection with the heathen, in order that He may dwell in them (2 Cor. vi. 16, 17); and this He had done for the children of Israel. But they were not willing to be God's temple. They would not submit themselves to God, that He might dwell in them, His living temple. But God was long-suffering and patient with them, and was not willing to give them up; so when they would not allow Him to live in them, He had a tabernacle built, that His glory might be manifested among them. This was a "tabernacle of witness," both to the power and glory and holiness of the Lord, and His desire to dwell in them, and to the unbelief of the people, which prevented it. How evident it is that a temple of dead material cannot serve for "the living God." Only a living temple can be His real habitation.

God tells us that "the customs of the heathen are vain" (Jer. x. 3), and proceeds to illustrate the saying by describing the making of an idol. It has to be fastened with nails, "that it move not;" and it must needs be borne, because it cannot go. Why do the heathen follow such vain customs?—Because they want a god that they can see, and their eyesight is very dim; they have no spiritual vision, and can discern only the outward form of the most palpable substances. They do not perceive hidden realities.

The same characteristic in the Jewish people made it necessary for the tabernacle to be built. They knew not this truth uttered by Christ, that the place to worship God was neither in Jerusalem nor any other particular spot, but "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." John iv. 23. The same disposition that made it necessary

that they should have a building of stone for a temple, afterward led them to desire a king in place of the unseen God, that they might be like the heathen. They trusted only in the things that are seen, which are temporal, and had no hold upon the unseen things, which are eternal.

The work of the Gospel is to change these customs, and establish true worship, setting up the true temple. It does not bring in any new custom, but builds up the old waste places, the foundations of many generations; and he who follows its teachings is called, "The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." Isa. lviii. 12.

Therefore it is said: "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. ii. 19-22.

Thus through this Jesus of Nazareth the time of "restoration of all things" will at last come, when it will be said, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." Rev. xxi. 3. Then Solomon's question at the dedication of his temple will be answered; for God will be the dwelling-place of His people, and He will dwell in them. And that glorious custom, of which Moses was the first to write, will never be changed throughout eternity.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A BUSINESS MAN.

THE church at Jerusalem in the days of the apostles was no small affair. Starting with one hundred and twenty, it was increased in one day by three thousand. Thus the Lord added saved persons daily to the number, and one day five thousand more were gathered in as the result of a single discourse. Later on we read that "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Acts v. 14. Still the work of preaching and teaching went on, and so when we read further that "the number of the disciples was multiplied," we may know that the company of believers in Jerusalem must have been numbered by tens of thousands.

The administration of the affairs of a modern church composed of a few hundred,

or at most four or five thousand persons, involves considerable labour and business capacity; but the church in Jerusalem presented some problems that are not known in these days. Those who had the oversight of it, had to deal not merely with what are now understood by the term "church funds," but with the affairs of each individual member. "For as many as were possessed of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Acts iv. 34, 35. They had not only to supply the needs of the poor, but to administer the estates of the wealthy; and so the business of the church in those days equalled that of a benevolent society and a court of chancery and a probate court combined.

In those days "there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." National prejudice, that most widely-spread and most senseless of all prejudices, found place even among those disciples, and was likely to cause serious division, as it did later on, and does to this day. Now it would not do for there to be any ground for even a shadow of a charge of maladministration of funds by the apostles, which would tend to the prejudice of their teaching. As they said, "It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables;" so they counselled the selection of seven business men, who could manage the distribution, leaving the apostles free to give themselves wholly "to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word."

What were to be the qualifications of these business men? Acts vi. 3 tells us: "Brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." The advice was acceptable; "and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."

From what we have already learned, we know that the business which these men had to do was just as practical and perplexing business as demands the attention of any "business man" to-day. Therefore we may know that the qualifications necessary to their successful handling of the business committed to them are

equally necessary for any man now, who would have real permanent success in business. To be full of the Holy Spirit is as necessary for a business man as for the man who devotes his whole life to the preaching of the Word. "The Lord giveth wisdom," and His Spirit is "the Spirit of wisdom." When a business man possesses this Spirit, and conducts his affairs by faith, there will be nothing to hinder his becoming a mighty worker for God, as was the case with Stephen. Indeed, every such Spirit-filled man will be a mighty worker for God, whatever his business; but he may, like Stephen, be drawn into devoting his entire time to teaching.

It is not alone in business that a man needs the Spirit of God; the artisan has the same need. God does nothing unnecessarily; and this is how He fitted men to build a house:—

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee." Ex. xxxi. 1-6.

Here almost every art and trade is introduced, indeed "all manner of workmanship," and we find that skill in each comes from the Spirit of God. Whatever skill one has in any trade or business comes from God, even though the man may not recognise God; what wondrous skill, then, must be possible for the man who voluntarily and continuously places himself under the control and instruction of God's Spirit.

Here is a truth, stated by a certain preacher, which everybody would do well to consider: "Whatever you know how to do well, God knows how to do it better." Then the most efficient "master workman" in any trade may learn much more from the Lord; and the blessed thing is that the instruction that he gets in his special line is available for his soul's salvation.

We have not space to go further into details at this time, but can only refer to Moses, David, Solomon, and Daniel, as

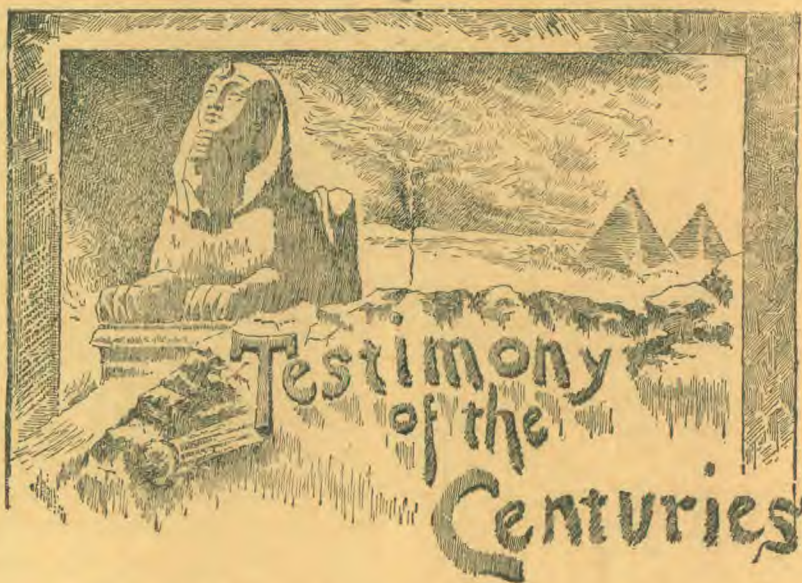
men who had the affairs of a nation on their hands, and who were mighty in the Word of God. People in far inferior position, and with incomparably less responsibility, often say that they cannot find time to get acquainted with God's Word; but those men were successful in their vast and complicated business, because they studied the Word, and meditated in it, and talked with God. Why should we continue to reverse the proper order?

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Ps. i. 1-3.

"LEAVE the future; let it rest,
Simply on the Saviour's will;
Leave the future; they are blest
Who, confiding, hoping still,
Trust His mercy
To provide for every want,
And to save from every ill."

FIDELITY.

THE truest nobility is fidelity wherever we are situated. An illustrious example is given in the following account: A duke went to the home of Sir Matthew Hale, one of England's greatest judges, and told him he was engaged in a lawsuit which would come before Hale for judgment in a few days. He said he wanted to give Hale a statement of the case, so that he might understand it when it came into his court. The great jurist reproved him sharply. "Not one word," he said, "will I hear. I will listen to the case in open court, and decide it on its merits." The duke said that the plaintiff was "only a common farmer." "That makes no difference," Hale said; "when a man comes into my court, it is his case, not his rank, that I consider." The duke still protested. He wanted to acquaint the judge with certain facts that it would not be pleasant to mention in open court. Hale answered that if his visitor persisted, and did not leave the house at once, he would commit him to prison. The duke left and went to the king to complain. The king heard his story and laughed. "Faith," he said, "I think you are lucky. I wonder he did not send you to prison. I verily believe he would not hesitate to commit me to prison if he thought I was trying to get him to help me to do some one a wrong.—Selected.



CALLED OUT OF EGYPT.

WHEN the Lord visited and redeemed His people, to take them into the land of promise, the land which He swore to Abram, Isaac, and Jacob to give to them; when He took them unto Himself to serve Him only, in the keeping of His holy law, He said, first of all: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," etc.

Israel missed God's call: they believed Him not, and therefore could not enter into His rest. These fell in the wilderness. And the generation that went into the land of Canaan did not in that go into "the land" and the "rest" to which the Lord would have taken the people when they first left Egypt, had they only believed. They drifted further and further away from God until they actually rejected Him, that they might be like the nations.

And they became like all the nations. They failed exactly as had their fathers before them. For, in the days of David, the Lord still said: "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known My ways. So I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest." Heb. iii. 7-11; iv. 7, 8.

But still they hardened their hearts, and went further away from the Lord, until they got into such darkness that it was the very darkness of "the shadow of death," which is "darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." And there the people sat, when there shined unto them a "great light," even the light of God, in which darkness itself is light. Isa. ix. 2; Job x. 21, 22; Matt. iv. 16.

Christ came. Again God visited to redeem His people, to make them not simply servants, but sons of God, that we "might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life." And at that time again God said: "Out of Egypt have I called My Son."

Why was it necessary that the infant Jesus should be taken into *Egypt* at the time of the slaughter of the innocents by Herod? It was not alone to escape the decree of Herod, that Jesus was taken into *Egypt*; for that decree could have been easily escaped by a much shorter journey. This was done to teach all people for ever the deep spiritual lesson of the true deliverance from *Egypt*.

Jesus came into the world to take the place of man, to be our substitute and surety. Mankind is overwhelmed in the darkness and bondage of sin—Egyptian darkness, a darkness that may be felt. He was made to be sin; upon Him was laid the iniquity of us all; He was numbered with the transgressors; He was made in all things like those whose substitute He became.

Therefore He was taken into *Egypt*, and was brought out again, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son;" and that by this object lesson there might be emphasised anew, and for ever, the great lesson taught from of old to all people, the great truth that men become the sons of God only by their being called out of *Egypt*.

The Ten Commandments express the whole duty of man. All that ever a man can do, in deed, word, or thought, in righteousness, is covered by the Ten Commandments. All man's service to God is in the keeping of this His Law. And when it was written of Christ, and it was fulfilled in Christ, as the Example of all mankind, that "out of Egypt have I called My Son," this was simply speaking anew to all mankind the words which, that great day, God spoke from heaven, as the preamble

to the whole Ten Commandments and their keeping: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

This is the universal lesson: that no man can serve God, that no man can keep a single one of the Ten Commandments, except he is first delivered, by the power of God, from the darkness of Egypt, from the darkness of the shadow of death, from the realm and bondage of sin.

This is the lesson of the whole Bible. Look, for instance, at Eph. ii. 1-10: how men are dead in trespasses and sins, in the darkness of this world; walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the ruler of the darkness of this world (Eph. vi. 12), the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. But God, who is rich in mercy, has quickened us together with Christ, and has raised us up together with Him, to live and walk with Him. And this He did, not by our works, nor because of our works, but of His own mercy and grace; "for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Thus is the lesson taught, that no man can do good works except he is created unto it by the power of God.

After men have been delivered from this present evil world, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and are standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,—the liberty by love to serve one another,—filled with the Spirit, so that all the fruits of the Spirit are shining in the life, reflecting the sunshine of righteousness,—only then it is that the generally considered practical things of the Christian life are enjoined.

Why is this? It is the same universal, divine lesson, that no man can do good works, no man can possibly do the "practical things of the Christian life," who has not first the Christian life as a practical thing. And, therefore, it is made perfectly plain that deliverance from the darkness and bondage of sin; the finding of the sonship of God; the ability to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free; the receiving of the fulness of the Spirit of God in the life,—these things are the practical things of Christianity, equally with the others. Indeed, in a sense these are the more practical things; because so certainly must these precede the others that, without these, the other practical things of the Christian life can never be seen at all.

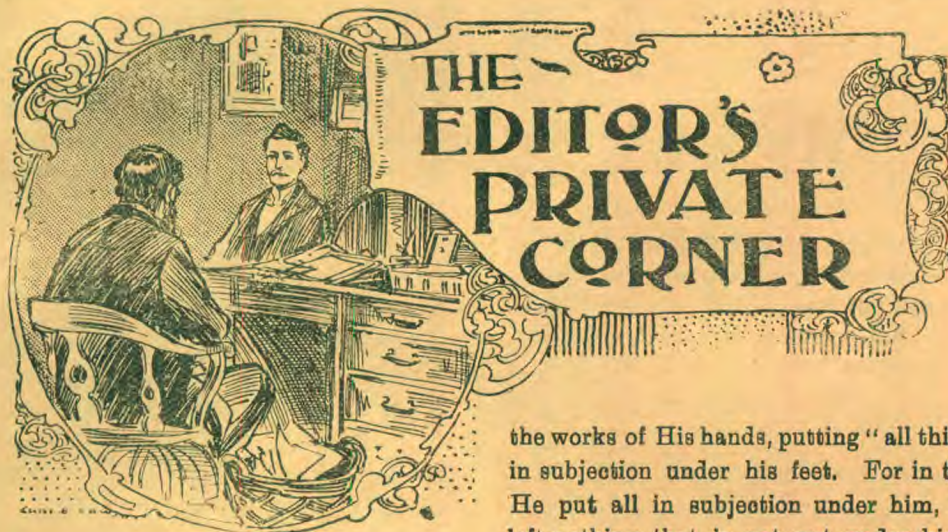
Therefore when, from Mount Sinai, God would speak, with a voice that shook the earth, the practical things of the life of man, He spoke first of all this original practical thing of the life of man—deliverance from the realm and bondage of sin:—

"I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Ex. xx. 2.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

Yet this is not the preamble of only the first commandment, but of the whole law. And since, when He sent His only begotten Son to redeem us indeed, He renewed and

emphasised this preliminary thought, in the words, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son," it is as if *this* were the preamble and the whole law. And all of it—the preamble and the whole law—is expressed in the great thought of the Third Angel's Message: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. xiv. 12. A. T. JONES.



THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

"It is always said that God gave man a free will, and yet one of His principal acts was to forbid man to eat of a certain tree. How could man have a free will in this case, inasmuch as God knew that he would fall?"

A SINGLE text of Scripture is the key to the solution of this difficulty, which is so common among men—the idea that obedience to law is incompatible with freedom. The text is Ps. cxix. 45: "I will walk at liberty; for I seek Thy precepts." The free man is the man who obeys righteous laws; the slave is the one who falls into transgression.

The words of Christ to the Jews tell us this truth: "If ye abide in My Word, then are ye truly My disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered unto Him, We be Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any man: how sayest Thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin. And the bondservant abideth not in the house for ever; the Son abideth ever. If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John viii. 31-36.

THE KING MUST BE FREE.

WHEN God made man, the crowning work of His creation, He crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over

the works of His hands, putting "all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him." Heb. ii. 7, 8. God gave man dominion over "all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." Ps. viii. 7, 8. Man was made ruler over the very earth itself, "and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen. i. 28.

Man—not only the first being that God created, but mankind, male and female—was made king. He was given dominion over the works of God's hands; and since the heavens are the works of God's hands (Ps. xix. 1; Heb. i. 10), it follows that man's rightful dominion extends beyond this planet on which we live. A most magnificent kingdom was given to him. Now it needs no argument to show that one cannot be a king and a slave at the same time. "Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage," (2 Peter ii. 19), and when a man is in bondage he is evidently not ruling.

From time immemorial, the root idea of royalty, derived from God Himself, has been that the king's person is sacred. If he be a king indeed, it will be so regarded, not only by his fellow-men, but by the beasts of the earth, as has many times been demonstrated. The truth may be stated either way: Every real king is a free man, and every absolutely free man is a king. Christ said that He makes His followers free, and the Scriptures also tell us that all whom He frees from sin are made kings and priests. Rev. i. 5, 6.

GOD'S ABSOLUTE FREEDOM.

God is King of kings, and there can be no question but that He is absolutely free. "The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all." Ps. ciii. 19. "Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." Ps. cxv. 8. He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Eph. i. 11. The greatest ruler that ever exercised dominion on this earth, and who had demonstrated the futility of trying to resist God, said, when light and reason from heaven dawned upon him, that "His kingdom is from generation to generation; and all the inhabitants of the world are reputed as nothing; and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto him, What doest Thou?" Daniel iv. 34, 35. God, being absolute ruler, is absolutely free. His mind and will are free.

GOD'S WILL ON EARTH.

WE are taught to pray to God, our Father: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." This was the condition in the beginning, and it is that which is to be restored through the Gospel. But can you not see that such a state must necessarily be one of absolute freedom on earth? It follows from the fact that God is free, and that His will is absolutely unfettered. He is free, and He gives freedom by giving Himself. Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, and one with Him, has secured our everlasting freedom by giving Himself to us. Being made partakers of the Divine nature,—being made one with Christ as He is one with the Father,—we must necessarily be as free as He is.

Let me repeat, in order that this truth may be very plain. God's will is absolutely free, and therefore whenever and wherever His will is done there can be only freedom. The man in whom God's will is done,—that one in whom God's will has free course,—whose only will is God's will, can, like God, do whatsoever he will. Nothing will be impossible to him. There can be no talk of bondage in connection with such a man.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A PERFECT MAN.

THIS we may know by reference to the formation of the man whom God pronounced "very good." The simple story is told in Gen. ii. 7. "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man

became a living soul,"—a perfect man. So again we read: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Job xxxiii. 4. "There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Job. xxxii 8.

Do you see what it is that constitutes the perfect man? that is, the man who is complete as *man*. It is just this: A body of dust with the Spirit of God. The clay we all have; but just to the extent that we lack the Spirit, the mind, the "perfect will of God," do we come short of being perfect men. Bear in mind that in using the word "perfect," I do not mean simply "good," but complete, just as one would say of an animal that has no blemish that it is a perfect animal, or of a machine that is complete in all its parts that it is a perfect machine. So the Spirit of God is an essential part of man. The man who lacks the Spirit of God, who is guided and controlled by any other spirit, is an incomplete man.

The Spirit of God must of course always speak and act according to the will of God. Rom. viii. 27. So the perfect, the complete man, is free because his body is yielded to God, that "that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" may be done in it, even as it is in the person of God Himself. The man is free because he is dependent upon God, and because he acknowledges and acquiesces in that fact. Freedom of the creature is therefore always found in dependence, in obedience, and never in independence. When this truth is learned, God can send us out into His wide universe, to range as freely as He Himself.

GOD'S WILL NOT ARBITRARY.

FROM all that has been said it must be evident that God's will is not arbitrary. That is, God does not, like human rulers, think out laws for the government of His subjects. He does not try experiments. He does not impose rules, or make prohibitions, simply because He wishes things to go in a certain way. His laws are all like Himself,—they *are*. He cannot be other than He is, and so His law—His will—cannot be other than it is. If this great truth be recognised, it will make obedience very easy. Then we shall know that "this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John v. 3.

Knowing this, we may see that it was not anything like what in man would be caprice, or the arbitrary exercise of

authority, that made God forbid man to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The tree was not, we may be sure, placed in the garden merely as a *test*. It was there because it was necessary for it to be there. Just *why* it was necessary we shall doubtless know better when we get into the garden; but we may be confident that God does not act capriciously.

It also necessarily follows that the fruit of the tree was forbidden, because it was not good for man, at least not at that time. Sometimes a merchant will purposely leave money in the way of a new office boy, to see if he will take it; but we must settle it for ever in our minds that God does not deal thus with His children. "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." James i. 13. He never trifles with His creatures. Our knowledge of the fact that the very best fruit is not always, at all seasons, suitable to be eaten, may help us to understand that an explanation of why the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil had such a "mortal taste" to Adam and Eve may sometime be forthcoming. Till then we may rest content in the knowledge of God's goodness and absolute justice.

The essential part of your question is now answered. Man is a king, and free, only when he is simply the agent of the King of kings, whose will is perfect and unfettered. When man has no will but God's will, no mind but God's mind, because he has no spirit but God's Spirit, then he is free indeed; for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. iii. 17. Only so is he a man indeed.

GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE AND MAN'S FREEWILL.

BUT how could it be that man was free to act as he chose, when God knew beforehand just what he would do? This is an old question, and many have put it forward as proof that man is not free, while others use it as evidence that God does not know all things. Now it should be remembered that questions and objections are not proofs; and the fact that we do not understand a thing does not prove that it does not exist. The facts are clear, both that man is free except when he voluntarily goes into bondage, and that God knows all things, and knows them just as well before they occur as afterwards.

God is the one who is, and who was, and who is to come. He is the beginning and the end. He inhabits eternity. But eternity is future as well as past. You may say that you cannot understand how

God can dwell in the future; neither can I; but I can understand it just as well as I can understand how He has existed from all eternity, without any beginning. Cannot you? We cannot understand the Being of God at all; but, accepting the truth that He *is*, we must also, and can just as easily, accept the truth that He is the one who *will be*. That is, He is even now in the days to come.

When you tell me something that you have done, and I tell you that I have already heard of it, you do not think that my knowledge of what has taken place has in the least interfered with the freedom of your will. It does not curtail your liberty for me to look back upon your action. Even so it does not interfere with our freedom for God, from His habitation in the eternity yet to come, to look back, as it were, upon what we are now doing.

Remember that eternity has neither beginning nor end. Then it is a circle. Now draw a circle upon a piece of paper, and make two figures upon two different sections of it. Conceive them to be travelling around the circle in the same direction, and then say which one is ahead. Either one of them may be said to be ahead of the other. But even this is a feeble illustration, for God is not at one point only of the circle, but at every point of it at the same time.

Now I know that this does not explain God's existence or His foreknowledge; but this illustration of a Scripture statement enables us to realise that God is infinitely great, and that nothing is hard for Him, and that just because He knows all things, even before they happen, we are free agents. He knows the future, not because He looks ahead, but because He is there.

The practical benefit of this truth is the confidence it begets in His power to save. He can thwart every design of the enemy against us, making all things work together for our good. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

"O BLESSED life! the heart at rest,
When all without tumultuous seems;
That trusts a higher Will, and deems
That higher will, not mine, the best."

FAITH and obedience are bound up in the same bundle. He that obeys God, trusts God; and he that trusts God, obeys God.—C. H. Spurgeon.

"How can a Christian be healthy who never works? How can a man's faith be strong who never enters his closet?"



BUSINESS.

DOES the Holy Spirit desire us to engage in the active business life, or rather to withdraw into solitude, separation, quietude, away from the noise and clattering of the machinery of worldly strife?

This is the question that is pressing upon many anxious, earnest hearts that desire and design to follow. What are we to do in relation to business? Is it possible to engage in the business of to-day, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, and love God with all the heart and our neighbour as ourselves? What is to be done?

The Holy Ghost is the God of business, the God of affairs. He has to do with creation, and with all the works of God. He comes into the heart, and moulds the life, not to make it inert, inactive, and lazy, but to augment its powers and increase its activity, adaptability, and usefulness. He comes in to be made unto us wisdom, to cause us to be diligent in business, and to work together with Him in the work of the age. He comes into our heart to make it not only His temple, His armoury, His arsenal, but His manufactory as well; His abiding, accounting, and developing place of abode.

The God of business desires the man or woman of business to enter into a co-partnership with Him; so we may be workers together. He delights to make business men and women; so the more intimate we are with Him, the more adapted we are to do business for and with Him for the benefit of our fellow-men. He will eliminate selfishness from business. We shall then do business not to get rich, not to accumulate wealth, not to secure honour nor achieve success; but our eye will be single. We shall gather to scatter, and use to bless.

We have no right to hide the talent in a napkin, and bury it in the earth. We are to use and increase its usefulness for the glory of God in the good of men. A spirit-controlled business life is a most blessed and desirable life, giving active play to all the faculties, bringing out the latent powers, developing, strengthening, and enlightening us, and bringing us into sweetening relationships to God and man, making our own lives sublime by the constant contact, the needed friction, and the continual testing.

Business men for God! for God is for business men. Cast all your care on Him. He careth for you. Do business without

care, or anxiety, or worry, so we may do business for God. He desires unselfish business people that He may use, so that He may lift business life out of the plane in which it has fallen, to a higher, holier position, in keeping with the occupation of the Son of God, whose life was summed up in the sentence, "He went about doing good."—*The King's Messenger*.

THE NEW EARTH THE HOME OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

GOD made the earth to be inhabited. Isa. xlv. 18.

2. It was not made for wicked men. Prov. x. 30.

3. It was made for the righteous. Matt. v. 5; Isa. lx. 21.

4. It will be the home of the righteous when the wicked are out off. Ps. xxxvii. 9, 34; Prov. ii. 22.

5. The end of them that continue to do wickedly will be destruction. Ps. xxxvii. 20; Mal. iv. 1.

6. This destruction takes place when Christ comes. 2 Thess. i. 7-9.

7. Having been removed "from the presence of the Lord," there will be no place for the wicked in all the universe of God. Ps. xxxvii. 10.

8. "But the meek shall inherit the earth." Verses 11, 9.

9. The earth will be their eternal home. Verse 29.

10. The inhabitants of the new earth will always be happy. Ps. xxxvii. 11; Isa. lxxv. 17-19; xxxii. 17.

11. Then will be fulfilled the promise, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea." Num. xiv. 21; Hab. ii. 14.

12. The "glory of God," which is to cover the earth "as the waters cover the sea," is the love of God. Ex. xxxiii. 17-19; xxxiv. 5, 6.

13. The curse of sin will have been removed. Rev. xxii. 3.

14. The earth will undergo a change. Ps. cii. 25, 26.

15. The change will be accomplished by fire. 2 Peter iii. 10.

16. God will make all things new. Rev. xxi. 5.

17. As the result the wilderness will blossom as the rose. Isa. xxxv. 1-8.

18. This prophecy applies to the future eternal home of the saved. Isa. xxxv. 9, 10.

19. Then the purpose for which Christ came (Luke xix. 10) will have been accomplished.

20. When the good and the pure and the true are gathered to their peaceful, happy home, sickness and death will be at an end. Isa. xxxiii. 24; Rev. xxi. 4.

21. Persecution is the experience of those

who live godly lives in Christ Jesus now. John xv. 18-20; 2 Tim. iii. 12.

22. But a change will take place. Rev. vii. 14-17; Ps. xxxvii. 12-18.

23. Man and his home were lost through unbelief in God and faith in Satan. Gen. ii. 16, 17; iii. 1-6; Rom. vi. 16. Faith in Satan resulted in rebellion against God. But the Lord is not discouraged. Isa. xlii. 4.

24. By faith in God we can become His children (Gal. iii. 26), and inherit the home of the righteous.

CHAS. P. WHITFORD.

VAIN WORSHIP.

BUT in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. xv. 9. There is such a thing as the *vain* worship of the true God. It is to make void a commandment of God by a tradition. A tradition is an old thing of human origin. Rolling years add nothing to its authority. Error, however venerable, is not sanctified by age. A lie does not become a truth by age, any more than a liar becomes truthful by the mere fact of age. The *oldest* liar is a liar still; and the *oldest* lie is a lie still. We do well ever to remember that no lie is of the truth, and no truth is of a lie; that error is from beneath, while truth is from above: that true worship is to teach and obey the commandments of God. "They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

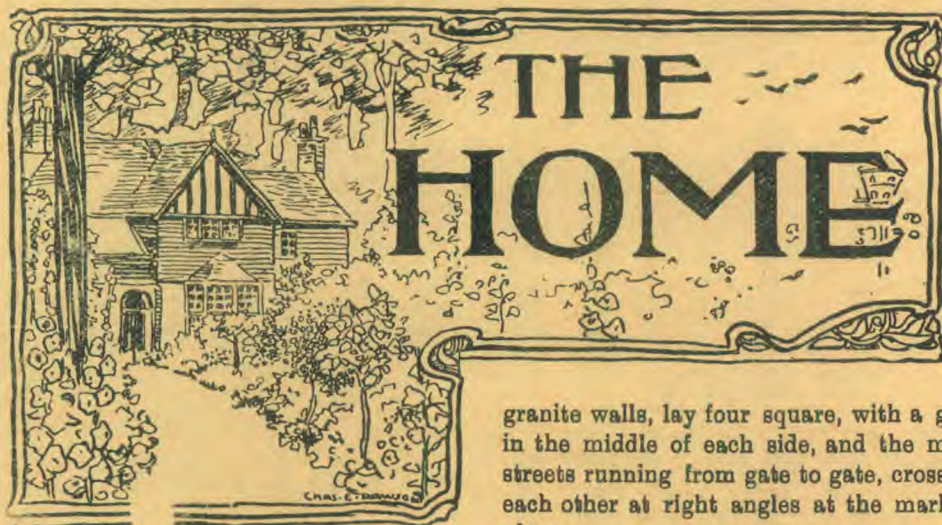
The Emperor Constantine in his Sunday law of March 7, 321 A.D., called the first day of the week, or Sunday, "the venerable day of the sun." It was an old, a venerable day, even then. As named by another, it was "the Wild Solar Holiday of all heathen times." It has great antiquity, great age, but was never anything more than the sun's day, dedicated to the worship of the sun, the first form of vain worship; and it had no higher authority than sun worship.

It is just as destitute of divine authority to-day. It is a tradition, pure and simple, of great antiquity, highly exalted, and generally venerated and observed at the present time. It is a tradition, the more dangerous because its whole tendency is to make void a commandment of God.

If this tradition has a place in your creed, teaching, or practice, I beseech you, in the light of God's infinite, immutable, and eternal law, answer the Saviour's weighty question, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" Matt. xv. 3.

H. A. ST. JOHN.

A GREAT lie is like a great fish on dry land: it may fret and fling, and make a frightful bother; but it cannot hurt you. You have only to keep still, and it will die of itself.—*Crabbe*.



A BLESSING.

NUM. IV. 24.

THE Lord bless thee!

How shall He bless thee?

With the gladness that knoweth no decay,
 With the riches that cannot pass away,
 With the sunshine that makes an endless day—
 Thus may He bless thee.

And keep thee!

How shall He keep thee?

With the all-covering shadow of His wings,
 With the strong love that guards from evil things,
 With the sure power that safe to glory brings—
 Thus may He keep thee.

—Selected.

AN ANGRY MOB QUELLED BY THE STORY OF THE CROSS.

SWING shut the city gates; run and tell the sentinels to stand guard, and let no one pass in or out till we have made way with these preachers of other gods. No news shall ever get out of the city as to what has become of them."

It was in a walled city of some twenty thousand inhabitants in the kingdom of Hyderabad, within twenty miles of its capital, as we were on a Gospel preaching tour, the first ever made through the kingdom of the Nizam, in August, 1863, which is more fully spoken of in "In the Tiger Jungle."

We had been travelling since early morning, preaching in all the towns and villages on our way, and arrived before the gates of the city during the heat of the day, and camped outside its walls. We had heard of it as the wickedest city of the realm.

About 3 P.M., my four native assistants went into the city to offer Scriptures and tracts for sale, I promising to join them when the heat should be a little less.

After half or three quarters of an hour I went through the iron gates, the largest and strongest city gates that I had up to that time seen. The city, with its high

granite walls, lay four square, with a gate in the middle of each side, and the main streets running from gate to gate, crossing each other at right angles at the market-place.

Just after entering the gate, I met my native assistants returning, with a hooting rabble following them. Speaking to me in the Tamil language, not understood by those people, they told me that it was not safe to attempt to do any work within the city. They had sold a few Gospels and tracts to both Mohammedans and Hindus. The Mohammedan zealots and Brahman priests had been diligently examining the Gospels, and saw that their systems must go if these Scriptures were believed, and Mohammedans and Hindus joined in an effort to stop the people buying, and drive the catechists out of the city. Herod and Pilate had become friends for this purpose.

Some of the Gospels were bound in yellowish buff book-binder's muslin. The Mohammedans sent messengers running through the streets saying that they were bound in hog-skin, and warning the faithful not to touch them. The Brahmans sent messengers to tell the Hindus that they were bound in calf-skin, and skin of the sacred cow, and telling them not to be polluted by them. They had not only prevented the people from buying, but had incited the rabble to drive the catechists out of the city.

"Have you preached to the people?" said I to the catechists. "Have you proclaimed the Gospel message?"

"No sir; we have only sold a few books and tracts."

"Then we must do so now. Did we not, before we left home, make a solemn vow that we would not pass a single town or village without proclaiming the Master's message, and have we not His covenant, 'Lo, I am with you'? I, at least, must go to the market-place and preach. You need not accompany me unless you think it best."

"We did make that vow. We will go with you," they said.

The rabble had halted and quieted as they heard the foreigner talking with the catechists in a strange tongue, waiting to see what would come of it. We walked with slow and firm step up the street to the market. The crowd followed, increasing by the way. Seeing a foreigner with

the catechists boldly walking up the street, the Brahman and Mohammedan zealots joined the throng.

We reached the centre of the town where the main streets crossed, and there was the market-place, with a roof supported upon large masonry pillars. Ascending the steps, I said in Tamil to the catechists, "Place your backs against these pillars, so that no one can attack you from behind, and keep a sharp watch on all, but show no signs of fear. The Master is with us, His promise is good."

As we stood there, we could see three of the four city gates open with the armed gate-keepers sitting under the arch of the gateway. Turning, I spoke politely to the people in Telegu, which was understood by all.

"Leave this place at once," was the angry response.

I complimented them on the polite reception which they gave to visitors, telling them I had visited more than a thousand towns in the Telegu country, but it had been reserved for them to show the most polite reception that had thus far been received. A few smiled, but the rest only scowled the more.

"Friends," said I, "I have come from far to tell you some good news. I will tell that to you, and then we will immediately go."

"No," said some who were evidently leaders, "we will not hear you. We have found out that you have come to proclaim another God. You do so at your own peril. You see this angry mob. One word from us, and you are dead. Say not another word, but leave the city instantly, and we will see you safely out of the gates. Dare to say one word against our gods, and we will loose this mob on you."

We had seen the angry mob tearing up the cobble paving-stones, and gathering them in the skirts of their garments to stone us with.

"We have no desire to abuse your gods," said I, "but have come to deliver a message."

Then came the order, "Swing shut the gates; make way with these preachers of other gods."

I saw one nudge another, saying, "You throw the first stone, and I will throw the second." But all who had stones to throw were in my vision, and they quailed a little under my keen glance, and hesitated. I seemed to feel the presence of the Master, as if He were standing by my side with His hand on my shoulder, saying, "I am with you. I will tell you what to say." I was not conscious of any anxiety about my personal safety. My whole soul was wrapped up in the thought, "How shall I get my Master's offer of salvation before these people?" The promise of Luke xii. 12 was then, I doubt not, fulfilled, "The Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."

"Brothers," said I, "It is not to revile your gods that I have come this long way; far from it. I have come to you with a royal message from a King far higher than your Nizam; I have come to tell a story sweeter than mortal ear has ever heard. But it is evident that this multitude does not wish to hear it." They thought that I was weakening, and quieted down to see what was going to happen.

"But," said I, "I see five men before me who do wish to hear my story. Will you all step back a little? I will tell those five who want to know why I have come here and what is my message, and then you may stone me. I will make no resistance then." I had been carefully scanning the crowd, and had selected my men; for I had seen five honest countenances who had shown no sympathy with the abuse that had been heaped upon us.

"Brother with the red-bordered turban," said I, addressing a venerable Brahman who stood among the people at the right; "you would like to hear what my wonderful story is, before they stone me, would you not? Be frank and say so; for there are others like you who wish to hear."

"Yes, sir, I would like to hear what your story is," said he, speaking up courageously and kindly.

"Brother with the gold-bordered turban at my left, you, too, would like to hear, and you with the yellow turban, and you with the brown-bordered, and you with the pink."

I had rightly judged these men, for each assented. They were curious to know what I had to say.

"Now will you five men please come forward, and I will tell you alone. All you others step back, step back; as soon as I have told these five the story, you may come forward and throw your stones."

The five stepped forward, the rest reluctantly stepped back a little. I had purposely chosen Brahmans, as I thought I could win them the better.

"Brothers," said I, in a subdued tone, "what is it you chant as you go to the river for your daily ablutions? Is it not this:—

*'Papoham papakarmahan, papatma,
papa santhavaha
Trahi mam Krupaya Deva, Sharana
gata vetsala,'*

said I chanting it in Sanskrit, "and is not this the meaning?" said I in Telugu:—

*'I am a sinner, my actions are sinful,
All that pertains to me is polluted with sin.
Do Thou, O God, that hast mercy on those who
seek Thy refuge,
Do Thou take away my sin.'*

These five Brahmans at once became my friends. One who correctly chants their Vedas and their mantras, they look up to with respect.

"Now do you know how God can do what you ask? How He can take away the burden of our sin and give us relief?"

"No, sir, we do not know. Would that we knew."

"I know; I have learned the secret; shall I tell you?"

"Yes, sir, please tell us."

The multitude seeing the Brahmans conversing with the foreigner with evident respect, quieted still more, and pressed forward to listen.

"Step back, step back;" said I; "it is only these five to whom I am to tell my story. If the rest of you listen, it is on your own responsibility. Step back, and let me tell these five alone." This only increased their desire to hear, and I went on:—

"Brothers, is it possible for us by our own acts to expiate our sins? Can we, by painful journeys to the holiest of all your holy places, change those sinful natures that you bemoan. Does not your own Telugu Poet, Vemana, say:—

*'The Muslim who to Tirupati goes on pilgrim-
age,
Does not thereby become a saint of Siva's
house,
Becomes a dog a lion when he bathes in Ganges
stream?
Benares turns not harlot into pure and trusted
wife.'*

Hearing their own language chanted, the people pressed forward still more intently.

"Nay, brothers, it is not by these outward acts to the utmost austerity, that we can attain to harmony with God. Does not your beloved Vemana again say:—

*'Tis not by roaming deserts wild nor gazing at
the sky;
'Tis not by bathing in the stream nor pilgrimage
to shrine;
But thine own heart must thou make pure, and
then, and then alone,
Shalt thou see Him no eye hath kenned, that
thou behold thy King.'*

"Now, how can our hearts be made pure, so that we can see God? I have learned the secret, and I will tell it you."

Then I told the Story of stories; the story of redeeming love. Gradually and imperceptibly I had raised my voice until, as I spoke in the clear, resonant Telugu, all down these three streets the multitude could hear, and as I told them of His rejection by those He had come to save, and told them that it was for them too, far away here in India, that He had suffered this agony on the cross, down many a cheek of those who had been clamouring for my life I saw tears coursing, and dropping upon the pavements that they had torn up to stone us with. Far earlier in the story I had seen them stealthily dropping their armfuls of stones into the gutter, and pressing back to listen.

How they listened as I went on to tell them of the laying of His body in the tomb.

"Now," said I, folding my arms, and standing before them, "I have finished my story. You may stone me now. I will make no resistance."

"No, no," said they, "we don't want to stone you now. We did not know whose messenger you were, nor what you had come to tell us. Do those books that you have tell more about this wonderful Redeemer?"

"Yes," said I, "this is the history of His life on earth."

With this their wallets were produced, and they purchased all we had of the Gospel of Luke. They purchased all the Gospels and tracts we had with us, and appointed a deputation of their best men to escort us to our camp, begging us to forgive them for the insults they had heaped upon us, for they knew not whose messengers we were.

Verily, the story of the cross has not lost its power.—*Jacob Chamberlain.*

A DREAM.

A YOUNG girl dreamed one night that she was in heaven, and was being shown through the Holy City, examining and admiring the many beautiful residences, pausing before one exceptionally beautiful, that was being erected, so much so that the workmen themselves stepped back to gaze upon the beautiful home. Turning to her guide she said, "For whom is this beautiful palace?"

"Why, that's for your gardener," answered the guide.

"For my gardener? why he would not know what to do in such a spacious dwelling. He would be completely lost in a mansion like this! Why he lives in such a little bit of a cottage on earth. He might do better; I give him reasonable wages, but he gives so much of it away to poor miserable people that he has hardly enough to keep his wife and family, let alone any comforts or luxuries."

Walking on a pace they came to a little bit of a cottage. "And who is this being built for?" asked the young woman.

"Why, that is for you," answered the guide.

"For me!" she exclaimed in wonder and surprise, "why, that cannot be for me, I have always been accustomed to a mansion. I could not adjust myself to such a small house!"

Still plainly but sadly answered the guide, "It is for you. Our great Architect does the very best He can with the material that is sent up to Him."

With that she awoke, but the dream had such an effect upon her that she determined henceforth to lay up treasure in heaven.—*Vanguard*

"GRANT my request, dear Lord, I pray,
That every mistake I make to day
May serve, like an angel's touch, to show
How on the morrow I ought to go."



THE BEST.

MAKE-THE-BEST-OF-EVERYTHING

Finds the world a happy place;
And he says a heart to sing,
And a smile upon the face,
Are the surest means to make
Sunshine for another's sake.

Make-the-Best-of-Everything

Is a pleasant friend to greet;
For he's always bound to bring
News that's welcome, true, and sweet,
And that sheds a brighter ray
On the duties of to-day.

Make-the-Best-of-Everything

Never has an hour to spend
Wondering or worrying
How his best-laid plans shall end;
But in doing all things well,
He makes every minute tell.

FRANK WALCOTT HUTT.

A PET HUMMING BIRD.

IN a small work called "Humming Birds," a lively account is given of a family of rubies, which in North America were caught in their nest by a Mr. Webster. After carrying them home and placing them in a cage, he fed his little family upon a mixture of honey, sugar and water, but he soon found that the birds could not subsist upon this liquid alone; the additional food of delicate flies, and of fine red spiders, being absolutely needful to keep them alive. As winter approached, and flies became scarce, his little favourites became restless; they wanted to fly away with other humming birds, to the warmer regions of Mexico and Southern America; so he opened the door of their cage to allow them to migrate to regions where no doubt they could find an abundant supply of suitable provision.

As they flew away, Webster and his young sister thought they should never more see their favourites; but the following spring he tells us, "I had gone into the garden summer-house with my book, and was dreaming away over its pages, when a soft whirring noise close to my face caused me to look up. About one foot from me, a humming bird poised so steadily upon the wing that its body seemed perfectly motionless, looked with its bright knowing eye fixedly upon mine. It did not move when I lifted my head, and retaining this position for nearly a quarter of a minute, with a low chirp darted out and settled upon some flowers

near. I started up, while a quick thought sent a thrill of exquisite pleasure and surprise through my whole frame. The bird sat still. I ran with my utmost speed to the house, and catching a glimpse of my sister, cried out to her, almost beside myself with excitement—

"Get the white cup! get our cup! some honey! some sugar! here's the water! quick! dear! quick!"

"What is the matter with you, brother?" exclaimed the distracted child, endeavouring at the same time to execute these multifarious orders all at once.

"O, our bird is come back! I saw him just now! Where are the closet keys? O, he's come back to us all the way from South America—the little darling! I thought he couldn't forget us!"

"But, brother, you are mad—how can you tell it from another humming bird? I've seen a dozen this spring!"

"O, I know it was one of the young ones—he came in and looked me in the eye ever so long! Do make haste!"



"The mixture was completed, and off we ran in trembling eagerness, for the test of the white cup we knew would decide for or against us. We reached the summer house—the magical white cup was raised before us—the bird was still sitting on the flower—we gave one chirp as of old, and without an instant's hesitation it darted to the cup, alighted upon the rim, and plunged its little thirsty bill up to the very eyes in that delicious cup, and took the longest, deepest draught I ever saw taken before by one of them; and this convinced me that it had just arrived, and had come straight to its old home for food and love.

"My sister burst into tears and screams of joyous laughter, and of what ridiculous capers I might have been guilty I cannot tell. I only remember the self-contented and philosophical manner in which the returned pilgrim continued to plume its storm-ruffled feathers, uttering now and then the old chirps on the side of that cup—which position it retained until we bore him on it to his new house, of which he assumed possession with a remarkably matter-of-fact or rather matter-of-course air."

"Your Heavenly Father feedeth them."

A LITTLE BIRD TOLD HIM.

LITTLE Mrs. Bird built her nest in the apple-tree near the kitchen door; and before her children were half-grown, Mr. Thomas Cat ate them every one. Mrs. Bird fluttered among the leaves of the apple-tree, and cried for a whole day. Then she went down into the corner of the orchard, and built another nest. But Master Tommie Sprat found it, and took all the eggs away. Mrs. Bird cried over the empty nest all day. Then she went far, far away into the woods, and built another in a thorn tree.

One morning, while she was sitting peacefully on her eggs in the nest in the thorn-tree, she heard footsteps on the stones below. She looked over the edge of the nest with startled eyes. At first she did not know whether to be afraid or not. The creature she saw had on a very short dress, but it also wore a small, round straw hat and short hair. Mrs. Bird did not know whether it was a girl or boy. Girls were harmless creatures she knew. Suddenly the creature jumped over a log, and whooped wildly.

"Oh me! oh me! it is a boy!" shrieked poor Mrs. Bird. She sprang from the nest, and darted through the branches around and around her nest, screaming and scolding furiously.

Foolish Mrs. Bird! Why, almost any boy in the world would have been sure, from the noise she made, that she had a nest hidden there.

But this boy did not know it. He was a very young boy, far too young to be wandering in the woods alone. To tell the truth he had run away, and, although he did not know it, he was quite lost.

The boy walked on past the tree, and, after a little, Mrs. Bird lost sight of him, and settled quietly down again. After a long time she heard a queer noise, and, peeping over the edge of the nest, she saw the boy coming back again. His hat was gone, his feet were covered with mud, his hands and face scratched with briars, and he had discovered that he was lost, and was sobbing bitterly. He was so tired and blinded with crying that he tottered as he walked, and when he reached the tree where Mrs. Bird had her nest, he dropped in a weary, muddy little heap on the dead leaves, and fell asleep.

Mrs. Bird screamed and scolded, and darted about the tree, swooping so low that her wings almost brushed the boy's head; but he did not hear her.

Presently poor, distracted Mrs. Bird heard other strange sounds. She heard voices calling "Harold! Harold! Harold!" and the echoes caught up the words, and tossed them back and forth until the trees and rocks seemed to be cry-

ing, "Harold! Harold!" too. But Harold did not hear. He was too sound asleep. Soon two figures appeared in the distance.

"More boys! more boys!" shrieked Mrs. Bird. "Oh, my poor eggs! What shall I do?"

They were very large boys. We should have called them men, but Mrs. Bird did not know the difference. She was afraid of anything that wore trousers and short hair, and a small, round straw hat.

Suddenly one of the men stopped, and caught the other by the arm.

"Listen, Charlie!" he cried. "Do you hear that bird scolding down yonder in the thicket?"

"Yes. What of it?" said the other.

"Something has disturbed her. It may be the boy. Let us see."

"P-papa, how d-did you know where I was?" asked Harold, sleepily, when he awoke, a moment later, to find himself safe in his father's arms.

"Oh, a little bird told me!" answered papa, laughing.—*Sunday-School Times.*

WHY THEY LOVED.

I LOVE little Lucy," sang Dickbird, as he swung in his cage; "she never forgets to give me fresh seed and water every day, and she keeps my cage neat and clean. When the days are fine, she always hangs me among the vines on the porch, where I sing for her my sweetest songs."

"I love little Lucy," purred old Tab from the rug by the fire. "Every morning and every evening she gives me a dish of nice, warm milk. She is kind to my kittens, too, and handles them gently. When I catch a fat mouse, I take it to Lucy, and she pets and praises me so that I feel very proud."

"Cluck, cluck! I love little Lucy," said Dozens, as she bustled about the yard, followed by her pretty brood. "She brings us our pan of maize-meal three times a day, and keeps fresh water in the yard for us to drink. Then she never frightens me by running after my chickens. I will lay my nicest eggs for Lucy."

"Bow-wow-wow! I love Harry," said Towser, "He keeps plenty of fresh, clean straw in my kennel, and never teases me when I am eating my dinner. When he goes for a walk, he takes me with him, and I will never let anything hurt him if I can help it."

"Moo, moo!" said the gentle, big-eyed cows to one another in the pasture. "Moo, moo! we love Harry. In the winter he puts us in a warm stable, and in the hot summer he does not hurry us. When the flies and mosquitoes torment us, he throws a sheet over us while he milks, then we do not overturn the milk-pail by trying to keep the flies off."

"If some one carelessly leaves the garden gate open, and we go in (for we do

not know any better), he drives us out quietly, and does not send his dog after us."

"We love Harry," neighed Whitefoot and Fleet. "If our load is heavy he does not hurry nor whip us. He does not fasten our heads up in unnatural and painful positions. When he feeds us, he is careful to measure our oats, so that we may have enough, and yet not so much as to make us ill."

"He never shouts angrily at us, and we are glad to travel our very best for Harry."—*Youth's Instructor.*

SUPPOSE.

SUPPOSE there were never any quarrels between brothers and sisters. Suppose brothers were never thoughtless and rough, and sisters never peevish or perverse.

Suppose girlish lips never said "I shan't," and boyish fists were never clenched to fight.

Suppose all this were true, would not some homes be brighter?

Suppose we see that it is true in our homes!—*Selected.*



HERE is a tiny nest not much larger than a big thimble. Take a peep inside. There you will see some tiny eggs no bigger than a pea. These will turn into wee birds about the size of the blue-bottle fly.

What very small bird can have built so tiny a nest? Here she comes. But she is so small and darts so quickly through the air, that we should hardly see her, if it were not for her bright feathers.

She looks like a flying jewel. She glows with all the colours of the rainbow. This is the little Humming-bird, the smallest of all the birds. She is not much bigger than a Bumble-bee.

This little mother does not fly right to her nest. She wants to keep it se-

cret. She rises high in the air. Then she darts like a flash of lightning down among the branches. She feeds her babies with the honey and the insects she has brought for them, from the flowers.

God made the glowing feathers, and the tiny wings of this beautiful little bird. All beauty comes from Him, and shows us a little of His own glory. He teaches her how to make her nest and feed her young.



Humming-bird.



IF ALL THE WINGS.

IF all the wings
And feathered things
Upon each woman's bonnet,
Some windy day
Should fly away,
And leave but ribbons on it,
More "sonnet" she by far would be—
Like maid of old-time sonnet.
Soon birds once more
Round every door
Would sing their morning matins,
In glad reprieve
Come every eve
In all their glist'ning satins,
Safe from annoy
To trill their joy,
While each we fledgling fattens.
Each sunny day,
In plumage gay,
A-toss on branches slender,
Their lilted lays
And psalms of praise
To God thanksgiving render
For lives so sweet,
And wings so fleet,
And lullabies so tender.
Though man neglect,
May God protect!
To harm them—O, what madness!
And what a dearth
Of joy and mirth—
Old Earth a-sob with sadness—
Without sweet notes
From feathered throats
To thrill the world to gladness.

—Grace Appleton, in *New York Home Journal*.

SEEKING FOR SUNLIGHT.

NATURALISTS have long been puzzled by a strange habit of the swifts and sand-martins, which, at twilight, when the day is darkening, ascend, as the lark does in the brighter hours, until they seem to be but tremulous specks, or become actually invisible. It has now been suggested, however, that the explanation is a simple one, and that the bird rises from the earth in search of the sunshine which, after the shadows have fallen upon the fields, still glows in the upper skies. And so it may be with the believer, who, when the eventide deepens around him, can rise in meditation, and thanksgiving, and prayer

to those higher regions where there are no earth-born clouds to obscure the light. And, as the tiny bird brings back warmth for the night, so he too may bring down with him to his daily round some reflection of the glory of Him "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto" (1 Tim. vi. 16).—*Christian*.

A CURE FOR WINTER SADNESS.

THE birds can teach us many things. They have a message to us all if we will give time to listen to them quietly. For the birds will speak to us in no other way. Only when we fold our hands and are absolutely still will they come near to us. And this is part of the blessing all nature brings: she tells no secrets to those who will not withdraw themselves into silence, but when we have come apart from the world her voice is as the voice of God. "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." A time of silence with the birds and with God is the best cure for winter sadness. They will almost certainly remind us of the words of Him who revealed the Father—"Fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." *Marianne Farningham*.

BIRD LIFE IN WINTER.

MOST of our British birds which in summer are wild and unapproachable, are at this season of the year quite the reverse, for it is astonishing what cold and hunger will do to tame them. As soon as the frost sets in, the worms and insects bury themselves deep in the earth, and then our feathered friends have to seek elsewhere for their food. Some of them, like the blackbirds and thrushes, obtain many a meal about the orchard and kitchen garden by picking and scratching under the dead leaves for the remnants of fruit and berries, and occasionally unearthing a few snails. The sparrows and greenfinches can always find plenty of their favourite food around the farmyard and cornstacks, whilst the robin is never far from the back door when the crumbs are shaken out after dinner.

But probably the most prolific supply comes from the newly-ploughed fields. It

is a most interesting sight to watch the swarms of birds tumbling and fluttering over one another in their eagerness, close to the heels of the ploughmen, who are always glad to see them there; for the farmer knows that they are doing an immense amount of good by picking up the grubs and wireworm, and the seeds of many kinds of weeds.

The rooks and starlings are the most numerous, but there are also many of the finch tribe, including a couple of rare hawfinches, some yellowhammers, wag-tails, and linnets, a few bunting-larks, and a stray tom-tit; whilst a tiny brown wren hops inquiringly about the truss of hay under the hedgerow, which is to serve for the horses' lunch, and succeeds in finding one or two spiders for its pains.

Over in the copse the jays and magpies are busy turning about the dry leaves where there is always something eatable to be found, and the woodpecker keeps up an incessant tap, tap, on the sunny side of the trees.

The scene is a most pleasing one to any lover of nature, for thanks to the mild winter, the birds are in good condition, and their plumage at its best, and one cannot but recall the words of the Psalmist, "These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them, they gather."

But the short January day draws to a close, the ploughs have ceased work, and the birds gradually fly away to their different roosting places. The rooks slowly wend their way to the great woods beyond the downs, and the starlings, with a good deal of noisy chattering, to the osier beds in the marshes. The linnets and larks find a warm place among the thick furze and gorse on the common; the wren and tom-tit have a cozy hole in the thatch of the barn; and the robin has already settled down in one corner of the wood pile. The jays and magpies will be content to nestle in some ivy-clad tree, whilst the woodpecker will hie him away to the hole in the ash, where last summer he and his mate raised a nest of young ones. By the time darkness sets in they are all fast asleep, having not a care for to-morrow, the day having proved sufficient for their need. *E COOPER.*

The Sense of Humour in Birds is not uncommon. I remember an old friend of my boyhood, a green parrot who was a good talker, but alas, no grizzled veteran of the fo'castle was possessed of a choicer or more complete vocabulary of profanity. Yet he never used it save at the most inopportune times. So sure as there were guests to dinner, he would wait until his white-haired master had begun to say grace, when he would break in with the most shocking oaths. Even when the precaution to put him in another room had been taken, his keen ear would detect the right moment, and he would scream out his curses.—*Selected.*



A NEW train has just been put on for the English service between Calais and Paris, the average speed of which is to be sixty-two miles an hour.

DURING the past two or three years there has been an increase in the area of land under poppy cultivation in India,—nearly 100,000 acres in three years. It appears that this is the result of a deliberate policy on the part of the Indian Government, which desires to make up the lessened profit due to Chinese competition.

At a recent meeting of the Society of Arts, presided over by Cardinal Vaughan, the Rev. Herbert Thurston, S.J., read a paper on "The History of the Rosary in all Countries," in which he showed that it had its origin in Mohammedan and Buddhist countries. The similarity between Catholicism and Buddhism is so marked as to indicate that they have a common origin.

ALTHOUGH the injustice of compelling the Welsh Nonconformists, who outnumber Welsh Churchmen three to one, to support the Church of England in Wales, was clearly stated in the House of Commons, the Welsh Disestablishment Bill was defeated. The result is nevertheless, as the *Daily Chronicle* says, distinctly encouraging, as it showed a decided increase in the number supporting the measure.

THE *Chicago Tribune*, which claims to keep an accurate record, says that in 1901 there were 118 legal executions in the United States,—one less than in 1900,—and 135 lynchings,—twenty more than the preceding year. Of the 135 persons who suffered death at the hands of the mob executioners, 107 were coloured. Nineteen were lynched for alleged criminal assault, and thirty-nine on the suspicion of murder. It appears that lynchings are on the increase in the United States, and that they take place on slighter provocation than formerly. If such a record came from Turkey whole columns would be written on the "unspeakable Turk," and the Sultan's unfitness to rule.

SOMEONE writing of the tenth chapter of Genesis, the chapter which tells of the division of the nations and the peopling of the earth, says: "It is of marvellous interest, and the most marvellous thing about it is that all modern investigation and discovery are only tending to confirm more absolutely its literal accuracy." This is the least marvellous thing about it; for it is no wonder at all that God knew what took place and was able to record it accurately. The marvellous thing is that professed Christians should wait on "investigation and discovery" to establish the truth of God's Word. Here is where the simple believer has the advantage: he can know things a long while before the "investigator" can, and he begins his study where the other leaves off.

SPEAKING of the terrible storms that prevailed not only about our coasts, but on the Continent and in America, the *Daily Chronicle* says: "The experience of the Ostend mail boat *Marie Henriette* teaches us how little the mechanical improvements which last century could make its special boast, are able to prevail against the elemental forces of nature." It would be well if men would lay these lessons more to heart. The proudest works of which man boasts so much will be laid low in a moment when the Lord ariseth "to shake terribly the earth."

A DIFFICULTY regarding precedence at the coronation is said to have arisen in the case of the Australian States, the Premiers of which object to being placed in a position inferior to that of the Premiers of New Zealand and other self-governing colonies. It is painfully amusing to see men of the world strive for position. The dignity that is injured by one's being placed a few yards behind somebody else certainly has not much to support it. Yet these matters are just as real to those concerned as the toys and games of little children are to them.

THE Bishop of Southampton has been uttering some truths about congregational singing, which we wish might be generally regarded. He wisely objects to requiring a congregation to sing words that express only the peculiar feelings of one man at some particular time. He objects to such words as "Tis weary waiting here," because "most people ought not to feel them;" he might have said "all;" for Christians are bidden to "rejoice evermore." As a general thing it may be said that hymns for congregational singing ought to be expressions of prayer and praise, and recognitions of the Divine attributes, rather than a recital of personal complaints or feelings.

It is reported from New York that Dr. Dawbarn, one of the surgeons of the New York City hospital, has been awarded a prize of two hundred guineas by the Philadelphia Academy of Surgery for the most notable medical achievement of the year. The operation for which the prize was given is for cancerous growths in the head, where they cannot be reached with the knife, to be cut out, and consists in tying the external carotid arteries on both sides of the head, thus cutting off the larger part of the supply of blood to the head. This deprivation of nutriment causes a gradual but steady lessening of the cancerous growth, and it is stated that "several patients have been cured by this daring operation."

Many will read this without perceiving that it indicates the means by which every person can at least ensure himself against cancer, if not cure a growth that is already started. It is only to regulate his diet so as to make it impossible for cancer-

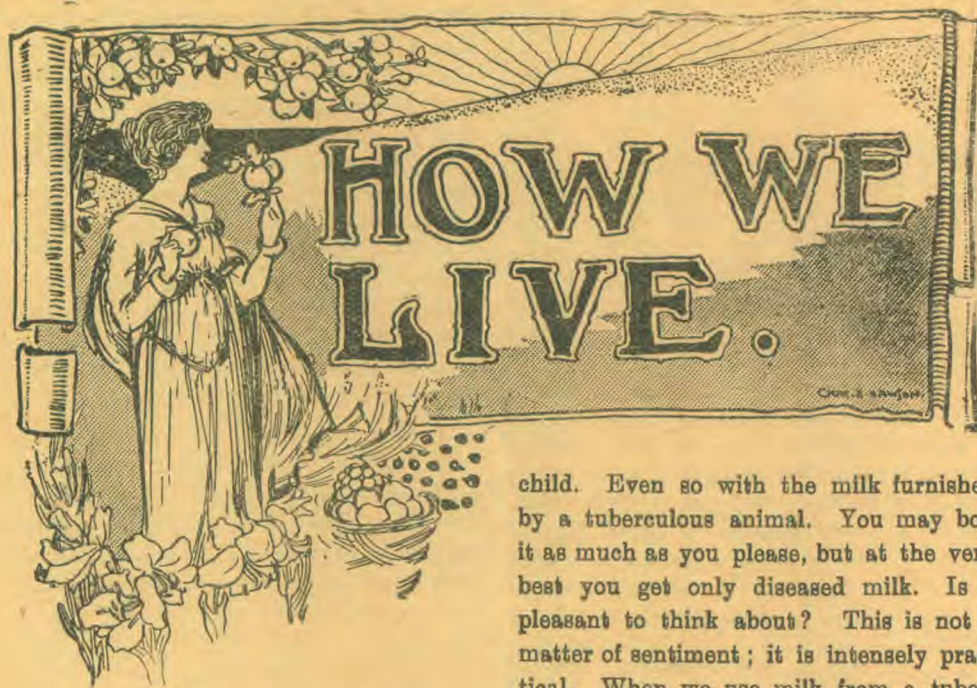
ous growths to form or enlarge. This does not mean semi-starvation, except perhaps for a time in a case that has made considerable headway; but it does mean the regulation of the diet, both as to quantity and quality, so that there will be no excess of nutritive material in the body, nothing that the system does not need and cannot at once use up. With a class of food that is light, and easily digested and assimilated, and which, instead of clogging the organs, tends to stimulate them to healthy activity, one may rest free from fear of cancer. Such a diet would omit flesh meat, and would consist largely of fruit. This is much better than to undergo a terrible operation.

THE *Catholic Times* is hopeful as regards the return of England to the Catholic Church, and not without some reason. On the anniversary of the late Queen Victoria's death, requiem masses were offered in many Anglican churches. The *Catholic Times* says—

"Assuredly it is strange to read of a Requiem Mass having been offered in a Protestant church for the soul of Queen Victoria. But there are, it appears, a very large number of Anglicans to whom such a service is no novelty. A convert from the Church of England has sent us a little book entitled, 'Before the Altar,' from which it is evident that to-day in some of the Anglican churches all the doctrines of our church, except Papal Supremacy are freely taught. . . . The book, which is published by Messrs. Mowbray & Co., is in its thirteenth edition. Our correspondent thus interprets the change: The Church of England is gradually returning to Rome, having strayed long enough. She sees the arms of the Mother Church open and stretched forth to welcome her, as they have ever been, and steadily she comes back, giving way now on one point, and again on another."

All this makes it more imperative that we should "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard," and to "preach the Word."

ONE of the greatest living authorities on China and the Chinese, Dr. A. H. Smith, for twenty-nine years a missionary of the American Board, and therefore certainly not prejudiced against missions and missionaries, declares that "the attitude of the Christian Church is not only a bar to the spread of the Gospel, but also a potent cause of the hostility of the Chinese to foreigners generally." The trouble lies in the striving after political influence and authority on the part of missionaries. In this the Roman Catholics are naturally the worst offenders, as they have had the most experience; but the Protestants are by no means guiltless. More and more are professed Protestants imbibing the idea that political influence is very advantageous to the church; and in proportion as they adopt this view do they become virtually Catholic; for Christianity coquetting and yoking up with civil power is what made the Papacy. Dr. Smith says that the vandalism and inexcusable cruelties of the foreign soldiers towards the non-combatant population, in the late Boxer troubles, have left seeds of undying hatred in the hearts of the people. Thus the advance of "civilisation" in China is a hindrance to the spread of the true Gospel. Yet a "remnant" will certainly be saved.



MILK AS FOOD FOR MAN.

HAVE you not often read that tuberculosis germs in milk are destroyed by boiling? and if so, have you heeded the oft-repeated exhortation to boil all the milk you use, and thus free yourself from all danger of the dread disease? If not, what explanation can you give for such indifference to the health of your family?

PERHAPS you have already taken this precaution, and think that now you run no risk. But are you willing to think about the case a little further? If you are, let us devote a quiet half-hour to it. You have killed the tubercle bacilli, rightly enough, but have you made the milk sound and wholesome thereby? Far from it. Although the milk cannot now directly convey to you the specific disease, consumption, it must be plain to everybody who stops to think, that, since boiling adds nothing to the milk, the article that comes from a diseased, debilitated cow cannot by that process be made equal to that which comes from a healthy animal.

WHAT is the condition of a person or an animal that has consumption? It is one of weakness and degeneration. The entire body is far below the normal state; every tissue is diseased. Any physician will say that a tuberculous mother ought not to suckle her infant, even if she has the strength to do so; not merely because of the danger of introducing the germs into its system, but because the milk will not contain sufficient nourishment for the

child. Even so with the milk furnished by a tuberculous animal. You may boil it as much as you please, but at the very best you get only diseased milk. Is it pleasant to think about? This is not a matter of sentiment; it is intensely practical. When we use milk from a tuberculous cow, we are taking food which, even though its disease germs be destroyed, tends indirectly to consumption, because it is an inferior product. Now when we remember that the great majority of cows are diseased, it is plain that by far the safest plan is to let milk entirely alone.

BUT possibly you will think that the milk that you get is not diseased, however much other milk may be affected, and that you can safely use it. Very well, suppose that it is so, although you cannot know that it is; even then we have not done with the subject. Did you read the article in the PRESENT TRUTH of January 16 on "The Sources and Prevalence of Impurity in Milk"? If not, do so; it is not exaggerated in the least. Suppose the cow be healthy; it still remains a fact that milk is one of the most unclean articles of diet in common use. Notice the black sediment in the bottom of the jug or cup when you pour out the milk. That is nothing but manure from the sides of the cow. You think that it is not nice to talk about such things. No; it is not; but what about eating them?

WE will not talk about this unpleasant subject any more. We will talk for a few minutes about milk taken from healthy cows, and kept as clean and sweet as it possibly can be. That is surely good food, is it not? Yes; it is good food for calves.

"But isn't milk the natural food of mankind?" Yes; human milk is; but will a man admit that cows' milk is his natural food? Hardly. Cows' milk is for calves, and human milk is for human babies, not

for men. Milk is the natural food of the infant, when it has no teeth; but when the teeth come, that is a sign that the system needs stronger food; and then the supply of milk naturally ceases. So it is evident that the use of cows' milk by men and women is a most unnatural habit. As a last resort, when nothing better is at hand, it may be given to infants and invalids, but even for them it is unnatural.

BUT if milk is an unnatural food, what shall we take in its place? If you would like clean, wholesome food instead of that which at the best is unnatural, then you have a wide range from which to select. If you would have milk, then learn from Eve as

"from sweet kernels pressed
She tempers dulcet creams."

From nuts you can prepare rich, delicious milk, which is both wholesome and nourishing.

IT is not necessary here to mention the vast number of foods that the Creator has caused to grow for us; but we will take that which is supposed to rank lowest in the scale, namely, fruit. Here we have food which takes the place of milk, as to fluidity. Now as to nourishment, compared with milk that is ordinarily delivered at your door, oranges have the same food value. Lemon juice has a trifle more nourishment. Grapes have between two and three times as much nourishment as milk, pound for pound. Cherries are something more than twice as nourishing.

THIS list might be greatly extended, but it is not necessary. All we wish is to show you that there is no fruit that is not quite as nourishing as milk, and that most fruit is much more so. Moreover fruit affords the most delicate flavours in great variety, can always be obtained absolutely clean, and is in general easily digested by the weakest stomachs. What more can we ask? You think that fruit is "too expensive;" but as a food, it is cheaper than milk; and even if it were not, you will surely not claim that we ought to eat that which is unclean because it is cheap. Let us eat that which is best, not as a "substitute for milk," but as the natural food, for which cows' milk has been unnaturally substituted.

THE use of tea and coffee is only a respectable sort of tippling, the effects of which may be as injurious as those following the use of alcoholic drugs.—*Medical Press.*

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EARNEST appeals and stirring "revival efforts" are not to be despised nor neglected. They have their place, but they can never take the place of earnest, diligent study of the Word of God. A solid Christian experience can never be built upon emotion, excitement, or the best resolutions. It is the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God, fixed in the mind, and appropriated by faith, that make us partakers of the Divine nature. "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Ps. cxix. 11. "Concerning the works of men, by the Word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyers." Ps. xvii. 4.

A Soft, Strong Voice.—"A soft answer turneth away wrath." This is true in the most literal sense. It is impossible to quarrel with one who replies in a soft voice,—not a weak, whining voice, but a firm, yet soft and low voice,—a voice which in its very tone shows that its softness is the softness of strength; that the speaker uses a low tone because he has the power to restrain himself. A high, strident tone, the tone in which people quarrel, is on the contrary a sign of weakness. We should study to cultivate low tones in speaking, especially for use with those who are excitable; and the best way to cultivate them is to let the peace of God rule in the heart; for the peace of God is strength.

Knowing and Telling the Truth—In order to tell the truth one must first know the truth. This is self-evident; nobody can tell the truth if he does not know the truth. What is truth? It is the Word of God—the Word of life. Christ said to the Father: "Thy Word is truth" (John xvii. 17); and as He is the Divine Word He also said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John xiv. 6.

How may we know the truth? "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John viii. 31, 32.

He who truly knows Christ knows the truth, and so can tell the truth. But the truth is the life; therefore, in order to tell the truth one must recognise Christ wherever there is life. He who does not know the life does not perceive the truth; and this does not mean simply that he cannot tell the truth about Jesus, but he cannot know or tell the truth about any created thing; because everything that exists is the visible manifestation of the working of life. This explains much of people's failure to report things correctly, and their unintentional misrepresentation of others. People who do not know the truth cannot be expected to tell the truth about what they see and hear; they cannot be expected to repeat or describe them accurately, since they do not see or hear correctly. They have defective sight and hearing. They do not wilfully deceive, but they are themselves deceived.

About the International Sunday-School Lesson.—Just a word concerning the article that appears each week with a footnote indicating that it deals with the International Sunday-school lesson. We know that many Sunday-school teachers make use of these articles in preparing their lessons; but they are not written solely for the benefit of the comparatively few Sunday-School teachers among the thousands of PRESENT TRUTH readers. If the articles were of value only to those few, we should hardly feel justified in devoting so much space to them; but the case is this, that the articles are as general in their nature, and as much designed for the general reader and Bible student as for teachers. Those who have no connection with any Sunday-school can read them with as much profit as those who do. We simply take advantage of the fact that some are specially interested in a certain portion of Scripture at a certain time, to provide matter of value to all. The footnotes are appended, noting that the articles in question are on the International lessons, because we seldom use the titles given on the lesson sheets.

The Place of Communion with God.—When God told Moses to let the people build a sanctuary, that He might dwell among them, He gave directions concerning the construction of the ark to contain His law, the cover to which was called the mercy-seat, and said: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from

between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony." Ex. xxv. 22.

That was only because the people did not know the simple truth that "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." But what are the facts? "The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy." Ps. cxix. 64. This mercy has intimate connection with God's law, as indicated by the ark in the sanctuary; for the verse continues, "teach me Thy statutes." God's presence is in heaven and earth (Jer. xxiii. 24), even in the very interior of the earth itself. Ps. cxxxix. 8. Therefore wherever we turn, wherever we are, we find the mercy-seat—the place of communion with God. Although God is everywhere, He is hidden from the eyes of those who are not spiritual; He dwells in secret; and whoever knows and recognises God's presence everywhere, and who holds communion with Him, at all times and everywhere, dwells in the secret place of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty.

The Genesis of Persecution—"And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia, and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake. Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council." Acts vi. 8-12.

It has a short family history. First somebody believes more truth than the leaders in the church do,—more than they have been teaching, and more than they have decided is "orthodox." Then these "leading men," who lead only backward, and not forward, begin to dispute with the reformer. Mind this, the new doctrine does not stir them up to renewed zeal and energy in teaching the people the truth, but only to combat it. It is much easier to raise objections to something that another is teaching than to teach. Then when they find that they cannot answer the reformer, they proceed at once to punish him as a criminal. If the Jews could have silenced Stephen by argument from the Bible, they would never have stoned him.