

# PRESENT TRUTH

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

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## "ONE OF THE PEOPLE."

(Deut. xviii. 9-22)†

WHEN the three disciples were with Christ "in the holy mount" where He was transfigured before them, there came a voice out of the cloud, a voice from heaven, which said, "This is My beloved Son: hear Him!" Compare Matt. xvii. 5 and 2 Peter i. 17, 18.

These words proved that Jesus was the one of whom the Lord spoke, when He said to Moses, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him." Deut. xviii. 18, 19.

In the words, "a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee," we have the hope of the Gospel—the hope which the Gospel holds out to mankind. "The Man Christ Jesus,"—the one Mediator between God and man,—was in all things "like unto His brethren" from among whom He was taken; and therefore we know that every man may, if he will, be in all things like unto Him. He was made like us, not that He might know what man

is, but that we might see what man ought to be, and what we may be.

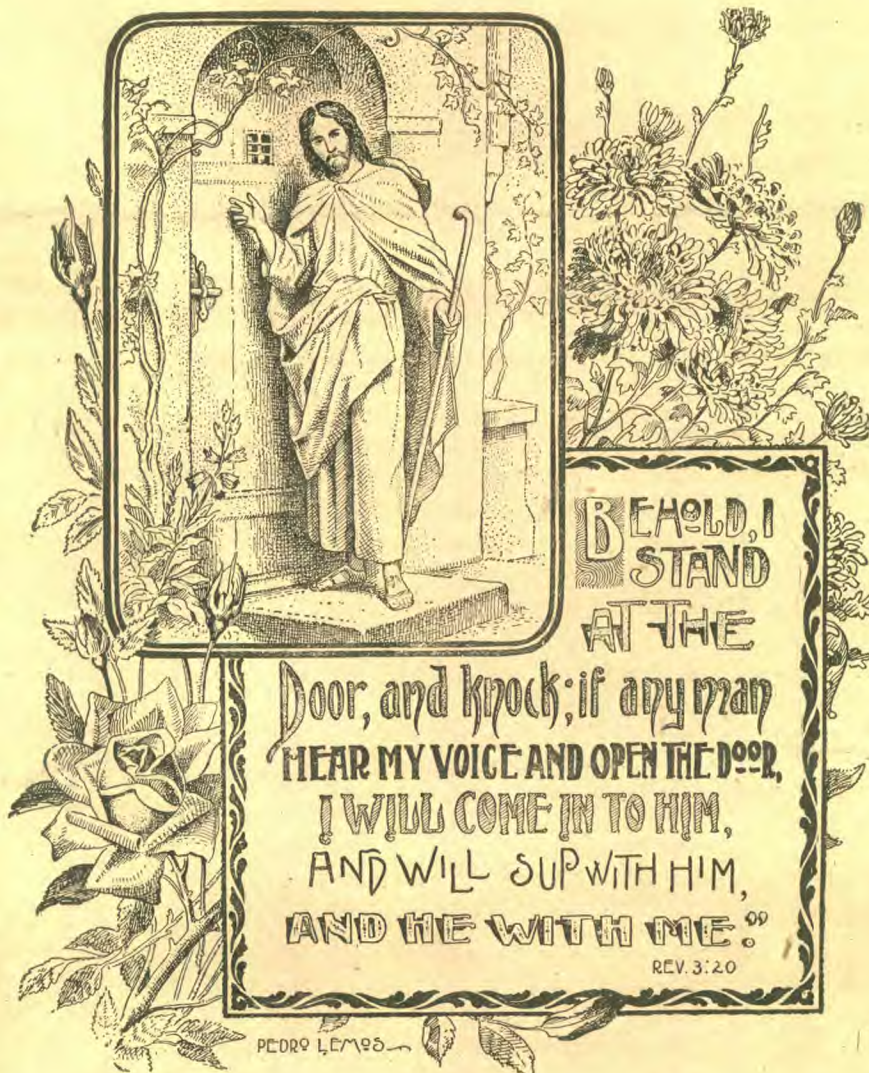
"Then Thou spakest in vision to Thy saints, and saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty; I have exalted One chosen out of the people." Ps. lxxxix. 19.

because He said, "I can of Mine own self do nothing;" it is the man fainting beneath the heavy cross, and then stretched upon it;—this is the Mighty One—the Man of the people.

This mighty One was born of a woman, and was subject to all the infirmities and disabilities of other men born of women. He is partaker of the same flesh and blood that all other men are, and is of Himself as weak as the weakest of them; for no man can possibly be weaker than not to be able to do anything. Therefore since God is no respecter of persons, we know that every person, every one of His brethren, may be a mighty one—"strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might;" "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power."

Jesus had no power on earth to resist and overcome sin, that we may not have. He had no advantage over us; when He came to this earth, He "emptied Himself," and became wholly like those whom He would redeem. If

it had been otherwise, He could not have been a perfect Saviour; for He saves us by His life,—His life in complete touch with ours. If there were a point where His life did not touch ours, just there He could do nothing for us; and since we must be saved as a whole or not at all, it is evident that if in a single point He failed in establishing a connection with us, He could not



Who is this "One that is mighty"? It is the helpless Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger; it is the boy of twelve who got lost in the crowd; it is the faint and weary traveller by the wayside well; it is the "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," offering up prayers and supplications with "strong crying and tears," asking for strength,

† International Sunday-school lesson for Sept. 7.



save us at all. He is "a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people," because He was "in all things" "like unto His brethren."

"This Jesus hath God raised up," and "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost," He sheds the same power upon His brethren. What he has attained to, all may gain through Him.

This is beautifully and forcibly set forth in the term frequently applied to Christ, namely, "the firstfruits." He is the firstfruits of the harvest that is to be gathered at the end of the world. A sample sheaf has been selected, and by it the whole crop is to be tested. He is the first; in all things He has the pre-eminence, and always will have; yet to all eternity He will still be "one of the people."

Christ was a Prophet like unto Moses, yet those who professed to believe Moses would not listen to Him. "We know that God spake unto Moses; but as for this fellow, we know not from whence He is," they said. John ix. 29. Thus it is to-day. Men are holding fast to a dead past, refusing to accept the living present. They know that the truth was proclaimed years ago, and there they take their stand, sure, as they think, of being safe. Looking backward, instead of forward and upward, they lose the light which shines now,—the same light that shone then, only brighter, as we get closer to it. And so we have the anomaly of men standing close to the light, and yet in far greater darkness than many who are far away. Let us give heed lest even to-day that come upon us, which God spoke through the prophet so many long years ago: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." The Prophet still speaks: Hear Him.

#### WARNINGS OF THE END.

AT the time of the universal deluge evidence of which is world wide, mighty convulsions of which we have faint conceptions took place. "The fountains of the great deep were broken up; the windows of heaven were opened." Water from above met water from below. Tempest, black and wild and fierce from the sky, met earthquake and catyolysm in the earth. Cities disappeared in a moment. Mountains sunk into the beds of the seas. Sea beds became mountains. Mighty

rocks split in twain, between which rivers flowed and valleys were formed. Diverse and dangerous elements were stored in close proximity. Enormous deposits of lime were made under great pressure, generating heat. Prodigious drifts of tropical trees, ferns, and foliage, driven by such winds and currents as mariners never faced, filled deep valleys, and the heavings of earth cast these up into hills and mountains covered with debris. Pressure generated heat, and out of these deposits grew our coal mines. Heaving earth and swelling sea and electric storms played strange pranks in the year of the flood. Even the earth itself seems to have been shaken out of place by the convulsion of nature over the increase of transgression. Earth's millions who would not be warned, who thought they knew more than God's prophet, perished; eight souls were saved by God's goodness and power in the ark.

But never again will the world be destroyed by water. The promise of God stands sure. "The world that then was . . . perished; but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." 2 Peter iii. 6, 7. The margin reads, "stored with fire." This may refer as well to the elements, the union of which causes fiercest fire, as to the actual fire itself. The coal, the oil, the lime, and water, the various gas-producing agencies, the chemicals, whose combination or contact means destruction, are all stored in the earth, waiting for that great day, of which all lesser similar days are predictions. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah were prophetic of world destruction and the perishing of its people, an example of those that should afterward live ungodly. 2 Peter ii. 6; Jude 7. Pompeii and Herculaneum were a warning; Lisbon was a warning; Caracas was a warning; Krakatoa was a warning; Charleston was a warning; St. Pierre was a warning—all merciful forecastings of the great cataclysm to come, when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." That men may escape all these, God has given these warnings all through the ages, more frequently repeated now in these days of intensity. Over and over has God told us that the atmospheric heavens and earth "shall perish; . . . they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a mantle shalt Thou roll them up, as a garment, and they shall be changed." "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage." Then it shall be said: "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved."

What is the lesson? It is that men shall not plant in earth their affections

nor bury here their treasure. When the prophet tells us that the earth is waxing old, he is also careful to tell us that God continues, that He is the same, that His years have no end. Heb. i. 11, 12. In the great convulsion to come, all that is of God and righteousness will not be shaken. "The kingdom that cannot be shaken" He offers freely to the weary wayfarers of earth and its disappointments. Heb. xii. 28, 29. He pleads with all, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain glory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

M. C. WILCOX.

#### THE COMPLETE PREPARATION.

THE work to be accomplished in this generation is "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Such a complete transformation will be wrought by the power of the Gospel that the Christians who are living when the Lord comes can be taken bodily into heaven without danger of introducing sin into that holy place. "We which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." In view of this event the Lord's purpose for us is expressed in the inspired prayer: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But before the Lord comes, there are experiences to be passed through for which a special preparation is necessary in order to live through them. A complete Gospel is necessary in order to make a complete preparation for the coming of the Lord, and this Gospel must renew the whole man. It is true that we cannot save ourselves by what we eat and drink, but it is also true that we can do much to hinder the Lord from fulfilling His purpose of salvation in us. We are to co-operate with Him, recognising and accepting His life in its purity, and doing nothing to render His gift of none effect. Those who are prepared to stand during the seven last plagues must be obedient to all God's laws, those for the body as well as any others, and this obedience must be the obedience of faith. In that time of trouble the Lord will not work a miracle to preserve those who have neglected to walk in the light which He has given to us on the principles of physical health. The remarkable advancement which has been made in the knowledge of health principles is in itself a sign of the soon coming of the Lord. All this light



is necessary for us in preparation for that great event.

#### ONLY ONE GOSPEL.

We sometimes speak of "the Gospel of health" just as we speak of "the Gospel of salvation," or "the Gospel of God's grace," but we ought not to think that "the Gospel of health" is a different gospel from "the Gospel of God's grace," or "the Gospel of salvation." There is only one Gospel. There is only one Saviour. He is a complete Saviour. He saves from all sin, which means that He saves from the transgression of all God's laws as applied to the whole being. The fulness of the Gospel includes health for body, soul, and spirit. It is restoration for the whole being. Nothing short of this is the complete Gospel. It was this complete Gospel which was taught by the Master Himself. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." And this same Gospel is the one which must be preached in this day "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Through this Gospel will be realised the Lord's own will, as expressed through the beloved disciple: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." This was the experience of Daniel and his companions, as they were loyal to the truth revealed to them concerning the diet which was best for them. It ought to be the experience of the people of God in this time. We must believe in the fulness of the one Gospel, and so open the way for testimony to its blessedness in our lives.

W. W. PRESCOTT.

#### "IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER."

SAINTS have written and preached mysteries about prayer, but Paul speaks with the simplicity of a wise teacher, and speaks with child-dialect to child-life. Can anything be more simple? "In every thing"—do not limit the "every," it includes greatest things and smallest trifles—"in every thing pray." In the remarkable life of "Rabbi" Duncan, of Edinburgh, who climbed out of atheism through pantheism, first into dim light, and then into the light of God, we learn that one instantaneous effect of receiving the certainty of the knowledge of God was that he was irresistibly inclined to tell Him everything. And in humble measure I have experienced that, in a curious way, small things mentioned to Him get righted in the mind or life, for He has almighty strength for our greatest need and is exquisitely tender for our least.—*The Bishop of Durham.*

"Let your requests be made known unto God."



#### CAUSES OF ISRAEL'S CAPTIVITY.

THERE is hardly any portion of the Bible story that receives less attention than that relating to the period of the restoration of Israel to their own land, from the captivity to Babylon. And yet there is hardly any portion of the Bible story that is more full of the very life and movement of God in human affairs; hardly any portion more full of valuable lessons. Indeed, there is no portion of the Bible story so full as is this of striking illustrations of how easily, how promptly, and how triumphantly, God can interpose with kings and powers in behalf of His cause and His people in the earth.

The books of the Bible especially embraced in this Bible story are, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The period of the world covered in the narrative is about from B.C. 536 to the crucifixion.

God had brought Israel out of Egypt, and, having separated them from all the nations, had placed them in the land of Canaan, "the glory of all lands," to be the light of the world. The chief reason why He placed them in the land of Canaan—Palestine—is that then, and for ages afterward, that little country was the pivot of the world. Between Egypt and the eastern and northern nations there was then, and for ages afterward, constant intercourse, practically all of which necessarily passed through Palestine. Yet later, when the weight of empire passed to the west, still Palestine was the centre around which swirled the world's affairs.

At that centre of the world's great currents God set His people to be His light to all the nations, whose people by thus constantly passing and repassing through that land, should behold that blessed people and glorious land, and be led to say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people" (Deut. iv. 6); and thus be led to inquire for the source of this wisdom and understanding, this prosperity and glory, and so find the true God, and turn from idolatry to the worship of Him. God intended that by His splendid presence abiding with them, His people should thus influence all the nations for good; and thus to carry on His fulfilment of His promise to Abraham, "In thee shall all nations be blessed."

Therefore, of Israel God had said, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Num. xxiii. 9. But the people would not have it

so. They exclaimed and insisted, "Make us a king," "that we may be like all the nations." 1 Sam. viii. 4-20. They had their way; they rejected God, and not only became "like all the nations," but did "worse than the heathen" round them. And then, as with the nations that were in that land before them, the land could no longer endure them, and so must spew them out. They were carried captive to Babylon, and the land was left desolate, that it might have rest from the sickening iniquities with which it had been afflicted.

The special sins that brought the captivity of Israel and the desolation of the land, were:—

1. Oppression and injustice. "O house of David, thus saith the Lord, Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest My fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings." Jer. xxi. 12. "Thus saith the Lord, Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place," "then will I cause you to dwell in this place." Jer. xxii. 3; vii. 5-8.

2. Oppressing and defrauding the labourer in his wages, while they in their wealth revelled in luxury. "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; that saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermillion." Jer. xxii. 13, 14.

3. Neglect of the poor. "Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him; was not this to know Me? saith the Lord. But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness." Jer. xxii. 15-17.

4. Disregard of the Sabbath. Jer. xvii. 21-27.

5. The worship of the sun, with all the abominations that go with it. Eze. viii. 3-18.

6. Rejection of the word and message of the Lord in reproof, counsel, and warning. Jer. xxvi. 1-23; xxxvi. 22, 23; xxxvii. 1-21; xxxviii. 1-28.



But the very crowning abomination of all was,

7. Their making the temple of God and the forms of worship of the Lord their confidence of salvation, while practising all these other iniquities and abominations; their holding God to a strict accountability for His promises, while they ran perfect riot against every precept upon which those promises could possibly rest; their making capital of God's temple and ordinances and services designed to put away sin, as security in their complete abandon in the indulgence of sin: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these." [Luther's translation: "Here is the Lord's temple, Here is the Lord's temple, Here is the Lord's temple."] Jer. vii. 3, 4. "Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us." Micah iii. 9-12. "Behold, ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? ["There is no danger to us, though, or as long as, we do such abominations."—Luther's Translation.] Is this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord." Jer. vii. 8-11.

"Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house [of the Lord] as the high places of the forest." Micah iii. 12. "Go ye now unto My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel. And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, and ye answered not; therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by My name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim. Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither

make intercession to Me; for I will not hear thee." Jer. vii. 12-16.

Because of that deplorable, even desperate, condition of things in Jerusalem, the Lord of Jerusalem was compelled to liken her to Sodom, declaring that she and Sodom were sisters; and further: "As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abominations before Me: therefore I took them away as I saw good." Eze. xvi. 48-50. And consequently Ezekiel saw in a vision a man with a writer's ink-horn by his side, passing throughout Jerusalem, setting a mark upon the foreheads of the men who were sighing and crying for all the abominations that were done therein. Following him were six other men, each with a slaughter-weapon in his hand, to "slay utterly" all to whom they should come, except that they were to "come not near any man upon whom is the mark." Eze. ix. 1-7.

Now this whole narrative has its parallel in the last days, even in our own time. General wickedness prevails (Matt. xxiv. 12; 2 Tim. iii. 13); oppression, injustice, defrauding the labourer in his wages to increase the overloaded coffers of the rich, who revel in luxury—all this is indulged (James v. 1-8); in the midst of this abundance to boundless millions there is such neglect of the poor that God is obliged to turn His attention especially to them (Luke xiv. 21-23); the Sabbath is disregarded (Isa. lvi. 1, 2; lviii. 13, 14); the sun—in the Sunday—is honoured (Dan. vii. 25; Rev. xiv. 9-12); the Word of God in counsel and warning, concerning all the evil and impending destruction, is rejected (2 Peter iii. 3-7, 10-14; Matt. xxiv. 37-39).

And, also, there prevails the same chief abomination of all—the indulgence of a whole catalogue of iniquities under the form and profession of godliness (2 Tim. iii. 1-5);—so that, looking again upon it all, God is compelled to liken it also to Sodom, because the last days of the world are as the last days of Sodom: "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." Luke xvii. 28, 29, 30.

And while this destruction and desolation is impending, the heavenly messenger (Rev. vii. 2, 3) passes through the world, setting the royal seal—the heavenly mark—upon the servants of God, who are sighing and crying for all the abominations that are done in the land; and after him

pass the messengers of judgment, slaying utterly all upon whom is not found the mark. Rev. xiv. 9, 10; xv. 1; xvi. 1-21.

Thus certainly and thus fully does the period which culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of that land, contain lessons of deep meaning to the people who live in the last days—even now—when all the cities of the nations and of the world are to be broken down, and the earth made desolate, "at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger." Jer. iv. 26; Rev. xvi. 19; Zeph. i. 14-18.

So, also, does the period of the restoration from that ancient destruction and desolation contain lessons of deep meaning to the people of God of all times, and especially of the last days.

A. T. JONES.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S HOME.

God is the Christian's ever peaceful home:  
In every threatening storm, his safe retreat;  
His comfort when bereavement seems complete.  
All holy fellowships at Mercy's throne,  
May be renewed. Here distance is unknown.  
All share one life—God's life of peace and love;  
More precious this than pearly gates above  
Or jasper walls, though built on precious stone.  
Home of my soul, how dear art Thou to me!  
A thousand times more sweet than homes of earth

Which I have known—whate'er their memories be  
Of happy childhood or of priceless worth.  
Those were but tents, built on life's shifting sands.  
In Thee I find the House not made with hands.

PHILO.

#### GOD'S SECRET CHAMBERS.

WHEN a devout disciple takes God's Word in his hands, for studious and thoughtful meditation, he naturally lifts his heart to Him who alone can unveil the eyes of his understanding to behold wondrous things out of His law. Ps. cxix. 18. As he reads and searches, meditating therein, the same Spirit who first inspired the Word, illumines his mind. New light is thrown upon the sacred page, so that what was obscure or hidden, becomes visible and legible; and new clearness of sight and insight is given to the spiritual organ of vision, so that it becomes more capable of seeing, more keen-sighted and far-sighted.

Let those who have felt this double effect of the Spirit's teaching bear witness to the marvellous result. The Bible becomes a transformed book. It was before the best of all books, but it is now the Book of God—a chamber of disclosed mysteries—a house of many mansions, in which new doors constantly open into new apartments, massive and magnificent, God's art galleries, museums of curious things, treasures of celestial gems.

The devout student is filled with wonder, transported with delight. Words open



with new meanings until we look through them into depths and heights, breadths and lengths, that are infinite. We are looking at a firmament which was before clouded—but the clouds are parting and heavenly constellations are visible. Meanwhile the eye has become telescopic, and where before we saw a few scattered stars, and an indistinct nebulous cloud, everything is ablaze with the glories of countless and many coloured lights.

When the Author of the Word becomes Instructor and Interpreter of His own text-book, we read Heaven's great Classic with the notes and comments of the divine Author himself. And so he who devoutly searches the Scriptures, finds in them both eternal life and the testimony of Jesus; the reverent, searching, prayerful study of the Word of God is the cure of all honest doubt as to its divine origin, and the all convincing proof of its plenary inspiration.

But, as the first Psalm teaches, he who would find such delight in the Law of the Lord must meditate therein day and night. He must be a sort of sacramental tree of life, planted by the rivers of water. Mark the instructive, emphatic metaphor. The tree is permanently planted in the soil. Its roots are fixed organs of nutrition, constantly subordinate to the double purpose of growth and fruitfulness. Through the spongelets at their extremities, the tree takes up the moisture of the river into itself, transmuting the water into sap, which deposits woody fibre in the branches and becomes juice in the fruit.

The disciple is planted by the River of God,—the Word which goeth forth out of His mouth; he takes up into himself the very water of life, transmuting truth into character, and precepts and promises into practice. And so he who reads God's Word and, like the cattle that chew the cud, ruminates upon it, comes to know God through His Word, as we come to know men through their candid and self-revealing utterances.

To meditate on God's Word introduces us to the secret chambers of God's thoughts, and imparts insight into God's character. He becomes sure there is a God, who sees Him unveiled in the Scriptures, hears His still small voice in their audience chambers, traces His glorious footprints on their golden pavements; and in times of temptation, trial, sorrow, doubt or any other need, God's words are so brought to his remembrance, and applied by the Spirit to his needs, that they become to such a reader, individually, God's words to him. He consults Holy Scripture as the oracles of God, and the oracles give answer. This is one of the closed mysteries, a stumbling-block of mysticism, or the foolishness of fanaticism, to the unbelieving; but, to him whose experience has been enriched by it, an open mystery, a fact as indisputable as anything in the realm of matter.—*Dr. A. T. Pierson.*

### WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

**I**N all the details of life, Christians are to follow the principles of strict integrity. These are not the principles that govern the world; for there Satan is master, and his principles of deception and oppression bear sway. But Christians serve under a different master, and their actions must be wrought in God. They must put aside all desire for selfish gain.

To some, deviation from perfect fairness in business deal may look like a small thing, but our Saviour does not thus regard it. His words on this point are plain and explicit: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." A man who will overreach in a small matter will overreach in a large matter if the temptation comes to him.

Christ's followers are obliged to be more or less connected with the world in business matters. In His prayer for them the Saviour says, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil." Christians are to buy and sell with the realisation that the eye of God is upon them. Never are they to use false balances or deceitful weights. God says:—

"Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. . . . But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God." "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. . . . Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge. . . . When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."

In every action of life the true Christian is just what he desires those around him to think he is. He is guided by truth and uprightness. He does not scheme; therefore he has nothing to gloss over. He may be criticised, he may be tested; but through all, his unbending integrity shines out like pure gold. He is a friend and benefactor to all concerned with him; and his fellow-men place confidence in him; for he is trustworthy. Does he employ labourers to gather in his harvest? He

does not keep back their hard-earned money. Has he means for which he has no immediate use? He relieves the necessity of his less fortunate brother. He does not seek to enlarge his possessions by taking advantage of the untoward circumstances of his neighbour. He accepts only a fair price for that which he sells. If there are defects in the articles sold, he frankly tells the buyer, even though by so doing he may seem to work against his own pecuniary interests.

A man may not have a pleasant exterior; but if he has a reputation for straightforward, honest dealing, he is respected. Stern integrity covers many unpleasant traits of character. A man who steadfastly adheres to the truth wins the confidence of all. Not only do Christians trust him; worldlings are constrained to acknowledge the worth of his character.

Satan knows full well what a power for good is the life of a man of unbending integrity, and he puts forth zealous efforts to prevent men living such lives. He comes to them with alluring temptations, promising them wealth, position, worldly honour, if they will but yield the principles of righteousness. And he has much success. Thousands yield to his bribery. The desire for wealth, for fame, for position, is too powerful for them to resist. Forgetting God, they withdraw their affection from Him, and worship mammon.

From the sad history of many who have failed we learn the danger of prosperity. It is not those who have lost their property who are in greatest danger, but those who have obtained a fortune. Adversity may depress, but prosperity frequently elevates to presumption. Prayer is often requested for men and women in affliction; and this is right. But those in prosperity are more in need of the prayers of God's servants; for they are in greater danger of losing salvation. In the valley of humiliation men walk securely while they reverence God and make Him their trust. On the lofty pinnacle, where praise is heard, they need the help of special power from above.

Seeing the fearful danger of love of gain, Paul writes: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. . . . Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation



against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

The temptation comes to a man to pursue a wrong course for the sake of gaining money. He yields, and commits himself to that which the Lord cannot indorse. And daily the spiritual life of that man grows weaker. Daily he wanders farther from true happiness.

The sad history of Judas is a lesson for all. Judas was blessed with wonderful opportunities. He was with Christ during the entire period of the Saviour's ministry. Day by day for three years he listened to His instruction and witnessed His marvellous works. Had he been willing to renounce all selfishness, the Lord would have used him to advance His kingdom. But Judas loved gain. He was a speculator. He thought that he could manage the finances of the church, and so make money. Stronger and stronger grew his covetousness, till at last he sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver.

How many to-day are like Judas betraying their Lord! How many are sacrificing principle for the sake of worldly gain! Thus they crucify Christ afresh, and put Him to open shame.

True religion is not an experiment. It is an actual imitation of Christ. God keeps a personal account with every man, testing him by the practical results of his work. Soon will be heard the call, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

### IMPROVEMENT OF TALENTS.

THE man who received the one talent "went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money." Just what he did, many to-day are doing. But let them not think that when Christ comes to reckon with His servants, He will be satisfied with the return of that only which was given. He will call for His own "with usury." The Lord expects every one to increase His gifts. Every provision has been made for us to do this. He who does not improve his talents is regarded by the Lord as a slothful, untrustworthy servant, unworthy of admittance into the heavenly courts.

The denunciations of God are not confined to the most revolting sins. In the day of judgment special reference will be made to the neglect of doing what might have been done, but was not done because of a lack of the qualification Christ died to place within the reach of every one.

Take the case of one who claims to know Christ, but who allows self-seeking to hold the largest place in his life. Busied with the things of self, he forgets God. He fails of improving his talents, and thus disqualifies himself for the sphere of usefulness he might have filled. Through his unfaithfulness, souls are lost. He has disappointed his Master. Upon him must

fall the penalty of failing to fulfil God's purpose. God holds him responsible for the evil resulting from his neglect, for the souls he might have saved had he been faithful to his trust. Every hour spent in careless inaction, in indifference to God's claims, is an hour lost for ever. Every opportunity for service allowed to pass unimproved means an eternal loss.—*Selected.*

### A LIVING MESSAGE.

"We need not, in order to be evangelical, use the stilted phraseology and quaint illustrations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We are to preach to the living men and women of to-day. The sins of the Babylonians, of the ancient Greeks and Romans, may be very interesting to the antiquarian, but little good would attend their discussion in the pulpit of to-day. We need to apply God's truth to the sins that are prevalent in our own times."



### THE POWER OF TRUTH.

THE appeal on the Sabbath question that came to my heart from the native Africans was more striking than anything I had heard from any other source. At that time I was accustomed to make use of Sunday, which I then strictly kept, for doing itinerant mission work in the native villages.

One Sunday morning I visited a M'ganja chief, who lives about thirty miles south of the junction of the rivers forming the boundary between the British and Portuguese territory. This tribe is mentioned by Livingstone and also by Riverton Young, who speak of their peculiar worship, which is different from that of any other people in the world. They believe that they have living with them a daughter of God,—a prophetess whom they call "the woman-child of God." They claim that this woman receives Divine messages in the night-time, and that she must always dwell in the house sacred to her as a prophetess, and must stay alone on the mountain. In her hut they have a skull, which they say is that of a chief having supernatural wisdom, and that when he died he went to live with God. They think that God tells this man the message He has for that tribe, and He speaks through the bones of his mouth, and the woman listens and hears the message

that God sends through him. That is their simple belief.

As I came near the village of this chief, I saw a number of people, and heard a great noise of drums beating. They had some large jars, each holding about six gallons of bombi—a sour fermented drink made from soaked maize. This beverage does not appear to be very intoxicating. When these natives propose to have a good time they sit together for one or two days drinking bombi, and they do not seem to get drunk, but only noisy and lively. They do not stagger, but get into a happy frame of mind, without becoming actually intoxicated. However, we do not encourage, but rather discountenance, the drinking of this or any other fermented liquor.

I asked the people if I might stay and speak to them a little about the message of God, but they showed no inclination to hear. I found the chief, and asked his permission to speak to his people, but he gave me no encouragement. All the indications were that I must move on, but it is not convenient for a man to pass on when he has a special message for people who have not heard it; so I did not go.

I thought, "I am at my wit's end, but God is not at the end of His resources." So I closed my eyes, and began to sing a little hymn, with a sense of personal enjoyment and peace in the thought that God can make a way for the entrance of His Word when we can see none. When I had finished one hymn I sang another, "When He cometh." The natives do not know the meaning of jewels, so we have a rather free translation, something as follows, "Jesus is coming, to read the hearts, to read God's good ones, and clothe them with beauty, in shining garments."

After singing this I paused and opened my eyes, and looked down at some little children who were gathered close round me, looking very earnestly into my face. I spoke a few words to them, and looked from them to the mothers, very cautiously, for it is surprising how an African woman will shrink out of sight if she is looked at. Then I saw the chief and a number of the men standing round, and I commenced to speak, believing that God had opened the way. I always keep this thought in mind when speaking: that the blessing will be, not according to one's wisdom or the amount that he may know, but according to his faith and the power of God. The results will be in proportion to this, rather than to the wisdom of your utterances. However little you may have to give, see that you do not hold back that little. I am a great admirer of the words of Peter: "Such as I have give I unto thee." If we give the little, the best we have, though lacking in many ways, faith in God working with us will accomplish what is lacking. In this spirit I tried to speak.



Lest the people or chief should try to stop me, I spoke on without pausing for about twenty minutes. Then I stopped, for the chief was looking at me with a hard, cold gaze. I said, "Perhaps some of you have something in your minds that you would like to say. I do not wish to do all the talking; I will wait and hear anything you have to say." This I usually do, for we can never tell how God will work. We are glad to pluck a beautiful flower, no matter how unlikely the place where it grows; and we should be just as ready to receive truth wherever we may find it, whatever the hand that presents it. We should ever be on the alert for truth, and always keep an open mind.

I was struck with the expression of the chief's face, and I never recall that man but what his face reappears before me with the remarkable look he had as he said, "I have something to say. When you first talked, you said you would tell us some of the words that God had spoken, and we have been listening for these words of God, but you have only told us your own words. You have not told us any words that God spoke. Do you know any of the words that God spoke to men? If you do, we want to hear them."

I took my Bible, and as I turned the leaves I thought, "Where is there any passage that declares that God Himself spoke to men?" I confess that up to that time I had never thought of using the Commandments of God. We are so accustomed to speaking of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the necessity of faith, and confining ourselves to this, that I had never thought of referring to the Commandments of God as having any importance in this Gospel age. But when this man said, "Tell us some of the words of God," my mind turned only to this one passage in Exodus xx.: "And God spake all these words, saying," etc., and I began to read them the exact words.

I dwelt particularly on the first and second commandments, because of their worship of "the daughter of God," before referred to. The second commandment seemed very appropriate to their case. I said I had come to bring them a message, not only from the Father, but from His Son, who left His beautiful home in Heaven, His Father's dwelling-place, and came down to earth, and lived and suffered as a man, even unto death, to bring them life and light. Their faces clouded at once when I spoke of the Son, the Man-child of God. They said they did not want to hear of the Son of God; they had the daughter of God. I said that if the messages of the daughter of God were really inspired of God, her words would agree with the

words of God. Here was a good chance for them to prove if she were indeed a prophetess. Had she taught them the laws of God? I will not tell you all that they said on this point. The first and second commandments seemed to rebuke them.

#### A MISSIONARY REBUKED BY A HEATHEN.

Then I proceeded with the third and fourth commandments, intending to go on swiftly, for I had before had a little trouble with the fourth commandment. But I read it truly and carefully, just as it stands. I was surprised at the eagerness of the chief, who said, "Tell us which is that day; we are ready to give God His day. We have never heard before that God required us to give Him one day. That we did not know. Tell us which is the seventh day, and we will watch and mark, and give that day to God."

I began to think that the man's heart was opening, since he was willing to give a day to God. He asked me very pointedly, "Which is that day? I want to know." I thought, "Will it be enough to say that this is the day? Why should I confuse this man's mind by telling him about the change?" I almost fell under that temptation. But I thought, "No; God requires us to be faithful in little things. I will tell him the exact truth."

So I said, "To-day is the first day of the week. Yesterday was the last day of the week, so yesterday was the seventh day. Almost all white men worship on the first day, for that is now our custom." I was again surprised at the swift retort of this man. He leant forward and said, "Who gave you white men power more than God? Have you power to make laws, and put the laws of God under your own? What is this you tell us, that white men worship on the first day, when God has told them to give him the seventh day?"

It seemed strange to me that I had gone to talk to these men about the Lord Jesus Christ, and they had brought me again to this trouble over the Sabbath. They persisted in saying that they did not want to hear about the Son of God, and there seemed no way for me to talk to them about anything but this troublesome Sabbath question. At last I said, "If you like to keep the seventh day you can do so, and I will keep on as my fathers did, until I find out that I am making a mistake."

The chief said, "We shall not keep the white men's day; we shall keep God's day. We shall remember that yesterday was the seventh day, and count from that day." I said, "You have dragged this thing out of me; I did not come to talk about it. I have told you the truth, and you must do as you choose." I explained to them that

we kept the first day because the Son of God left the grave on that day, but still it seemed to make no impression upon the chief, and I went on my journey.

#### A CASE FOR JUDGMENT.

I thought that this was an end of the matter so far as I was concerned. However, I had taken with me on that journey an Ajowa youth, who had been with me for years, and another young man, and after our return home I was surprised one day to receive a visit from a body of young men, about fourteen in number, led by these two. They came to me, saying, "If you please, we should like to have a case for judgment at law (which is what they call a council) about the Sabbath." I consented, and we sat down. One of the young men who had accompanied me began by saying that they had been thinking and praying a great deal about the Sabbath. I had taught them to cook all their food and do all their work on the seventh day, so that they would be free to worship God on the first day. This had made them listen very carefully to my talk with the chief about the Sabbath, and they were surprised to find that I, who was a teacher, had to be taught by this man, who had never before heard the words of God, and that I had not been able to answer him. It seemed to them that he had showed me from the Word of God that the day He has given us to keep is the seventh day, yet I was teaching them very carefully how to keep the first day. They thought that perhaps in this matter the white man was wrong, and now they had brought the case to me for judgment.

I answered them thus: "My judgment is, if your hearts say to you, 'The seventh day God requires me to keep,' you must do that which your heart tells you, for 'if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.' I keep Sunday because my heart condemns me not (although it was beginning to), but I have not come here to put you in bondage. You are not my slaves; you are free. If God requires you to keep the seventh day, let it be so." They seemed sorry to differ from me in any way, yet they said they would like to be free to keep the seventh day, and they did. But at that time I did not allow them to work on the first day. Then my work-people said, "This is a good way; let us keep the two days also." I could not consistently object, and so for quite a long time the two days were observed on that plantation. Afterwards, having given the matter further thought, I myself began to keep the Bible Sabbath, uniting with the Seventh-day Baptists, and so that station became a Sabbath-keeping mission; but of course those who observed the first day of the week were free to rest on that day, while the others laboured.

JOSEPH FOOTE.





## DOMESTIC BLISS.

HAPPY they, the happiest of their kind,  
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate  
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.  
'Tis not the coarser tie of human law,  
Unnatural oft and foreign to the mind,  
That binds their peace, but harmony itself,  
Attuning all their passions into love;  
Where friendship full exerts her softest power,  
Perfect esteem, enlightened by desire  
Ineffable and sympathy of soul;  
Thought meeting thought and will preventing will,  
With boundless confidence; for naught but love  
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.

—James Thompson.

## THE CONVERSION OF WALTER HOWARD.

## A TRUE STORY.

HIGH up on a hill, almost alone on the block at Harrison and Main Streets, reached by long flights of steps, stands the old St. Mary's Hospital. At the time of our story it was occupied, and probably is still, as a sailors' boarding-house, or home. Managed under the auspices of the Ladies' Seamen's Friend Society, its features are distinctively moral, and in compliance with one of the provisions of its lease, it sustains a pastor, or chaplain, to care for the spiritual interests of its guests.

The manager of the home was a tall, pleasant-looking man, commanding in appearance and well adapted to his position. Kind and fatherly to his guests, willing to help the deserving needy who appealed to him for aid, but stern toward those who attempted to defraud him or impose upon his kindness, he received the respect and admiration of the "jolly tars" who found at the home a refuge from the "land sharks," whom they feared more than the sharks of the sea.

Gaming and drink were prohibited and the sailors' money was held at their demand in the large safe at the office, except when an intoxicated guest came in off the streets demanding his hard-earned wages, when it was very sensibly withheld; and when he became sober, he was sheepishly grateful that it had been kept from him.

"What can I do for you, young man?" the captain asked of a youth who had been

standing at the counter in the office awaiting his turn to speak to him.

"I want to go to sea, captain, and I was told you could get me a job on board ship. Can you help me out?"

The captain looked the young man over. He saw at a glance the shabby clothes that had once been good material, the thin, pale cheeks that should have been round and ruddy, and the curly flaxen hair that fell becomingly about his regular features. It was not a bad face that he saw, so he asked kindly, "Why do you want to go to sea? you are no sailor."

"I'm tired of the land, that's all," was the reply. "I am a good cook, and I know I could suit at that job if I can't furl a sail. Men are not born sailors. I could get a job in the marine service," he added, "but I should like my line better."

"The sea-faring chances, my boy, aside from the marine service, are very poor at present. The hard times and the strikes have affected the shipping business to such an extent that good sailors are working their passage out of this port."

At this point the captain was called away, and the boy, considering his interview unfinished, awaited his return. It was a full hour before he finally appeared, and he seemed surprised to find the lad still there.

"I should hate to see you enter the marine service," the captain said, taking up the subject where he had dropped it. "It's too rough a life altogether. I'll tell you what to do. Stay around here with us a few days, and if you don't find what you want, I'll see what I can do for you. The steward will show you a room," and he waved him away.

On the day following, after a fruitless search for work along the water-front, he stood near the stairway in the hall at the Home watching a few sailors pacing the long room with the peculiar rolling gait acquired by trying to keep an equilibrium on the deck of a tossing vessel.

Back and forth they shambled, keeping step and spinning yarns as they would have done on their good ship's deck. As he was wondering how long it would take to acquire such a swagger, he suddenly felt a hand placed on his shoulder, and he found himself looking into the kindly blue eyes of a man whom he rightly judged to be the chaplain.

"Your name?" queried this worthy, cheerfully.

"Walter Howard," was the reply.

"From what ship?"

"O, just a 'land lubber' trying to get to sea."

"We are just going to have service upstairs, Walter, and we want you to come. Will you?"

"O it isn't preaching," he added as the boy's face hardened perceptibly. "Just a good old song service. You like to sing, don't you?" he added, tactfully.

"Sometimes," was the reluctant answer.

If there was one God-given faculty that lay not wholly unsullied in the boy's heart, it was appreciation of music, so he threw away his cigarette and started up the stairway.

"And one of God's great charities  
Is music, and it doth not scorn  
To close the lids upon the eyes  
Of the weary and forlorn,"

quoted the chaplain as he hurried off after more of his congregation.

The chapel was on the third floor, and from his seat near the big window Walter could see out over the bay once more. Now he could plainly see Golden Gate, and the fort, and away in the distance to the right, Mt. Tamalpais.

White-winged ships dotted the bay going in and out, and the steamers left long wakes of black smoke that hung fog-like to the water for some time before it disappeared.

As the service commenced, the music from the large, deep-toned organ and the chorus of voices of the Christian women who came to exert their influence for good, blended in perfect accord; and as they sang of the Redeemer's love, of the cross and the resurrection, many a hard-handed son of Neptune wiped his eyes surreptitiously with the back of his hand, and vowed in the bottom of his heart that sometime he would be "good."

Ah! how often it is that we put away the day of grace. Almost we are persuaded to be Christians, yet we put away the opportunity until it is gone, or we are gone, for ever.

But with Walter; as he listened to the old, old story of God's love, his burdened heart seemed almost to break. He felt a painful oppression in his chest, and in his throat was a lump that no amount of swallowing would down.

In vain he used his handkerchief, his eyes seemed to be a fountain of tears. He could not have explained his feelings otherwise than that he "felt sorry." Like any boy, he was ashamed of his tears, but still they came.

After a half hour of singing the chaplain talked to the men for a few minutes in a simple, practical manner of the advantages of the Christian life. His words were weighted with feeling and brotherly love, asking the men to consider the One who



had called Himself their elder Brother. He pointed to the fact that they would be glad to have a prince or a king for a friend, and yet the King of kings had called Himself their friend and they held aloof. After reading some of the Lord's precious words to them, he exhorted them to accept their Friend as one who could save them from their sins.

As the sailors filed out of the room, the chaplain shook hands with them as cordially as if he had not seen them every day about the building.

He had noticed Walter's emotion, and wished to talk with him; so when the boy came along, he said, "I wish to speak with you a moment, please." When they were alone the elder man laid his hands on the boy's shoulders and said kindly, "Are you a Christian, Walter?"

The hardened look came into the boy's face once more, and he would have broken away, but the chaplain saw the wet eyelashes, and remembered his emotion, and held him fast.

"No, I am not," he said when he saw he could not evade the subject.

"Why not?" the question came firm and direct.

"I have tried before, and could not be. I should like to be a Christian; I would go on my hands and knees from here to New York if I thought that could make me one. But I know I can't, and it makes me feel bad to be in a meeting. That's why I don't like to go to one."

"The Lord can help you to be a Christian, lad; if you have failed it was because you tried to do right in your own strength. That mistake is frequently made."

"It's no use," was the reply in a broken voice, "I have sinned so much that I believe there is no hope for me."

"Don't believe that; the devil would like to have everyone believe that, but as long as anyone feels a desire to do right, that is the Spirit of God pleading with him. And you dishonour God by thinking He cannot keep you from sin; but remember you have a part to act in that, and He will do all the rest. But before I tell you those things that you must do, I want you to read what the Lord promises to do. Here it is, Isa. xli. 10; 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.'"

Walter read the words slowly from the minister's Bible, and was evidently encouraged.

"Are you willing to ask God to help you, and to forgive your past?" the latter inquired.

"Yes," was the answer. So together the two knelt in the empty chapel, and

the lad prayed in a simple, broken manner, asking forgiveness for his sins and for keeping power to deliver him from his evil ways.

The chaplain was moved to tears. He prayed sincerely for the lad, and they both arose encouraged and strengthened.

"The parts that you must do in your new Christian life, Walter, you must remember, are just as essential as God's part, and they are these: First, study your Bible every day; you may not have time, but *take* time. It is an absolute necessity, because it is the spiritual food that God gives to sustain your spirituality. Job said he considered the words of God more than his necessary food.

"The next point is prayer. You must pray often. It does not change God, it changes you. It reconciles you to His ways, which are best for you. You cannot neglect prayer and be a Christian.

"The third point is, always speak a good word for your Saviour. Be a witness for Him continually."

"What about my bad habits? How can I stop smoking?" asked the lad as he arose to go.

"Don't touch, taste, or handle anything that is harmful, and God will help you to overcome the habit. He may take away the appetite for tobacco, or He may leave the desire with you and give you strength to overcome it. But trust Him, whichever way He may take. Now come in often while you are here, and maybe I can be of some help to you in different ways; won't you, my boy?"

"I will," the lad responded heartily.

A few days after he looked for the pastor, and found him reading on the balcony.

"I am going home," he announced, simply. "I don't want to go to sea; I feel I ought to go home."

"When are you going?" asked the chaplain.

"Right now," he answered, smiling, "good-bye."

"This is rather abrupt, Walter."

"Well, I am not doing any good here."

"Will you remember to retain your integrity, whatever comes?"

"The Lord helping me I will," was the sober response.

"Always remember me as your friend, my lad," the chaplain said as the boy bade him good-bye.

As he descended the long flight of steps that led to the street, it was with feelings of regret and yet of joy, knowing that he was beginning an experience that would lead to manliness and self-respect, happiness and heaven.

At the foot of the stairs he looked back and saw the chaplain still on the balcony.

He waved his hand in farewell, and saw the salute returned by his friend; and turning away, was lost in the crowd.

And so God allows circumstances to force us to extremities from which we see no way of escape. These are His opportunities. In the dead of night, in the loneliness of desertion, in the pangs of affliction,—then we read His thought; there we find His way.

HART HALL.

### THE LITTLE BOY'S QUESTIONS.

THERE were pictures of fire-men and fire-engines in the book that the little boy had found, and he carried it directly to his elder sister and began to ask questions about them. She could not tell him all that he wished to know—only the chief of a fire department could have done that; but she explained the pictures as well as she could, carefully choosing words that the child would understand, and he went away at length wiser and happier.

"I thought you were in a hurry to finish that dress," said a girl friend, who had looked and listened with amazement. "Why didn't you tell him you didn't know, or put him off in some way?"

"If I were set down in a strange country, where I wasn't very well acquainted with the language or the customs, I'd expect people to be patient with me," the boy's sister answered. "Harry has been in this world only seven years, you know, and he sees and hears many things he can't comprehend. Isn't it natural that he should ask questions?"

"I'm not very wise, but since he pays me the compliment of thinking that I am, I feel as if I ought to be polite, at least. If I lied to him in order to get rid of him, his confidence in me wouldn't last very long. If I put him off with an excuse—well, I think it's just as mean to starve a growing mind as it is to starve a growing body."

"Really, the easiest way is to answer him as fully as I can. That gives him something to think about. Then he isn't half so likely to chatter about a dozen different things, and he learns more, too."

"I didn't intend to preach a sermon, Katie," the girl added, smilingly, "but I studied this out for myself when little brother began to find his tongue, and I'm sure I'm right. I asked questions when I was his age, and I still remember the answers to many of them. Early impressions are lasting, you know, either to help or hinder. I want Harry to recall me always as a sister who was honest with him and willing to help."—*Youth's Companion*.





## THE CHILDREN.

### WHAT A BOY CAN DO.

A BOY can make the world more pure  
By kindly word and deed;  
As blossoms call for nature's light,  
So hearts love's sunshine need.

A boy can make the world more pure  
By lips kept ever clean;  
Silence can influence shed as sure  
As speech—oft more doth mean.

A boy can make the world more true  
By an exalted aim;  
Let one a given end pursue,  
Others will seek the same.

Full simple things indeed, these three,  
Thus stated in my rhyme;  
Yet what, dear lad, could greater be—  
What grander, more sublime?

—Crusader.

### HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.

WHEN Abram and Sarai, his wife, obeyed the call of God and left their home, they had no children to take with them. But God promised them that their seed should be "as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."

Last week we learned that the seed God promised to Abram is Christ and all who are His. It was a promise that Christ, the Seed first promised to Adam and Eve, should come in Abram's line, as one of his descendants.

Yet the years passed on, and no little child came to bless the home and gladden the hearts of Sarai and Abram. God kept them waiting a long, long time, to teach them a lesson of patience and trust.

One day Abram reminded the Lord about His promise, and said that he was still childless, and his chief servant, who was born in his house, was his heir. Then God took Abram out into the clear night, and told him to look up into the heavens where the host of stars were shining in the sky. In the clear air of Palestine many more stars can be seen than in this country. God said: "Behold the stars, which cannot be numbered for multitude; so shall thy seed be."

And yet the child of promise was not given, and Abram and Sarai were getting

old. It was ten years since they came to Canaan, and the promise was first made, and Sarai was already much older than the mothers of little children usually are. At last she thought that perhaps if Abram had a younger wife, God would give him the promised child. This was why she gave her Egyptian maid Hagar to Abram for his wife, hoping that a child might be given to her.

Of course, this was wrong, for it was God's plan that a man should have only one wife. Sarai ought to have trusted the Lord, but she was so anxious for the promise to be fulfilled that she tried to help Him by giving Abram another wife. But after Hagar became Abram's wife, she was very proud to think that she would be the mother of the child God had promised. She despised her mistress, Sarai, for she thought that Abram would think more of her and love her more if God should give her the child.

Hagar's pride brought her into trouble, but although she had acted foolishly, God did not leave her without comfort. He sent an angel with a message for her, and Hagar called the name of the Lord, "Thou God seest me!" because He had seen and helped her when she was alone and friendless in the desert, and comforted her in her trouble.

The angel called Hagar, "Sarai's maid," to remind her of her position, and take the pride out of her heart. And he asked her, "Whence comest thou? and whither wilt thou go?" to show her the folly of running away from her good home and kind friends, when she had no place to go to.

Ishmael, the son afterwards born to Hagar, was not the child of promise. Hagar was not the true wife of Abram, and God did not look upon Ishmael as his son. He came to him again, and said, "Sarai, thy wife, shall bare thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac." And "in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

But when Abram prayed for Ishmael, God said that He had heard him and that He would bless Ishmael also, and make him the father of twelve princes, and of a great nation.

### BOB THE PIGEON.

BOB was only an ordinary blue pigeon, and not at all handsome. I found him one morning on the ground under my pigeons' nests. He had been thrown out of his nest, as other young pigeons often are, but for some reason he could not fly. When I found him, he was almost starved. I took him to the house, and tried to feed him, but he would not eat. Then I opened his bill, and put some food into his mouth; but still he would not swallow it. Finally I thought what was the matter,—his mother had always fed him, and I must imitate her method.

A pigeon feeds her young differently from other birds. She sticks her bill so far down the young bird's throat that her head is literally in its mouth. This is because she secretes a fluid very much like milk in her crop, and disgorges it, along with seeds and grains of various kinds, into the young bird's throat. So I opened my pigeon's mouth, and placed wheat far back in its throat. This it swallowed readily, fluttering its wings, and squealing plaintively for more. It never knew when it had enough.

When I came to water it, I learned something else. A pigeon does not drink like an ordinary bird. I tried to give it water from a jar lid, but it would only stick its bill to the bottom, and push; then I tried pouring the water down its throat with a spoon, but that did not work very well, as it tried all the time to get its head down. One day when I had a tin cup of water and a spoon, trying to give it a drink, I learned a lesson. The bird got out of my hands, and hopping to the cup, stuck its whole head under water, and drank as long as it could hold its breath. I have since learned that a pigeon will stick its head under water until its whole head is covered, if it is very thirsty, and that it never raises its head, like other birds, to let the water run down.

One day a cat tried to kill Bob, and although he escaped, the experience caused him to form an undying hatred for cats. Ever afterward if a cat came near, he would begin cooing and threatening, and if it came nearer, he would boldly attack it. Seeming to know that a cat will not meet a direct attack, he would fly right into its face and bite its ears, and beat it with his wings till it would retreat. All the cats on the farm soon learned to fear him.

It was some time before Bob learned to fly, because he was so well fed that he was too heavy. Pigeons give their young all they can eat until they are full feathered, at which time they weigh more than at any other in their life. Then they give them nothing but water for a week or ten days, so that they will become light enough to fly. If the young bird does not get hungry enough to venture to fly, the



parents finally push it out of the nest. I have seen it take both father and mother to drive a young bird away from home. I did not starve Bob, so I had to teach him to fly by tossing him into the air several times every day.

Bob never chose a mate, and never seemed to care much for the company of the other pigeons. He made his home in the kitchen, roosting on the wood-box. On a cold winter day he delighted to sit under the stove, much to the disgust of the cats, which would fain have done the same; but he would not allow one of them even in the house when he was there.

One day a strange cat, which had been catching my other pigeons for some time, came prowling about the house, and attempted to catch Bob. But he was on guard, and met the attack boldly. They fought for about twenty minutes, the cat being determined to win. Wings gave the bird a great advantage, and the cat had to retreat with his ears torn to shreds by the bird's bill. But Bob was wounded. The cat had stuck one claw into his throat, and the wound never healed. Whenever he ate small seeds or soft food, some of it would collect between the food pipe and the skin of the neck, and of course it soon began to decay there. It was removed once; but as it continued to collect, it soon caused his death.

I have told only of Bob's warlike traits. He was a very affectionate, winsome pet, loving above everything else to be fondled and petted. He especially enjoyed sitting on my shoulder, and rubbing his head and bill over my face, cooing softly while he did so. He fought nothing but cats, and then only in self-defence.

FLOYD BRALLIAR.

### SHUT OUT INSTEAD OF ME.

IT was one morning many years ago, when I was a very little child. I had been disobedient at breakfast-time, and papa had said to me gravely and sadly, "Carrie, you must go and stand outside the door for five minutes."

I got down, choked back the sob that rose in my throat, and without turning to look into papa's face, I went outside the door, and it was shut against me.

The minutes seemed very long and silent. I remember well how my tears dropped down on the mat, I was so grieved and ashamed. The five minutes were not nearly over, but the handle of the door was partly turned, and Johnnie's curly head peeped out. Both his arms were around my neck in an instant, and he said, "Carrie, go in; I'll be naughty instead of you." And before I could say a word he had pushed me in, and shut the door.

There I stood, with my eyes on the floor, and feeling so red and so uncom-

fortable, not knowing whether I might go up to the table. But papa took me by the hand, led me to the table, kissed me, and put me on my chair. Then I knew I was forgiven, just as much as if I had borne all the punishment; but how I did wish that Johnnie might come in.

When the five minutes were up, he was called in, and then papa took us both—me, the poor little naughty child, and Johnnie, the loving brother—and folded us both in his arms. Then I sobbed it all out—the repentance and love and gratefulness—while we were held close to that loving heart.

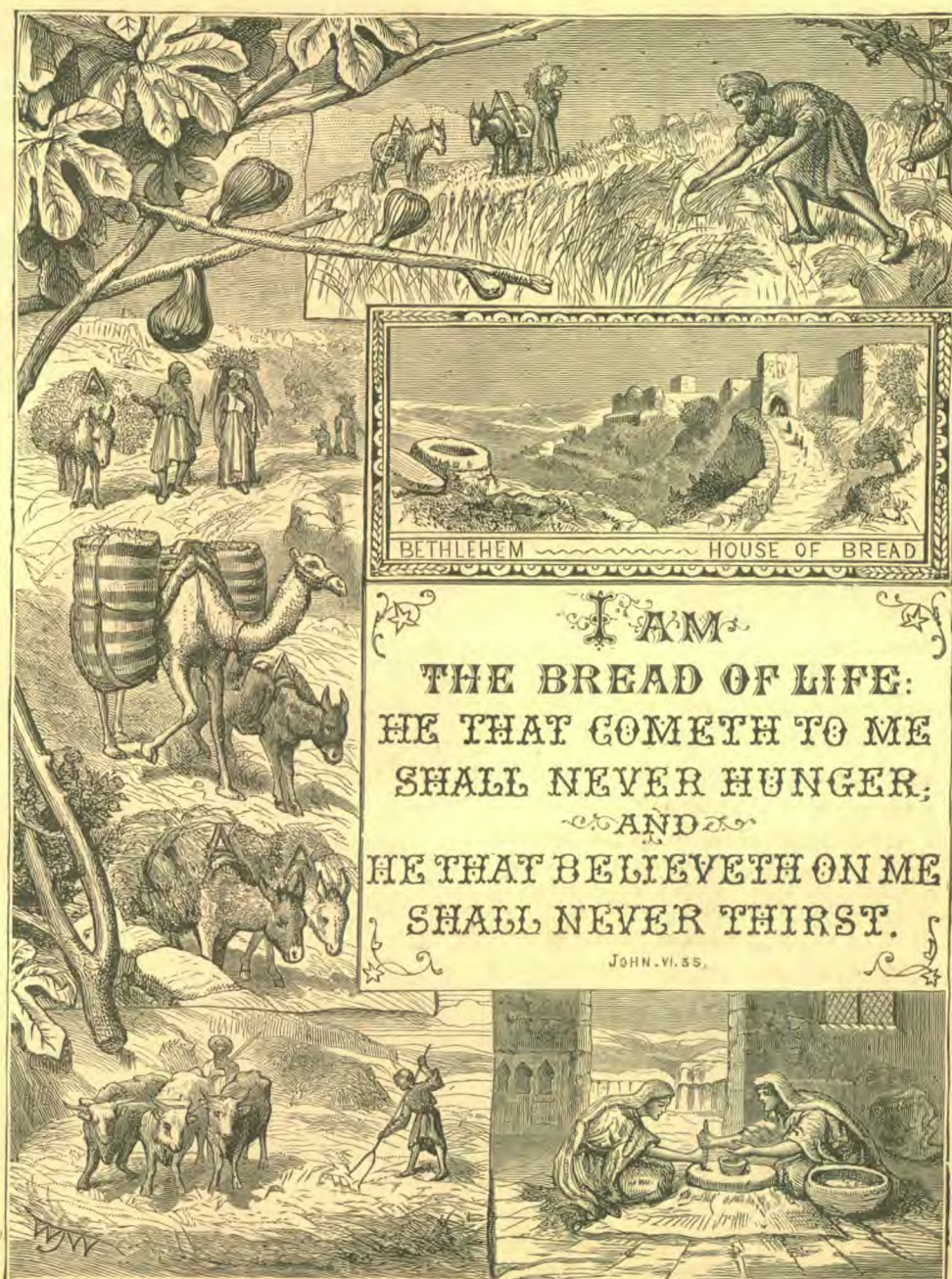
And now when I look back to that little scene, it seems a typical one. For the

years went by, and I found myself outside another door, separated from my heavenly Father. Sin had come between my soul and God. But I saw One who loved me come and take my place, and put me into His place of nearness, and I was forgiven for Christ's sake. Then I knew the fulness and freshness of the forgiveness of sin; for our Father drew me close to His Divine heart of love, and there with the Lord Jesus, my Sin-bearer, I found "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

"Payment He will not twice demand,  
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,  
And then again at mine."

—Monthly Record.

## EASY STEPS FOR LITTLE FEET.







## BREADFRUIT.

**M**OST of our readers are familiar with the story of the mutiny of the "Bounty,"—how in 1787 this vessel, under command of Lieutenant Bligh, was sent from England to Tahiti, there to load with breadfruit plants to be carried to the West Indies; and how a mutiny broke out, and the commander and his crew were cast adrift in a small boat, while the mutineers returned to Tahiti, a few afterward settling on the lonely island of Pitcairn.

Lieutenant Bligh had been sent on this expedition at the recommendation of Captains Campier and Cook, who, years previously, had called the attention of the English government to the value of this fruit, and the desirability of introducing its culture into the West Indies.

The fruit has nothing about it, either in taste or form, that resembles bread, but acquires its name from the fact that it forms the staple food substance, hence the bread, of the inhabitants of the tropical islands.

The tree is fair-sized, with large, glossy foliage, the male flowers growing in spikes, and the female in a dense head, the carpels of which consolidate, and form the fruit, which, in size and shape, generally resembles a melon. There are several varieties, some of which are not eaten, but whose large seeds are highly esteemed as food. The edible fruit seldom matures seed. There being many varieties, some are constantly ripening fruit, so that the fruit is present on the trees nearly all the year round.

In the South Sea Islands, a common practice is to roast the fruit in the coals, afterward scooping out the contents with a spoon. The fruit is picked just before ripening, when it is filled with starchy material, which, when cooked in this manner, resembles potato prepared with milk. It is frequently eaten with milk, butter, or syrup, making a toothsome porridge, or pudding. In the Pacific Islands the fruit is stored in pits to ferment, when it forms a substance resembling new cheese, and having a very offensive odour. This disappears, however, when the fruit is baked under hot stones.—*Selected.*

## JEWS WHO WEAR PIGTAILS.

**I**T is not generally known, says the *New York Tribune*, that there is a colony of Jews in China—Jews who wear pigtails, bear Chinese names and speak the Chinese language exclusively, and who

have forgotten the God of their fathers and neglected their ancient ritual of worship until it has been entirely lost to them. But there is such a colony, and its people have puzzled Oriental scholars for many years. Recently it has been established that they entered China, or, rather, their progenitors did—about the year 319 A.D., in the reign of the Emperor Mingte II.,

in the passing years, were especially honoured by the Emperor. One he made the treasurer of a great province and the other was a general in the Imperial Army.

In the golden days of Judaism in China they prospered, and when their magnificent temple was destroyed by fire they rebuilt it in greater magnificence. In a land where there are many fine temples theirs



THE BREADFRUIT TREE

and formed a colony about 700 miles from Shanghai, on the Hoang-Ho, or Yellow River. At one time these Jews were a power in the land. Their city grew in population until its inhabitants numbered about 5,000 Jews alone, and they became so wealthy that they were able to loan money to the Emperor, who so esteemed them that he built for them a synagogue. Two of them, whose names have been lost

was one of the most splendid. It was 350 feet long, and 150 feet wide. To-day their temple is a mass of ruins. Stone by stone, almost, it has been torn down by those whose care it should have been to preserve it. The story, even among the heathen, is that they forgot the worship of their God and He forgot them. They grew poorer and poorer with the advancing years during which they failed to keep the Sabbath of



their religion and were finally forced to sell all they had for food and clothing. Stone by stone, almost, their temple was demolished, to be sold to builders of other temples and houses; their sacred books were disposed of for what money they would bring; they had no place for worship, and gradually their religious rites were forgotten, and even their language so neglected that it has now become a mere memory, and they themselves a people lost among the heathen of the Orient.

China is mentioned in the Bible and was well known in the early days of Judea. Isaiah (xlix. 12) says: "Behold—and some from the land of Sinim (China)." In the days of the Emperor Mingte II. China was the most highly civilised nation, and all the world traded with her. The Jews visited the country repeatedly, although it required 250 days—nearly a year—to make the journey from Judea. No doubt some of the Jewish merchants, finding the country fertile and prosperous, advised their countrymen to emigrate. Old records that have been found in China indicate that seventy families started for the new land, bringing with them rabbis and men learned in the Law and the Prophets. After a year of wandering the pilgrims camped at Poen, the Kal-Fungfu of today, and there their descendants have remained ever since. For nearly six hundred years they prospered, and gradually Jewish traders penetrated to every part of the country. In the year 800 they were joined by a fresh influx of their countrymen, and the power and influence of the settlement greatly increased. The first reference to them that appears in the Chinese records was made in the eleventh century, when Jews are referred to as serving in the Imperial army with great bravery and distinction. The date of the beginning of their decline as a power and a people is not known, but it must have been long ago. In a few isolated cases they intermarried with the natives of the country, but as a rule they have done as Jews all over the world do generally, and have made alliances only among their own people.

### REVISED GEOMETRY.

IT is as far from A to B as it is from B to A, except in China. Many travellers have commented upon the apparent lack of the knowledge of distances across the country or between towns exhibited by the Chinese. If at one town they inquired the distance of the next, they were perhaps told twenty li—one-third of a mile; but upon arriving at the town they were surprised to learn that the distance back to the starting-point was estimated at twenty-four li, and that the cost of journeying back was correspondingly greater than the cost of the first journey.

This peculiarity extends also to travel by river, the distance up-stream being greater than that down-stream. The confusion which has thus arisen has been incomprehensible to foreigners.

Yet the Chinese method of measuring is not altogether illogical. The unit of measurement is not with the Chinese a unit of length, but a unit of energy. He measures distance not by the actual space passed over, but by the amount of physical energy required to cover that space.

His wage is based on a unit of energy, which is the amount it would take to carry a given load—one picul,—one hundred and thirty-three pounds,—one li on level ground. If the road is down-hill, the distance is regarded as less than the actual linear distance, because it is supposed to take less energy to travel in that direction; or, as the Chinaman puts it, "the li are short." It naturally follows that, travelling in the opposite direction, the road being an ascent, a greater expenditure of energy is necessary.

"The li are long," and in order to get a fair compensation for their work the carriers must see that the distance and the corresponding charges are increased. This way of estimating the distance, as *Leslie's Weekly* explains, makes the Chinaman's system of measurement seem simple, and even reasonable.



SPEAKING at the Methodist Conference, the Rev. W. H. Findlay, Missionary Secretary, said: "The sum of what I have to say is that whatever grounds for pride and satisfaction our church may find in some departments of its work for God, the state of its Foreign Missions is gravely, indeed, intolerably unsatisfactory." I find that the income of our Missionary Society has practically stood still for thirty years; has stood still while we have increased our chapels by hundreds, our membership by tens of thousands, our adherents by hundreds of thousands, and our wealth by millions; so that a stationary income has meant a steady decline in the average giving of Methodists to this cause." And that means a steady decline in Methodism as a whole; for no matter what wealth of means and members any body of Christians is able to exhibit at home, it is practically dead, or in a dying condition, if it is not alive to the Saviour's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

COMMENTING on the recently-developed prominence given to the religious vote in politics in Australia, the *Daily Chronicle's* Melbourne correspondent writes as follows:—

"Irishmen and the Roman Catholic Church possess immense influence in the Civil Service and the Governments of Australia by reason of the real administrative ability of the colonial Irish, and of

the solidarity with which Romanists support candidates known to be favourable to the Roman education policy, to Home Rule, and other causes dear to the Celtic heart. Individual Protestants have, in an isolated fashion, fought the Irishmen, and the powerful Orange Lodges have attacked them from pulpit, Press, and platform. Now, however, the Victorian Protestants intend taking a further step. A circular, signed by all the leading Nonconformists and three Anglican Bishops, has been issued stating that—

There are many circumstances which, in our opinion, render it desirable that a league should be formed for the purpose of meeting and counter-acting the organised Roman Catholic influence on the legislation and administration of this State, without in any way combating or interfering with the Roman Catholic religious position.

An anti-Romanist political organisation will certainly come into existence. In New South Wales similar steps are to be taken, so that when the reduced and reformed State Parliaments are created, the first elections will be inoculated with the virus of religious animosity."

All this is to be regretted, inasmuch as it will be a serious check to real religious work. The religion of Jesus Christ is advanced by preaching, not by politics. No error can be successfully combated by its own weapons. Politics is Rome's peculiar field, and the only way its progress can be effectually checked is by preaching the Word. While the Protestants are fighting Rome with her own peculiar weapons, and neglecting the Word, they are really helping her. If they would allow Rome to have a monopoly in politics, and would give themselves wholly to the Word of God, they might win.

PASSING along the streets, and noting the contents bills of the various newspapers, especially the evening papers, one would naturally get the idea that the most important business of the country is the playing of cricket. Cricket and racing news take precedence over almost everything else; and we are glad to see so influential a journal as the *Daily Mail* call attention editorially to games which spin out over days and days. Among other things it says:—

"Cricket has become with us a perfect mania, to which many other interests are sacrificed. At each important match, who has not been puzzled by the large number of people who have apparently nothing else to do but to watch cricket, and who day after day postpone to that pleasure their business—if they have any? Not merely on Saturdays, but on ordinary week days, thousands may be found collected around the field of play. Can this phenomenon be in any way connected with the stagnancy of British industry? Certainly it was not a phase of our English life in the past; it is a feature which is not to be observed in the United States, where baseball matches occupy only an afternoon; nor is it noted in Germany. It is difficult not to feel that our thousands might often make a better use of their time."

A correspondent also says:—

"We have sacrificed everything to cricket—our military prestige, our shipping, commerce, and manufactures. We have neglected science for cricket, we are behindhand in electricity, and have been content to be ignoramuses at chemistry in order that we may be proficient at cricket."

It is possible that this awakening of conscience is partly due to the defeat which the English players have suffered at the hands of the Australians; but whatever the cause, it is well that the attention of the public should be called to the fact that playing games is not the chief end of man.





### THE CHRISTIAN AS A PHYSICIAN.

**T**HE business of the Christian is to go about doing good. We know this because Jesus Christ, who is the Christian's pattern in all things, occupied His time in this way. He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." Acts x. 38. A very large part of the work of Christ among the people consisted in the healing of disease. All healing of disease is by the power of God, and therefore it pertains specially to the calling of the Christian. Every physician ought to be a Christian, and every Christian ought to be, and will be, in a sense, a physician. Every Christian has a license from God to heal the sick. No monopoly of this work can fall to the control of the state, because God and His work are altogether independent of, and superior to, any human authority, although the state does very properly enforce regulations protecting human life from ignorant and unscrupulous persons who would pose as physicians could they do so with safety to themselves.

The Christian knows and ministers the grace of God, which saves an individual from sin; and there is an intimate connection between sin and sickness. Physical disability is very often the reflection of moral disturbance. Conscience sways the mind, and the mind powerfully influences the health of the body. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine," and a clear conscience is an aid to physical tranquillity. Indulgence of appetite and passions quickly stamps disease upon the physical frame. All sickness resulted primarily from sin, and through the removal of sin all sickness is ultimately to be done away. He who was crucified for our sins also "bare our sicknesses." Both in the laws of nature and in the plan of redemption, God has revealed Himself as the source of both moral and physical life, and he who reveals God to the world must reveal Him as a God whose laws conserve physical health no less than moral soundness.

Health is of God, whether it be health of the soul, of the mind, or of the body. The work of the Gospel is to restore all parts of man's being to a state of health, as in the beginning, when man was created. And he who engages in the work of physical healing should, if he would be truly successful, recognise God as the great Physician, the source of all health and life, and be able to minister His grace to the one in need, no less than to supply those physical conditions under which health may be restored by the operation of natural laws.

L. A. SMITH.

### DO PEOPLE DRINK LESS THAN THEIR FATHERS DID?

**T**HIS question is answered in the negative by Mr. Thomas P. Whitaker, M. P., who proves his position as follows:—

For England and Wales only the average expenditure on drink during the year 1900-1 was £157,610,000.

You may say that you cannot believe that the people spend this money. We hear much of the improved sobriety in all sections of the community. Some tell us that there is vastly less drinking amongst the middle and the upper classes than there used to be fifty, seventy, or a hundred years ago. Others declare that the sobriety of the working classes has greatly increased. Almost everybody says that all round there has been a great improvement. Unfortunately for those who take this optimistic and superficial view, there are some absolutely indisputable facts which point in the other direction. That there has been some improvement during the last twenty-five years is undoubted, but it has been small, and during the last two or three years there has been a disquieting increase in the consumption of intoxicants. But looking back over the last fifty or seventy years, the quantity of intoxicating liquor consumed per head has increased more than one-third.

In my opinion, the true explanation of what is considered to be the greater sobriety of the people is to be found in another direction. There is more drinking now than there was sixty or eighty years ago. But it is of a different kind. It is more frequent and regular. There is less obvious intoxication, but there is more soaking. There is less reeling drunkenness, less evident excess, and consequently there are fewer cases in the police-courts and fewer guests under the dinner table. But taking the year round more liquor is swallowed. There have been great changes in manners and customs in this respect during the last hundred years, but they have not affected for the better the quantity consumed. Habitual drinking, continual and frequent, has taken the place of occasional bouts of brutal drunkenness. The present custom may offend our sensibilities less and impress our minds less luridly, but it is not in every respect and altogether a change for the better. Medical men tell us that continual drinking on what may be called a moderate scale is more injurious to the drinker than occasional outbursts of drunkenness with periods of abstinence between would be.

The late Sir William Gull said:—"It is one of the commonest things in English society that people are injured by drink without being drunkards. It goes on so quietly that it is even very difficult to observe. A man's nearest friends will frequently not know it."

Sir Henry Thompson, the well-known surgeon, said:—"The habitual use of fermented liquors to an extent far short of what is necessary to produce drunkenness, and such as is quite common in all ranks of society, injures the body and diminishes the mental power to an extent which I think few people are aware of." "I have no hesitation in attributing a very large proportion of some of the most painful and dangerous maladies which come under my notice, as well as those which every medical man has to treat, to the ordinary and daily use of fermented drink taken in the quantity which is conventionally deemed moderate."

"There is no other agent," says Doctor Newsholme, Medical Officer of Health for Brighton, in his Annual Report for 1900, "so competent to hurry on the degenerative changes in the system associated with old age; in other words, alcohol is one of the chief causes of premature old age. It is not sufficiently recognised that these evil effects are very commonly produced by the systematic indulgence in an amount of alcoholic drinks, that would by most be regarded as moderate; and that those who while never becoming intoxicated, daily take a considerable amount of spirits (especially if taken apart from meals) are much more likely to suffer in health and prematurely break down, than a labourer who may get drunk once a fortnight and be a teetotaler in the intervals."

Dr. Clouston, in an article on Alcoholism in Quain's *Dictionary of Medicine*, (1902), says:—"There can be no doubt that a man may induce some of the most marked and far-reaching pathological effects of alcoholic excess without having once been 'drunk'—without ever having had acute or chronic alcoholism or mental disturbance in any active form. He may ultimately reach almost complete intellectual dissolution, utter moral and affective perversity, and total loss of memory through the steady brain-poisoning of a respectable and almost unobserved excess."

Dr. Macroire (late Physician to the Fever Hospital, Liverpool) said:—"After having treated more than three hundred thousand cases in the town hospital, Liverpool, I give it as my decided opinion that the constant moderate use of stimulating drinks is more injurious than the now and then excessive indulgence in them."

THE ability of a man's body to resist disease is not measured by his weight, but by his specific gravity. It is not the weight or the amount of blood or of flesh that determines the health; it is the solidity of the flesh, the amount of power a pound.

GOD makes our features, but we make our own countenances by our inward mental habits.





### MINISTERING THE GOSPEL.

AND they began to pray Him to depart out of their coasts. And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him; howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him; and all men did marvel." We read in another place that Jesus afterward returned to that country, and found a great company of people ready to receive Him.

There is a good lesson in that scripture for us; it teaches us that redeemed humanity can do a work with God for the redemption of the world; and it teaches us also that man can work where God cannot work, or in other words, that the Lord can work through a saved person better than He can directly, even better than He can in person. There are so many features of this great Gospel; you may look at it from so many different points of view, all beautiful. I want to talk about the service feature, the working side, the side that pertains to ministry; for I believe that this presents to us a very important feature for the present time. Whatever Jesus has done for us, whatever we have permitted Him to do in us, He wants us to tell to our friends and our neighbours, and to communicate to every person we can reach. He says to you and me to-day just as He said to that man in Gadara, "Go to your friends, and show them great things the Lord hath done for you."

"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." The Bible is full of exhortations to the Christian to minister this gladness, this grace, to others, to his fellow-men. I do not believe that it is within the power of man to tell with his lips the wonders of God's love and grace. I do not believe anything can be marshalled up in the mind that will adequately and truly set forth the glory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and that is one reason

why the Lord gives to us the ministry of the Gospel, that we may minister it in loving service as well as to tell it in language.

#### PREACHING BY ACTION.

Here is a little story that illustrates this thought to some extent. A minister went on to the battle field with his Bible to preach the Gospel to the wounded and the dying. He found a man who was dying, and he sat by his side with his Bible, and asked him if he was a Christian, if he loved God. The man said, "I wish I could have my head lifted out of this hole; I am so uncomfortable, and have so much pain." The minister lifted his head up, but when he had got it up, he could not bear to put it down on the bare ground, and not seeing anything to put under his head, he pulled off his overcoat and folded it up, and put it under the man's head. When he had finished, he picked up his Bible again and said, "My dear fellow, I want to know if you love the Lord Jesus." The man said, "I wish I could have a drink of water." The preacher put down his Bible and hunted for some water. He brought it to him, and lifted up his head and held it to the parched lips. He laid his head back on the pillow, and then wanted to preach to him again. He said, "My good fellow, are you a Christian?" The man said, "I wish I could be covered up, I am very chilly." The minister looked round for something with which to cover the man up, but finding nothing, he pulled off his coat and covered him. When he had done that, he started to preach the Gospel again; but before he could say a word the dying soldier said with a smile, "If there is anything in that Book which leads a man to do what you have done for me, for God's sake read that to me."

That minister had been preaching the blessedness of the Gospel of Christ in every act of ministry to that man, and he had been preaching it more powerfully than his words could do. He had been ministering the Gospel of Christ to that man. He was a Christian himself, he had found God's matchless love; he knew it, he wanted to help that man, and yet perhaps with a mistaken idea as to what the preaching of the Gospel is. There are

lots of people that do not think they are preaching the Gospel until they get on a street and shout to the people as they go by. My dear friends, they can go to their homes and visit them, and take them food, or minister to them in their sickness, wash the little children while the mother lies in bed ill—they could do that and be preaching the Gospel of Jesus. We do not always realise just what it means to minister the Gospel. The preaching of the Gospel is the pouring out of the life, the opening of the life to the needy, suffering, groaning world.

God has given us the Gospel to minister to everything with which we come in contact, —not to talk it only, but to minister it, to live it, to communicate it. That is what Jesus did. This preaching of the Gospel by service is not a new thing. Job says, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame."

Two men used to come to my meetings in Australia; one could not see and the other could not walk. They used to come together; and the man who had no eyes, but had feet, was feet for the other; and the man who could not walk, but could see, was eyes for the other. "I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame." That means that in some way Job used the faculties God had given him in loving ministry for those who were deprived of them. Religion is a practical thing; it is more than Psalm singing; it is more than going to church and telling people how happy we are in the blessed truth; it is more than to be sitting in sack-cloth and ashes. The Christian life is a life of personal victory, a life of the ministry of that gladness and that blessedness of God to our fellowmen.

"I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not I searched out," Job said. And then he added, "Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel." Surely there was some reason for it, there was something that appealed to them. "After my words they spake not again, and my speech dropped upon them." The man that lives the Gospel to his fellowmen, ministering it to them in loving service, will know how to talk it, and they will know how to hear it a great deal better. Many people reverse this thing. Their first idea is to talk the Gospel to people, to argue it into them, to preach it with words; but Jesus ministered it, and then talked it. And Job said that when he had ministered the Gospel, then people were glad to hear him. He says, "I chose out their way, and sat as one who comforts the mourners."

A. G. DANIELLS.



# The Present Truth.

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SOMEBODY asked us the other day, "Do you believe in the atonement?" Our reply was, "We don't believe in anything else." There is nothing else to believe in. Christ is the Author and Finisher of faith; there is no other object of faith; and belief in Christ is belief in the atonement, for He is set forth for no other purpose than to atone for sin.

People talk about "the doctrine of the atonement," as if it were one of many Christian doctrines. That is a most mistaken notion. The atonement is not a dogma; it is the actual salvation of sinners from sin, by the fulness of the life of God in Christ.

**How Many Holy Days?**—Great applause greeted the statement by Bishop Vincent of America, at the recent Methodist Conference, that "in the Calendar of our Church there are 365 Holy Days every year." This is a fallacy into which many fall, making it an excuse for not keeping the Sabbath of the Lord; for they say, "We keep every day holy." Thus they imagine that they are even better than the commandment of the Lord requires them to be. When God had created the heavens and the earth in six days, He "blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it," or made it holy. There is just one holy day in the week, and that is the seventh day, "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." No other day is holy, or can be kept holy.

**Holy Days and Holy Men.**—It is one thing to say that the seventh day of the week, of each week, is the only holy day there is, and quite another thing to say that one cannot be holy on any other day. This last is not true. The seventh day only is holy; but he who is not holy every day cannot keep the seventh day holy. But his keeping the seventh day does not add to its holiness, nor does anybody's disregard for it detract from it. But while even a holy man cannot impart anything

to God's holy day, the day when kept does contribute to the advancement of his holiness. God's holy rest day, spent in contemplation of His works, is calculated to lift man higher with each successive recurrence, each Sabbath giving him an impulse that will last through eternity.

**Going Beyond the Commandment**—As already said, people imagine that in keeping, as they erroneously suppose they do, every day holy, they are seven times as good, in that respect, as God asks them to be. The condition of such is well illustrated by the story of the young sailor lad who was placed at the helm with instructions to keep the ship headed towards a certain star. By and by he called to the mate and asked him to give him another star to steer by, as he had "sailed past that one." He had turned the ship about, and because the star was then behind him, he supposed that he had sailed beyond it. Whoever gets beyond the commandments of God has simply turned his back on them. Be sure that when a man thinks that he is better than the Lord requires him to be in one particular, he invariably and most naturally assumes that he is justified in balancing matters by falling short somewhere else. Thus he is "guilty of all." See James ii. 10.

## A SIGN OF THE LAST DAYS.

THE Scriptures tell us that a special characteristic of "the last days" will be that "men shall be lovers of their own selves," and that this will cause the "perilous times" that will then be experienced. 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2. That we have already come to those days seems quite evident from the following extracts from an article by the Rev. Philip Young, in the *Daily Mail* of August 8, which only state in concise form what every observer of current events well knows:—

It is impossible to observe the advance of the American upon the great trade centres of Europe without seeing what probably the American himself does not see—the crass selfishness which allows no room for pity or for kindly feeling. It is one of the saddest phases of this new century that Christianity would seem so little to have permeated the national life; that the spirit of Christ is so little understood.

Time was when the injunction, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others," was better observed than it is today. It is out of fashion now, or observed only in a way at variance with the kindness which gave it birth. "The things of others" truly enough are "looked upon"—with a view to seizure.

It will possibly be urged in defence that the American feverish demand for more is but the natural outcome of an impulsive energy, itself born of a climate exhilarating even to intoxication,

or the mere outward expression of Nature's first law—the desire for self-preservation.

But this latter it certainly is not. "Live and let live" was once a healthy motto. Now it is "Let me live, I care not who may die."

We think, and rightly think, that few things are so pitiful and so pitiless, viewed as an exhibition of human nature in its worst form, as the shipwrecked man using his fellow-man as the lever by which he shall gain hold on lifeboat or clamber up the raft.

If it were possible to palliate such action, which it is not, it could only be upon the basis of this "first law," seeing that the higher law of self-sacrifice was unknown or selfishly held in abeyance. But America has no such plea. America is not as a shipwrecked man. Her own incomparable resources, her energy and electric powers have lifted her into an almost boundless prosperity; yet from sheer lust of gain she must throw herself upon the commerce of the world, fed by the one all-absorbing and insatiable ambition—to be first.

**GENTLENESS** and courteous grace are not incompatible with firmness. Moses, the meekest man, was one of the firmest and most immovable. Daniel very politely and meekly requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself with the king's dainties: but he had "purposed in his heart" that he would not. He did not think that it was necessary, however, to bluster, and to use strong language, in order to impress the one in charge; it is only the weak man that does that; the strong man is quiet simply because he is strong. "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

**Meditation.**—This is something that is very much neglected, to the detriment of the individual soul, and of society as well. It is common for people to allow the press of work and business to crowd out meditation; they think they "have no time for it." That is a short-sighted policy; they might as well say that they have no time to eat. It is the man who meditates, not merely occasionally, but "day and night," who has prosperity in whatever he undertakes. Christians are in danger of adopting the world's methods, and the world's standard of success. Real success is not always by any means that which is described by the highest figures.

WE hereby gladly acknowledge the receipt of £1 "partly for missionary work and partly as it may be of most use in the service of our God and Saviour." This acknowledgement should have appeared several weeks ago, and we beg the anonymous donor's pardon for the delay.