

PRESENT TRUTH

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

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THE GREAT EDUCATOR.

THE Bible is God's great lesson-book, His great educator. The foundation of all true science is contained in the Bible. Every branch of knowledge may be found by searching the word of God. And above all else it contains the science of all sciences, the science of salvation. The Bible is the mine of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The true higher education is gained by studying and obeying the word of God. But when God's word is laid aside for books that do not lead to God and the kingdom of heaven, the education acquired is a perversion of the name.

There are wonderful truths in nature. The earth, the sea, and the sky are full of truth. They are our teachers. Nature utters her voice in lessons of heavenly wisdom and eternal truth. But fallen man will not understand. Sin has obscured his vision, and he cannot of himself interpret nature without placing it above God. Correct lessons cannot impress the minds of those who reject the word of God.

The teaching of nature is by them so perverted that it turns the mind away from the Creator.

By many, man's wisdom is thought to

be higher than the wisdom of the divine Teacher, and God's lesson-book is looked upon as old-fashioned, stale, and uninteresting. But by those who have been viv-

greatest author and the greatest teacher the world has ever known.

Satan works on human minds, leading them to think that there is wonderful

knowledge to be gained apart from God. By deceptive reasoning he led Adam and Eve to doubt God's word, and to supply its place with a theory that led to disobedience. And his sophistry is doing today what it did in Eden. Teachers who mingle with the education they are giving, the sentiments of infidel authors, plant in the minds of youth thoughts that will lead to distrust of God and transgression of His law. Little do they know what they are doing. Little do they realise what will be the result of their work.

SEARCH FOR THE TREASURE.

The word of God is to be our study. We are to educate our children in the truths found therein. It is an inexhaustible treasure; but men fail to find this treasure, because they do not search until it is within their possession. Very many are content with a supposition in regard to the truth. They are content with a surface

work, taking for granted that they have all that is essential. They take the sayings of others for truth, being too indolent to put themselves to diligent, earnest lab-



THE FORBIDDEN BOOK.

"God's HOLY WORD WAS PRIZED WHEN 'T WAS UNSAFE TO READ IT."

fied by the Holy Spirit it is not so regarded. Instead of books containing the suppositions of reputedly great authors, they choose the word of Him who is the

our, represented in the word as digging for hidden treasure.

The Scriptures need not be read by the dim light of tradition or human speculation. As well might we try to give light to the sun with a torch as to explain the Scriptures by human tradition or imagination. God's holy word needs not the torchlight glimmer of earth to make its glories distinguishable. It is light in itself,—the glory of God revealed; and beside it every other light is dim.

But there must be earnest study and close investigation. Sharp, clear perceptions of truth will never be the reward of indolence. No earthly blessing can be obtained without earnest, patient, persevering effort. If men attain success in business, they must have a will to do, and a faith to look for results. And we cannot expect to gain spiritual knowledge without earnest toil. Those who desire to find the treasures of truth must dig for them as the miner digs for the treasure hidden in the earth. No half-hearted, indifferent work will avail. It is essential for old and young, not only to read God's word, but to study it with whole-hearted earnestness, praying and searching for truth as for hidden treasure. Those who do this will be rewarded; for Christ will quicken the understanding.

Our salvation depends on a knowledge of the truth contained in the Scriptures. It is God's will that we should possess this. Search, O search the precious Bible with hungry hearts. Explore God's word as the miner explores the earth to find veins of gold. Never give up the search until you have ascertained your relation to God and His will in regard to you. Christ declared, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." John xiv. 13, 14.

You must lay your preconceived opinions, your hereditary and cultivated ideas, at the door of investigation. If you search the Scriptures to vindicate your own opinions, you will never reach the truth. Search in order to learn what the Lord says. If conviction comes as you search, if you see that your cherished opinions are not in harmony with the truth, do not misinterpret the truth in order to suit your own belief, but accept the light given. Open mind and heart, that you may behold wondrous things out of God's word.

Faith in Christ as the world's Redeemer calls for an acknowledgment of the enlightened intellect, controlled by a heart

that can discern and appreciate the heavenly treasure. This faith is inseparable from repentance and transformation of character. To have faith means to find and accept the Gospel treasure, with all the obligations which it imposes.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. He may conjecture and imagine, but without the eye of faith he cannot see the treasure. Christ gave His life to secure for us this inestimable treasure; but without regeneration through faith in His blood, there is no remission of sins, no treasure for any perishing soul.

We need the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit in order to discern the truths in God's word. The lovely things of the natural world are not seen until the sun, dispelling the darkness, floods them with its light. So the treasures in the word of God are not appreciated until they are revealed by the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

The Holy Spirit, sent from heaven by the benevolence of infinite love, takes the things of God, and reveals them to every soul that has implicit faith in Christ. By His power, the vital truths upon which the salvation of the soul depends are impressed upon the mind, and the way of life is made so plain that none need err therein. As we study the Scriptures, we should pray for the light of God's Holy Spirit to shine upon the word, that we may see and appreciate its treasures.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

WHO CAN SERVE GOD?

(Joshua xxiv. 14-25.)†

THE question is not, Who will serve God? but, Who can serve God? That is a very important question. A failure to understand who can serve God, is the reason why many people continue in useless attempts to serve Him.

Joshua had recounted to all Israel the goodness of God to them and to their fathers, and concluded with these words: "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but

† International Sunday-school Lesson for Nov. 9.

as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Then all the people answered, and said: "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; for the Lord our God, He it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed; and the Lord drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites, which dwelt in the land; therefore will we also serve the Lord; for He is our God."

That was a good resolution. How shocked they must have been, therefore, when Joshua turned on them with the assertion: "Ye cannot serve the Lord; for He is an holy God."

Only such as are holy can serve a holy God. That is plain enough if we but stop to think for a moment. To serve Him is to do His will; His will is holy; therefore whoever does His will must be holy. An unholy person certainly does not serve the Lord, and cannot as long as he remains unholy; for his unholliness is most displeasing to God.

Are there then only a select few who can serve God? Yes; for all God's people are "the elect," or the selected ones:—Christ says to His disciples, "I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should bring forth much fruit, and that your fruit should remain"—and the number of them is very small compared with the number of wicked. But this does not mean that only a few have the privilege of serving God if they will. "Whosoever will" may take of the water of life freely; and the assurance is, "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are." Whoever fully yields himself, soul, body, and spirit, to God, is accepted by Him as His servant, and is made holy, so that he can serve Him.

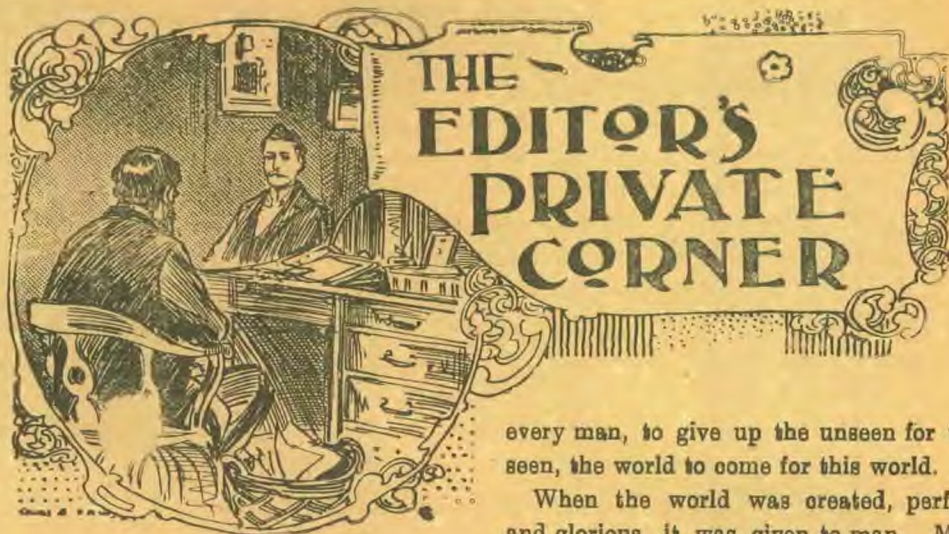
Christ has chosen us, that we should bear much fruit to the glory of God. But He says that the tree must be made good, before it can bring forth good fruit. Matt. xii. 33. "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil." Luke vi. 43, 45. So when we are cleansed by the Lord we become "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."

The law of God is the transcript of His character. Wherefore "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good." Rom. vii. 14. To keep the law of God is to serve Him; but not everybody can keep the law. The latter part of the seventh chapter of Romans pictures the unsuccessful efforts of any unregenerate man to keep the law of God. Then comes the comforting assurance: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

So it is not a difficult matter to serve the Lord, after all. Then what about the statement that a good many people try to serve God, and fail? The answer is found in the form of the question: they simply *try* to serve God, which is something that God has never asked anybody to do; He asks us actually to serve Him. We must *do* His will, not *try* to do it; and to the end that we may really serve Him, He puts His laws into our mind, and writes them in our heart. Heb. viii. 10. This is done for all who accept Him as their God, and who fully yield to Him. "His commandment is life everlasting;" therefore when His law is in our heart, it follows that it is our life; it controls our actions, instead of our attempting to put it into action. When we yield to righteousness as completely as we have to sin, we shall find that there is a greater power in righteousness than there is in sin; for "greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world."

But in order that we may experience the perfect working of this power we must not be partial in the law, choosing one portion and rejecting another. We must receive it all, and be willing for it all to have its effect in our lives. Thus, with God working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, we shall come to know the blessedness of the assurance, "His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face."

If we cannot find God in your house and mine, upon the roadside or the margin of the sea, in the bursting seed or opening flower, in the day duty and the night musing, I do not think we should discern Him any more on the grass of Eden or beneath the moonlight of Gethsemane.—*Dr. Martineau.*



SATAN'S OFFER.

"WAS it possible for Satan to give Christ all the kingdoms of the world? If not, wherein was the temptation?"

WE read that Jesus was tempted by the devil, and that one of the temptations consisted in taking Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showing Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and saying, "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me;" therefore there cannot be any doubt about the fact. We know that the offer was a temptation; and since it was a temptation, it is evident that Satan had something to offer. To find out just what it was, is not a matter of mere curiosity, or of trifling importance, for Christ suffered for us, being tempted, and His temptations are what we have to meet. He met them, and resisted them, in order that we might have the victory.

In 1 John v. 19, we are told that "the whole world lieth in the evil one." In 2 Cor. iv. 4, the one who blinds the minds of those who believe not—who is certainly the devil—is called "the god of this world." Hence it is evident that Satan has a very definite hold upon "this present evil world." Indeed, he has full control of it; but he cannot keep it for ever; for "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof."

Satan could have given Christ just as much as he himself possessed, and no more,—that is, "this present evil world." Do you say that there could be no temptation in that?—Millions of men have bartered their souls for only a small portion of it. The temptation that came to Christ was exactly the same, except in degree, as that which caused Esau to sell his birthright, and Balaam to try to curse Israel. It is the temptation that comes to

every man, to give up the unseen for the seen, the world to come for this world.

When the world was created, perfect and glorious, it was given to man. Man was made king—God's viceroy on earth. But man proved recreant to his trust, and basely sold himself to Satan, who of course thereby gained possession of the dominion. Satan's usurpation of the earth at once corrupted it; but God never acquiesced in the transaction. God, in giving the earth to man, did not give up His own right as Over-Lord, and therefore when Satan overthrew man, and seized his dominion, he did not in the least degree diminish God's right. Satan is indeed god of this world; but this present evil world is not the world that God designed for man's dwelling-place, and it is not what Christ came to acquire for man.

No one can ever give a better title than he himself possesses. Now God is the "possessor of heaven and earth," and He alone can give a valid title. Satan is a thief, and therefore whoever receives goods at his hands must know that they will sooner or later be confiscated. But this is just what the majority of men never think of. They grasp after the glittering prize that Satan holds out, not recognising the difference between what only seems to be and what really is. Christ always had a clear perception of things that differ, and hence He was able to resist Satan's allurement.

The same temptation came to Moses, and was resisted. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." Heb. xi. 24-26. So "he endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

This temptation comes to every person in some form. Do you want to know something of the strength of that which

Christ resisted?—Then recall the times when you have had the choice between the gratification of appetite and passion—the things that pertain to this world—and the opportunity to develop mind and body, and to be of greater use in the world. Let every one think what opportunities for gaining knowledge he has let slip, simply through love of ease and selfish indulgence, and he will know something of what Jesus resisted for us.

But you will say that one really gets nothing in the end by this exchange. After we have gratified the flesh, we have nothing to show for it; there remains nothing but weakness, weariness, disgust, regrets, aches and pains, and the fear of death. Exactly, but the thing looked attractive enough before we indulged in it; and we may be sure that Satan made the kingdoms of this world look very attractive to Christ. He showed Him all the glory of them. Do not imagine that there is no parallel between the lust of the flesh, and the kingdoms offered to Christ. To be sure there was no appearance of grossness in what was offered Him,—only the glory appeared,—but the grossness was all there, but concealed. And there was never evil thing held out as a bait to man, that was not made to appear good.

Think what the offer meant to Christ—to be the leader of the world, having the ears of all the people. How it would be suggested to Him that here was the opportunity of His lifetime. For just one act of compromise He could get into a position where He could present the truth to the whole world, and thus, it would be argued, the end would justify the means. He could be lifted up above the world, without enduring the cross. Ah, there was the secret of the temptation: the prospect of escaping the dreaded, cruel cross. Think how all men naturally shun the cross, and seek to escape it; think how many times you have neglected duty for pleasure,—the pleasure of sin,—and you will be able to comprehend a portion of the temptation that assailed Jesus.

But Christ, like Moses, had respect unto the recompense of the reward. With all the pomp and power, the glory and glitter of the world before Him, He deliberately turned from it to choose the cross of shame. The myriads of warriors moving at His command to overcome opposition to His will, He resigned for the company of twelve men of obscure birth. Through death He opened the way of life; whereas if He had yielded to Satan's temptation He would have had only the pleasures of

sin "for a season," and then eternal death.

"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." In the way of self-denial and the cross there is everlasting satisfaction; while in the way of self-gratification there is emptiness. The earth desolate through the thousand years between the first and second resurrection, with Satan confined to it (See Rev. xx.), shows what the kingdom really was, which seemed so dazzling as Satan spread it out to the view of Christ. And that shows what everyone gets who chooses this world. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

OVERCOMING THE WORLD.

CHRIST conquered, in order that we might conquer. His victory is ours, if we fully accept Him. "This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith." "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;" therefore to meet the temptation of the small portion of "this present evil world" that is offered to us, we have the strength that met and conquered the whole of it. Thus we are "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

Just one thought in closing,—a bit of practical help in resisting "fleshly lusts that war against the soul." Let us say, for example, that you are very hungry, and that along with the simple, wholesome food that your system really requires, there is set before you some dainty, pleasing to the palate, but not helpful to one who strives for the mastery. Now stop a moment and consider the end. It seems at this moment as if you want that thing more than anything else in the world; but if you listen to wisdom you will know that if you will but wait a little while, until you have satisfied your legitimate wants with good food, you will not care for this tempting morsel. In short, put yourself at once on the further side of the temptation, and you have won. You put it behind your back. We escape the sinful attractions of this world, by transporting ourselves by faith into the future, eternal world, and laying hold of the power of the world to come. Let us ever pray that the god of this world may not have power to blind our eyes by the glitter of this present evil world, so that we shall not be able to discern the real good from the false show.

CONVERSION AND FALLING AWAY.

"I AM anxious to know what is really the teaching of Scripture concerning the falling away of the converted. It seems to me that in the Scriptures it is clearly taught that a renewed man, while in this present imperfect state of existence, is not only subject to the allurements of temptation, but liable to lapse and gradually drift back, and ultimately find himself again in the depths of iniquity. A truly converted person, according to the creed of the church in whose teachings I have been indoctrinated, can never ultimately be lost. He may fall into the water, but will never remain in it till drowned; he may make hair-breadth escapes, but escapes in every case are inevitable. Such doctrine seems to me opposed to the clear teaching of Scripture, which never speaks of the faithlessness on the part of Christians as being due to a lack of genuineness in relation to their conversion. On the contrary, such express utterances as, "Be thou faithful unto death," and, "It is impossible to renew such (as fall away) to repentance," of necessity involve the possibility of falling away from "the truth as it is in Jesus."

In discussing a question of this kind we need to guard against fine-spun theological theories, and to keep to simple, practical truth. The Scriptures set the truth forth very clearly, in the abundant warnings against being led away by the error of the wicked and falling from our own steadfastness.

We can settle this question at once by referring to the beginning, before there was sin. Of the god of this world, Satan, it is said: "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." Eze. xxviii. 14, 15 If the pure and holy angels, even the chief of them all, the one who stood closest to God, and put the seal on perfection, could fall, it is evident that men who are walking with God can fall. Adam was the son of God, yet he fell; we also, although sons of God, are not any more beyond the possibility of falling again.

Those who claim that a saint can never fall away, always say, when a good man apostatizes, that he had never been truly converted. Thus they throw doubt upon the genuineness of everybody's conversion, and lead many timid souls to lose their confidence in God. But this false claim can easily be met. It will be admitted that the just live by faith,—that the one who has faith is just before God. The claim, therefore, that a really righteous man cannot fall away, is the same as saying that it is impossible to give up his faith. Now take the case of Peter walking on the water. We know that he did

actually walk by faith; yet he fell. Would anyone say that the fact of his fall shows that he had not really walked on the sea, but only seemed to do so?

One writer is quoted as saying: "One does not cross the bridge leading to life, and by-and-by return by another to the shores of death. Once passed from death to life, he is alive, and will never return into death." That sounds very fine; but it lacks proof. Judas, who at the last betrayed Jesus, was one of the twelve who received "power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases," and who "went through the towns, preaching the Gospel, and healing everywhere." Matt. x. 1-5; Luke ix. 1-6. A man cannot carry life to others unless he himself has it; yet Judas went at last to perdition. We must not flatter ourselves that a like thing cannot happen to us; for if we do we shall surely fall.

But what about Christ's statement that no one can pluck His sheep out of His hand? It is true; but they are in His hand only because they choose to be, and can leave of their own free will whenever they choose.

Well, at any rate we know that "whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." 1 John v. 18. Yes, it is true. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John iii. 9. But note that it does not say, "whosoever has been born of God," but, "Whosoever is born." The Christian's relation to God is always that of a new-born babe no matter how much he may grow. The good seed is the Word of God; and it is only as this word abides in us that we live. If we neglect or reject the word at any time, we shall die as surely as if we stopped eating the food that nourishes our bodies. And here we have an exact parallel; for our daily bread is given us for the purpose of teaching us how to obtain life from the word; and it is just as reasonable to say that a living man cannot starve himself to death as to say that a live Christian cannot become dead in trespasses and sins.

"Thou standest by faith; be not high-minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He spare not thee." Rom. xi. 20, 21. No one can question the genuineness of Paul's conversion; yet he declared that he was obliged to wage a continual warfare with himself, keeping his body under, and

bringing it into subjection, lest he should become a castaway.

Read the awful warning in Heb. vi. 4-6. "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify unto themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Surely there is no spiritual state possible in this life, higher than that here described; yet it is plainly indicated that men may fall from it. There would be no sense in saying, "If they fall away it is impossible to renew them again to repentance," if they could not fall away. And then the words, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you" (verse 9), show that it is possible for those to whom the apostle writes to have the same experience.

But is this possibility of falling away to perdition always to haunt the saints of God? Will the redeemed throughout eternity ever be in danger of losing their estate, as the fallen angels did? Not by any means; and the reason will be that before they reach that state, they will have been so thoroughly tested,—will have had such experiences with every sort of temptation, that nothing can come to them that they have not already met and resisted. When the restoration of all things is accomplished, rebellion will have been for ever wiped out of the universe.

And even here we are not to be "haunted" by the fear of falling away, although we are ever to keep in mind the possibility of it, and the danger that besets us. We are to know that we are safe in the everlasting arms as long as we do not take ourselves out. God "is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy," (Jude 24); and this suggestion of the possibility of falling is our assurance that we shall be "able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

A MILLIONAIRE, who had been born a poor boy, and whose money was now his idol, after showing his grand house and beautiful grounds to a Quaker, said, "And the almighty dollar has done it all! What cannot money do?" "Ah, friend," replied the Quaker, "thou remindest me of the Israelites, who worshipped the golden calf, saying it brought them out of the land of Egypt; when really it hindered them rather than helped them on the journey to the Promised Land; and may-be thy dollars may do the same to thee."



OBEDIENCE.

THE will of God is like a rope thrown to us as we struggle among the untamed waves. To remain "independent" is to repulse all succour, all salvation; it is to wander without a compass and without a chart through the fury of the storm. To obey is to seize the rope, to face the blast, to brave the storm, to advance against the confederate waves, to let one's self be irresistibly drawn towards the invisible harbour where our heavenly Father awaits us. Obedience is duty under all its forms. Obedience is faith and resignation. Obedience has for its watchword, "May Thy will be done;" which means, "I will fulfil it when I am strong; I will accept it when I am weak."—*Wilfrid Monod.*

"CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN."

ONE of the numberless touches of exquisite poetry in the old Testament is that which describes the "tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." The verdant grass plot which gladdens the eye is the result of a double process—shower and sunshine. Both are indispensable. We find in this beautiful expression a type of our deepest and richest spiritual experiences. It is a type of the most thorough work of conversion by the Holy Spirit. Over every impenitent soul hangs the dark cloud of God's righteous displeasure; His holy word thunders against sin, and His threatenings beat like a storm of hail. Repentance and faith in Christ sweep away this cloud; the thunders cease; the face of the atoning, pardoning Saviour looks forth like a clear blue sky after a storm; for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. No two cases of conversion are exactly similar, yet in every thorough work of grace, the darkness and dread which belong to a state of guilt give place to the smile and peace of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

What is true in the beginnings of the most thorough Christian life is often realised in the subsequent experiences of the believer. Rain and sunshine both play their part in developing godly character. It ought to be a comfort to such of my readers as are under the heavy downpour of trials to open their Bibles and read how it fared with some of God's most faithful children. Abraham tolled on his sorrowful way to Mount Moriah under a dark cloud

of apprehension; but the clear shining came when God approved his faith and spared the beloved son Isaac to the father's heart. The successive strokes of trial that burst on the head of Joseph only made his exaltation the more signal when he became prime minister of Egypt. There are forty-one chapters of the book of Job through which beats the tempest which smote the four corners of his house, but in the forty-second chapter comes the "clear shining after rain," and a blaze of restored prosperity. The biographies of Elijah and of Daniel prove how "light is sown for the righteous," and the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews is a meteorological record to show how faith paints rainbows on thunder clouds.

In our days, God often employs stormy providences for the discipline and perfecting of His own people. He knows when we need the drenchings. Every raindrop has its mission to perform. It goes right down to the roots of the heart, and creeps into every crevice. Not one drop of sorrow, not one tear, but may have some beneficent purpose. The process is not "joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness" and purity and strength. Christ's countenance never beams with such brightness and beauty as when it breaks forth after a deluge of sorrow; and many a Christian has become a braver, stronger, and holier man or woman for terrible afflictions; there has been a "clear shining after rain."

This principle has manifold applications. Sometimes a cloud of unjust calumny gathers over a good man's name; lies darken the air, and it pours falsehoods forty days and forty nights. But when the shower of slander has spent itself, the truth creeps out slowly but surely from behind the clouds of defamation, and the slandered character shines with more lustre than ever. The same storm that wrecks a rotten tree only roots more firmly the sound tree, whose leaves glisten in the subsequent sunshine.

All ye children of God who are under the peltings of poverty or the downpour of disappointments or the blizzards of adversity, "think it not strange as though some strange thing had happened unto you." Millions have had the same experiences before you. No storm ever drowned a true believer or washed out the foundations of his hope. The trial of your faith will be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the appearing of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Two things ought to give you courage. One is that our Lord loves to honour and reward unwavering faith. He permits the storm to test you, and then sends the smile of His sunshine to reward you. Another thought is that the skies are never so brilliantly blue as when they have been washed by a storm. The countenance of

Jesus is never so welcome and lovable as when He breaks forth upon us—a sun of consolation and joy—after trials.

Long years ago, on a day of thick fog and pouring rain, I ascended Mount Washington by the old bridle path over the slippery rocks. A weary, disappointed company we were when we reached the cabin on the summit. But toward evening a mighty wind swept away the banks of mist; the body of the blue heavens stood out in its clearness, and before us was revealed the magnificent landscape stretching away to the Atlantic sea. That scene was at the time, and has often been since, a sermon to my soul. It taught me that faith's stairways are over steep and slippery rocks, often through blinding storms, but God never loses His hold on us, and, if we endure to the end, He will yet bring us out into the "clear shining after rain."

"So it's better to hope, though the clouds run low,
And to keep the eye still lifted,
For the clear blue sky will soon peep through,
When the thunder cloud is rified."

—Rev. T. L. Cuyler.

THE DIVISION AND PUNCTUATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE marginal references in the Bible, the punctuation, the divisions into verses and chapters, are all the work of men. Not of men met together for that purpose, as in the translation of the Scriptures; but by several men at different times, and each independent of all the others.

First was the division into chapters. This was made by Hugo de Sancto Caro, who was born at St. Cher, Dauphine, France, about A. D. 1200, was created a cardinal by Pope Innocent IV., in 1245, and died in 1263. In preparing to make a concordance to the Latin Vulgate Version of the Scriptures, he divided both the Old Testament and the New into chapters, and that division still remains as he made it, in all our Bibles.

Next was the division into verses. The first direct step toward this was taken by Rabbi Mordecai Nathan, a celebrated Jewish teacher, in a "Concordance to the Hebrew Scriptures," composed A. D. 1438 to 1445. In this concordance, he made the division into verses, and marked every fifth verse with a Hebrew numeral letter. Then in 1661, Athias, a Jew of Amsterdam, printed an edition of the Hebrew Bible, in which he adopted the verses of Rabbi Nathan, and marked every verse with the figures in common use, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., etc., except the verses previously marked with Hebrew numerals by Rabbi Nathan. With the rejection of these Hebrew numerals, and placing instead the corresponding figures, the verses and numbers of Nathan and Athias are still retained in all the

copies of the Bible in other languages. But observe, this refers only to the Hebrew Bible, i. e., the Old Testament. The verses of the New Testament, as now used, are the invention of a printer, Robert Stephens by name, in imitation of those made for the Old Testament by Rabbi Nathan. They were first introduced in 1551, in an edition of the New Testament, printed by Stephens.

As for punctuation points, with the exception of the period, no such things were known when the New Testament was written, nor for a long time afterward, for the writing in the oldest manuscripts is all in capital letters without accent or mark of any kind, not even spaces, between the words. Here is a translation of the copy of the first few lines of the Gospel of John, as it was written:—

"INTHEBEGINNINGWASTHE
WORDANDTHEWORDWAS
WITHGOD. ANDGODWASTHE
WORD. HEWASINTHEBEGINNING
WITHGOD
ALLWEREMADEBYHIMANDWITH
OUTHIMWASMADENOTONETHING
THATWASMADEINHIMLIFEWAS."

About 400 A. D., Jerome, and others from him, used points that correspond with our comma and colon, but they did not go into general use at all. Again in the eighth century the stroke now called comma was received, and Jerome's points were again used at the command of Charlemagne, and in the ninth century the Greek note of interrogation, which is now our semicolon, was first used. But it was not till the invention of printing that any of these points came into general use. Thus the colon and the period began to be used about 1485, the comma was next given a better shape, and the semicolon added about 1521, and in Sir Phillip Sydney's "Arcadia," 1587, they all appear, as also the note of interrogation, the asterisk, and the parenthesis.

Then again, there were no acknowledged rules to guide the editors and printers in the use of the points, consequently they were placed just as each one pleased, and very often arbitrarily. And yet again the same editors and printers would change the punctuation in the different editions of the same work as they were successively printed; especially did Stephens vary his points in every edition of the Bible that he printed. And more than that, this variance in the punctuation of the Bible is not yet ended, as anyone may prove by comparing copies of the Bible printed only as far back as 1830 or 1840 with the later editions, and looking at Matt. xix. 28 and Heb. x. 12. In the earlier copies, at Matt. xix. 28, you will see the comma placed after "regeneration," in the passage reading thus: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me in the regenera-

tion, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory," etc., whereas in the later copies the comma is placed after "me," thus: "Ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory," etc. See what a difference it makes. The first would imply that Christ had been regenerated. But the difference in Heb. x. 12 is still more apparent, for in the older editions the comma is after "sins," thus: "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God," where in the newer editions the comma is placed after "ever," thus: "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." While the first would make Christ sit down at the right hand of God for ever, the last only makes one sacrifice for sins for ever, and then sat down at the right hand of God only "till His enemies be made His footstool."

To anyone who will compare the Revised New Testament with the old version of common use, it will be apparent that the Revision Committee did not hold themselves subject to the punctuation of the common version, but changed it wherever they chose; and it would seem that their changes are not always for the better, for instance, Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. From this it would appear that at the death of the Saviour, "many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised;" and yet did not come out of the tombs till after His resurrection, which was the third day after His death. Such a thing is hardly to be supposed, but rather, as our old version gives it, that, at the death of Christ "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after His resurrection," that is, the graves were opened at His death, when the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent; but the saints did not arise till after His resurrection. This looks more reasonable, and is less ambiguous. Yet there are places in our old standard version where the punctuation needs to be changed before the Scripture will be in harmony with itself. One notable instance is Luke xxiii. 43; by placing the comma after "to-day," instead of after "thee." Then it will harmonise perfectly with Zech. ix. 12, and John xx. 17, and with the whole course of Scripture on that subject.

A. T. JONES

HELP.

IT would make an exceedingly instructive Bible reading to take the word "help," and run it through all the moods and tenses in which it is conjugated in the Scriptures. "He is our help and shield." "A very present help in trouble." "From whence cometh my help? My help cometh from the Lord, which made

heaven and earth." "Our help is in the name of the Lord." This was the testimony of the apostle to the interposition of God in his behalf, when he stood before Agrippa, and told the story of his conversion, and of his obedience to the heavenly vision, and of what had come of it: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great." It would brighten all faces to realise fully, what resources of help there are for burdened and tempted and sinful souls in the grace of God.—*Advance.*

THE LAW THE CENTRAL THING.

IN a sermon delivered in the spring of 1898, Dr. P. S. Henson, the eminent Baptist divine of Chicago, said:—

"The central thing in the earth was the camp of Israel; the central part of the camp was the tabernacle; the central part of the tabernacle was the most holy place; the central thing in the most holy place was the ark; and the central thing of the ark was the law. The angels looking down into the ark fitly represent the aspect of heaven and earth toward the commandments. This law was to be the foundation of everything worth having. Sinai is the tallest pulpit that the world ever saw, and from it God spake these words. God spake these words, not Moses. They are not an outgrowth of the ethereal teachings of the Jewish nation. They are not for the Jew only, but also for the Gentile. Not in Palestine, but in the wilderness, they were given; thus confining them to no particular country. They are not merely for the old dispensation, but also for the new.

"Many think that the law was abolished when Christ came. But this is a mistake; for the law is as unshaken as the pillars of the throne of God. The giving of the law on Sinai was not the beginning of the law. They make a great mistake who say that from Adam to Moses there was no law. From the dawn of creation God wrote the moral law on the fleshy tables of the heart. But it was largely lost through sin, so that God in His mercy wrote it on tables of stone that might be seen. The ceremonial law passed away at the time of Christ, but not the moral law. God thundered the law to Israel and through Israel to humanity. The Lord addresses every man as 'thou.' He singles me out, and deals with me as if I were the only being under the stars.

"God's law is not an arbitrary restraining limit to my pleasure; but God does not wish me to do any harm. The law is underlaid with love. Man wants to get away from the law. Why, the fool! a man away from the law is in hell. God's law is to promote pleasure. It is not to restrain us, but to keep us on the track. Misery is due to the breaking of God's

law. Love underlies Sinai as well as Calvary. Love underlies the law as well the Gospel. The Sermon on the Mount explains the law of Sinai.

"Man must keep the whole law. A man cannot make up an average. Suppose there are ten gates in an enclosure, and a person is commanded not to go out. If he comes and says he went out through only one of them, has he not nevertheless disobeyed the law?"

"A man must keep all the law, and at all times. A perfect obedience is required. If a man is to scale heaven with a ladder, it must reach. This kind of law and language is not acceptable to the people of to-day. There never was such a revolt against law. There is a wide-spread contempt for the law and the Law-maker. On account of our contempt for the law, we may be buried under the lava of Sinai. The idea of sin is fading out. Sin is a sort of disease, and hell is getting to be regarded as a hospital. Calvary is meaningless if Sinai is hushed. When we lose sight of the law, there is a shallowness in religion.

"What the world needs is to know the law, that they may appreciate the Gospel. The law must go before the Gospel, so that a man may be brought to the knowledge of sin that he may be led to salvation. As soon as he sees his real condition, he flees for refuge to Christ; thus Christ becomes 'the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.' Then there is planted in me a principle of obedience; and though I shall never be perfect here, yet when I pass over there I shall keep the law perfectly. We shall not only sing the song of the Lamb, but the song of Moses and the Lamb."

FEELINGS V. EXPERIENCES.

CONQUEST of temptation, deliverance from the power of evil habits, and a ready compliance with the will of God in answer to prayer, is a much better proof of His favourable presence than joyous feelings. The latter may be mistaken; but the former are as sure a mark of the Divine operation and blessing as that a plentiful crop of corn has had benefit of rain and sunshine.—*Thomas Adams (1701-84).*

"DON'T you know, young man," said an aged minister, in giving advice to a younger brother, "that from every town, and every village, and every little hamlet in England, there is a road to London?" "Yes," was the reply. "So," continued the venerable man, "from every text in Scripture there is a road to the metropolis of Scripture; that is, Christ. And your business is, when you get a text, to say, 'Now, what is the road to Christ?' and then preach a sermon running along the road towards the great metropolis, Christ."



THEY TWO.

THEY are left alone in the dear old home,
 After so many years
 When the house was full of frolic and fun,
 Of childish laughter and tears.
 They are left alone! they two—once more!
 Beginning life over again,
 Just as they did in the days of yore,
 Before they were nine or ten.

And the table is set for two these days;
 The children went one by one,
 Away from home on their separate ways,
 When the childhood days were done.
 How healthily hungry they used to be!
 What romping they used to do!
 And mother—for weeping—can hardly see
 To set the table for two.

They used to gather around the fire
 While some one would read aloud,
 But whether at study or work or play,
 'Twas a loving and merry crowd.
 And now they are two that gather there
 At evening to read or sew,
 And it seems almost too much to bear
 When they think of the long ago.

Ah well! ah well! 'tis the way of the world!
 Children stay but a little while,
 And then into other scenes are whirled,
 Where other homes beguile.
 But it matters not how far they roam,
 Their hearts are fond and true,
 And there's never a home like the dear old
 home,

Where the table is set for two.

—Selected.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HOME.

FEW things are sadder than the gradual dissolution of a family circle. When, moreover, it once begins, it goes forward with a rapidity that is almost startling. The eldest son, it may be, dissatisfied with his narrow surroundings, takes his journey into some far country to seek a better fortune; or the eldest daughter, obeying the deepest instinct of a woman's nature, listens to the voice of a stranger, and forsakes with a light and hopeful heart the roof that sheltered her girlhood, to become the mistress of a new home. Then the younger children follow in quick succession. Some of them, most likely, are wrapped in white robes, and borne forth amid blinding tears to their last resting place. Sooner or later, and

in one way or another, they are all gone. The long table in the dining hall is shortened, the chairs are taken out of the family room because there is no one to occupy them, and the old folks are left to each other as absolutely as they were in those far-distant days when under bright skies and with buoyant spirits they began life together. Well indeed is it for them if the young love that once animated their hearts has deepened and ripened into that rational affection which is the most sacred bond of union between two human beings.

We have known aged couples whom not even the experiences of fifty years had disenchanted of the glowing ideals that floated before their vision when they first set their feet in the long road which begins at the marriage altar and ends in an open grave. Would that there were more such! At the risk of being sneered at by that large class of people to whom a bushel of corn or an ounce of silver is worth more than a ton of sentiment, we wish to protest against the criminal carelessness and indifference that allow all the glory to fade out of the wedded life, and suffer it to become a dull, monotonous, and commonplace thing. It is a matter of vast importance that husbands and wives, instead of losing their tender interest in each other, should cultivate this holy feeling with constant assiduity; for the time is coming when it may be the only human resource upon which they can draw for comfort.

It is a pathetic picture, this of the old man and his old wife trying still to keep a cheerful spirit in the empty house that once rang with the laughter of happy children. But it is not without features that relieve it of its sadness. No true home was ever created in vain. In the order of God's providence it serves a useful purpose, though it may afterward perish from the earth, and even the memory of it utterly decay. One of the most inestimable blessings that a boy or girl can carry with him into the busy world is the recollection of the dear, familiar hearthstone, on which perhaps no fire now glows, and around which no cheerful faces gather. This recollection is strength against temptation, courage in the teeth of hard conflict, fortitude under the pressure of grievous disappointment, and illuminating hope when sun, moon, and stars are obscured by cloud and tempest. Whatever is of high spiritual quality

in the family life abides, and passes on as a quickening force into the thought and inspiration of later generations. The purity, the love, the gentleness, the self-denial, that find in that divine sphere the fittest theatre for their display and exercise, do not evaporate into empty air, but become incorporate in the character of the children, and are transmitted in increasing volume to bless the souls of men and women still unborn.—*Christian Advocate.*

OPPORTUNITIES IN DISGUISE.

THE first feeling of many an ambitious boy or girl who has passed out of school or college, intent upon putting noble life into work, is often one of extreme depression and disappointment. Where is the splendid opportunity promised? Where is the great stage upon which the noble part was to be acted? Instead of stimulating incentives to self-sacrifice and self-surrender, there is only some common routine work—the teaching of a country school, the drudgery of a law office, or some equally distasteful and uninspiring occupation. How often does this earliest outcome of a practical life seem a sore and lasting disappointment and desolation to the eager boy or girl!

It is just here that the mature man who gives advice to the young graduate finds an opportunity of saying a wise word. He ought not to emphasise less the nobility of life and its inherent greatness, but he may wisely point out the fact that life often seems to delight in disguising itself and in presenting its greatest opportunities in the humblest and most uninviting form. Emerson somewhere says that the days come to us as veiled figures, and that not until they have turned from us do we discover how beautiful they are and what gifts they hold in their hands. The greatest opportunities often come in the humblest guises. Almost every successful man will tell you that his start in life came through some small service or some apparently insignificant chance to which at the moment he attached no importance.

A few years ago an ambitious girl graduated from college. She had made a fine record; she was possessed by a noble desire to serve humanity; she believed, as everyone ought to believe, that life had some special work for her to do, and she was eager to find it. She expected this work to come to her in some impressive and recognisable form; but instead of the large opportunity for which she looked, she found a position as the mistress of a little school in a manufacturing village. Nothing could have been humbler, and nothing more remote from any suggestion of great influence. The children were untrained socially, many of them ragged and dirty, and the atmosphere of the place was repellent to her delicate senses. No sooner

had she settled down to her work than a bitter sense of disappointment and depression came over her. Was it to teach the ragged children of a factory town the rudiments of knowledge that she had toiled all these years? Was this the outcome of her fine training and her unusual opportunities? She felt as if she had been defrauded. But after a while it occurred to her that possibly her attitude was wrong, and that even in the humble sphere in which she was placed she still might do some good. She turned to the children; she resolved to become their personal friend, and to influence them as a friend influences a friend. She courted their society,—walked to and from the school-house with them, went into the fields with them, drew out their confidences, and established herself on terms of intimacy with them.

It happened one day as she walked toward the school-house, surrounded by a group of children, that the subject of strikes came up, and the young teacher explained, in simple and forcible language, the evils which often follow in the wake of strikes—the suffering in the homes, the demoralisation of the workmen, and all the other miseries that accompany a serious disturbance of the relations of employer and employed. Among the listeners was a ragged Irish boy who seemed to be intensely interested, and at the close of the conversation requested the teacher to repeat what she had said. That afternoon when school closed, the same ragged boy went to the desk and asked permission to bring his father to hear what the teacher had to say about strikes. The young girl was naturally timid, and it took all her courage to assent to the boy's proposal.

The next day the father came—a rough big, dirty, and eminently unattractive Irish factory hand. He evidently looked for no new light, but, at his boy's request, had come to hear what the slip of a teacher had to say about strikes. Trembling within, but with a bold exterior, the young girl repeated her conversation, elaborating her points to make them a little clearer; and the man seemed interested. Not long after that, the teacher learned that the man to whom she had talked was the leader among the operatives of the town; that he had organised a strike, which was on the point of being put into operation when her talk with the children took place, and that she had impressed so deeply the leader, that the whole matter was postponed. A great strike had been averted by the school-mistress who thought that little place offered her no opportunity worth using.

This incident might be multiplied a thousand-fold in every field of labour. Opportunities which open the widest doors to usefulness and influence are constantly coming to men in the humblest possible guises. There is only one way of making sure of one's greatest opportunity, and that is to treat every opportunity as if it were great.—*Christian Union.*

RECOMPENSE.

STRAIGHT through my heart this fact to-day
By truth's own hand is driven:
God never takes one thing away,
But something else is given.

I did not know in earlier years
This law of love and kindness,
But without hope through bitter tears,
I mourned in sorrow's blindness.

And ever following each regret
For some departed treasure,
My sad repining heart was met
With unexpected pleasure.

I thought it only happened so,
But time this truth has taught me:
No least thing from my life can go,
But something else is brought me.

It is the law, complete, sublime,
And now with faith unshaken,
In patience I but bide my time
When any joy is taken.

No matter if the crushing blow
May for the moment down me;
Still back of it waits Love, I know,
With some new gift to crown me.
—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox, in Independent.*

A STRANGE IMPULSE.

THE following remarkable experience in the life of Mr. Emmons T. Mookridge, who was president of the Philadelphia Medical Mission, was published in Dr. Gordon's magazine:—

"After a busy day, sitting in my counting-room in meditation, there came upon me an irresistible impulse to take the train and go to a distant city. After vainly trying to shake off the impression, I sent word to my family that they need not look for me that night, hastened to the cars without luggage, and at the end of a three or four hours' journey found myself at my destination, heartily ashamed of having yielded to so unaccountable an impulse. Finding that the next train would not start for my home for some time, I strolled up into the town to pass away the time, amazed that I could have been so weak as to take a journey without any motive.

"As I passed a public office, a door opened, and there came forth a man whom I knew well, who, without expressing any surprise at my presence, asked me to walk with him, to which I consented. I noticed that he was under great suppressed emotion, and I was seeking to find the cause. He told me that the night before he had been badly treated by another, and that he was now on his way to take that man's life. Of course I was horrified, and tried all sorts of argument and persuasion to induce him to desist from his purpose; but he was a man of singularly strong will, and had become almost insane by brooding on his wrongs. For perhaps two or three

hours I followed him as he entered different places in search of his enemy, vainly seeking to deter him from his fell purpose, until at last at midnight I fell on my knees in the street and cried to God to save him from committing the dreadful crime of murder.

"Immediately the answer came. He raised his pistol, fired it into the air, and said, 'I yield to your entreaties, and forego my purpose.' 'Now take me home with you,' I said. He consented, and when we came there, I kneeled down, insisting that he should do the same, and prayed that he might not only forego his purpose of vengeance, but also forgive the offender. It was a long time before he yielded to my entreaties that he should forgive him, but every time he refused I turned to God with fresh prayer, until finally he consented to forgive. I then asked him to pray for his own forgiveness, and to ask God to receive him into His family as His child.

"For a long time he refused my appeal, but I kept continually calling upon God for him, until finally, as the day broke, he made a full surrender, and as we both rose from our knees, we gave the glory to God, who had used me as His feeble instrument to save a soul from death, deliver him from the power of Satan, and bring him into Christ's kingdom.

"More than a quarter of a century has passed since that eventful night, but the event was of God, who, when He commences a good work, carries it to the end; for he has ever since lived a godly and sober life, exemplifying the mighty power of God to save, to keep from falling, and to present faultless before the holy Presence with exceeding joy."

PROMPT PAYMENT.

A STORY is told of an old Methodist minister who believed in improving every opportunity to "sow the good seed."

Travelling along a country road one day, his horse lost a shoe, and the minister stopped at the next blacksmith's shop to have the damage repaired. Several loafers were about the shop. The minister told them who he was, inquired their names and occupations, and had a cheery talk with them.

When the horse was shod, he asked what was to pay, and the blacksmith said carelessly, "Oh, nothing; just remember me in your prayers."

"Very well," said the minister, promptly. "As my motto is, 'Pay as you go,' I'll just settle the bill now!"

Down on his knees he went, and the loafers and the blacksmith followed his example, willingly or reluctantly. The fervent Methodist prayer was both comprehensive and practical, and at its close the minister mounted his horse and rode off, carrying with him the hearty good will of his congregation.



JOSEPH IN PRISON.

IN our last lesson we learned that Joseph was sold by the Ishmaelites to Potiphar, one of the officers of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. He did not waste his time mourning, though it was a bitter trial to him to be separated from his father, know-



THE PRISONERS TELLING THEIR DREAMS.

ing how Jacob would grieve for him. But he put his trust in the God of his fathers, and did with his might all that his hands found to do.

God was with Joseph, and made everything that he did to prosper, and blessed the house of Potiphar for his sake. Potiphar saw this, and gave him charge over all that he had. So Joseph was a witness to the true God, in that dark heathen land. He was doing the work that God meant Abraham and his seed to do when He called him out. His promise was, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This was seen in the history of Joseph, who was an object lesson of Christ, the true Seed.

But Potiphar's wife was angry with

Joseph, because she could not get him to do wrong. He never forgot that God was with him, and when he was tempted he said, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" So Potiphar's wife told lies to her husband, about Joseph, and he was put into prison and kept in hard bondage: "his feet they hurt with fetters, he was laid in irons." Pa. cv. 18.

But God was with Joseph in the prison, and the keeper soon saw that he was not like one of the common prisoners. Here, just as in Potiphar's household, he did with his might whatever work he found to do, and soon he was put over all the prisoners, "and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it."

God was preparing Joseph for a very great and important work, and the training that he got as a slave and a prisoner was the very best he could have to fit him for it. Joseph did not see all this at the time, but he trusted that God was leading him, and worked at whatever came to hand, without murmuring at

his hard lot. No doubt he sometimes thought of his dreams, and wondered how they could ever be fulfilled.

Joseph was not wrapped up in his own troubles. All that he had suffered had given him tender sympathy for others, instead of making him selfish. He was quick to see when others were in trouble, and to try to help them.

One morning he noticed that two of the prisoners looked very unhappy, and he asked them kindly, "Why look ye so sadly to day?" He did not know that these kind words

would open the door of his prison, and set him over all the land of Egypt.

The two men to whom he spoke were servants of Pharaoh's household, his chief butler, and baker. They had each had a dream, and they were troubled because they did not know the meaning of their dreams. God had given Joseph understanding to interpret dreams, so he told each one the meaning of his dream.

The chief butler dreamed that he saw a vine with three branches, and it budded and blossomed and brought forth grapes, and he took the grapes and pressed out the juice into Pharaoh's cup that was in his hand, and gave it to Pharaoh to drink. Joseph told him that the three branches meant three days, and within that time Pharaoh would restore him to his old place in his household. Then he asked the butler to remember him when he should be brought out of the prison, and to speak to Pharaoh about him, because he had not done anything wrong, but was shut up in prison without any just cause.

When the chief baker heard that the butler's dream had so good an interpretation, he told his dream also. He held three baskets of bread on his head, and in the top basket were "all manner of bake-meats" for Pharaoh; and the birds came and eat them out of the basket that was on his head. Joseph said that the three baskets were three days, and within three days Pharaoh would take off his head, and hang him on a tree, and the birds should eat his flesh.

The third day from this time was Pharaoh's birthday, and he made a feast to all his servants, and he remembered



THE BAKER'S DREAM.

his chief butler and baker who were in the prison. Then he restored the butler to his office, but the baker he hanged, just as Joseph had said. But the butler, as soon as he was out of prison, forgot all about Joseph for a long time. Yet in all these things God was working out a wonderful purpose for the good of the whole world. What this was we shall learn next week.

TOMMY'S SURPRISE.

ONE night after Tommy was ready for bed and had on his clean, white nightgown, he climbed up in mamma's lap and asked for just one story more. Mamma drew her chair up by the grate and held Tommy close in her arms, and he reached out his two little bare feet to the fire. The big coals shone out and made the room warm and light, and Tommy was very happy, and waited as



THE BUTLER'S DREAM.

still as a mouse for the story to begin.

"A very long, long time ago," said mamma, "there was a beautiful grove of big, big trees. Their tops reached up higher than any trees you ever saw, and their branches reached out farther. Every day they drank in the sunshine and grew bigger and bigger. Everything all around them was very bright and pretty.

"But one day the wind began to blow, and the rain came down more and more, till the lakes and rivers spread over everywhere and covered the trees all up; and it kept thundering and lightning, and the ground shook so hard that some mountains were shaken all to pieces and great big stones sent flying into the air.

"The grove of big trees had all been blown down, and a great mountain of dirt was heaped up over them. How do you suppose the trees felt? They were jammed in tight, and squeezed hard under the big mountain, and it was dark, very dark in there. And I suppose they thought, 'We never work any more; we shall never see the sunshine again.'

"And there the trees stood for years and years and years—oh, a great deal longer than anyone who lives upon this earth can remember. But one day, away down in the ground under the mountain, came a great crashing, tumbling, rumbling, grumbling noise, and next there was a big hole in the mountain that reached clear

down to where the trees were, and the sun could shine in on them once more!

"But if you had looked in there for the trees you never could have found them, for they had all been broken up and jammed tight together and turned black and hard till they looked more like a big black rock. And when the men who made the hole saw the shining stuff, they said:

"'Here it is, here it is!'

"And the black, shining stuff said:

"'What's that? what's that? Oh, light! it's daylight! Who ever thought we'd see daylight again? Why, we've been shut in here years and years and years! We want to get out and look around.'

"But when it went to move it was very hard and stiff, not at all as it was when it was tall green trees and waved in the wind.

"Then the men took their big iron tools and began breaking it up into pieces. They loaded it into little carts and drew it out into the bright sunshine. The black, shining

stuff looked at the men and said:

"'See those trees growing there on the mountain! They look like bushes. When we were trees we used to reach ever so much higher than they do. Oh, how changed everything is—except the sunshine. That looks just as it used to. But we want to do some work again.'

"And very soon a man came and bought it. He brought a big load of it here for us to burn in our grate."

Then Tommy opened his eyes and said:

"Mamma, was it coal?"

And mamma said:

"Yes. And when it turns red and hot it is giving back the sunshine it drank in so long, long ago, when it was tall green trees."—*Youth's Companion.*

THE REAL DISCOVERERS.

UNCLE ROBERT had been explaining how messages could be sent back and forth between two far-apart places without any wires at all—just telegraphed right through plain air! It was certainly very surprising! Morry and Paine went out on the door-step to talk it over.

"No; nothing but great tall poles at the places where you send them—the messages, I mean. You send them straight through nothing!"

"He said you set little waves moving

in the air and they go all the way across to the other place."

"Yes," Uncle Robert's voice said, "and I really think the bunnies discovered it."

"Our bunnies?"

"No, not ours, but their great-great-great-grandfathers—oh, a great many greats! Away back to the first bunny family that ever was. They were the ones that discovered wireless telegraphy. I think they ought to have the honour. If there's a splendid statue ever made, I think it ought to have a big cotton-tail bunny on top of it!"

"Oh" laughed both small boys at once. "tell us why, Uncle Robert! A statue to bunnies!"

"Well, in the bunny family, when there is any danger from an enemy,—and the poor little wild bunnies are surrounded by enemies on every side—the different members of the family telegraph a warning to each other.

"Run! There's an enemy coming!" they telegraph, and all the bunny boys and bunny girls and the grown-up bunnies that get the message, go scurrying, hurrying into their holes. I tell you, they don't wait a minute. The messages go a good many hundred feet sometimes."

"Through nothing, Uncle Robert—I mean through the air?"

"No, through the ground. They stamp on the ground very hard with their strong little hind legs when they are alarmed. And they do it on purpose to warn the rest of the family at a distance."

"Run! Run! Run for your lives!" The little message is carried through the ground, much as our wireless messages are through the air. Little sound-waves are set in motion, one after another."

"Well," breathed Morry, "come on, Paine, let's go out and honour the discoverers' great-great-great-grandbunnies in our garden!"—*A. H. Donnell.*

PUT-OFF TOWN.

Did you ever go to Put-off Town,
Where the houses are old and tumbledown,
And everything tumbles and everything drags,
With dirty streets and people in rags?

On the Street of Slow Lives Old Man Wait,
And his two little boys, named Linger and
Late,
With uncleaned hands and tousled hair,
And a naughty little sister named Don't Care.

Grandmother Growl lives in this town,
With her two little daughters, called Fret and
Frown;
And Old Man Lazy lives all alone
Around the corner at Street Postpone.

To play all day in Tarry Street,
Leaving your errands for other feet;
To stop, or shrink, or linger, or frown,
Is the nearest way to this old town.

—Selected.



THE ADVENTURES OF TWO SPARROWS.

THIS story is given by Mr. Ernest Seton-Thompson in his book, "Lives of the Hunted," which fascinating volume of true stories no lover of animals can fail to enjoy. He followed from his study window the adventures of a sparrow which had been hatched in a barber's shop by a canary, who taught him to sing in a most unsparrowlike way. An accident, however, to the cage in which he was kept was the cause of his escape from captivity, and from this date his adventures may be said to have begun.

First of all he made a nest of twigs, the nearest approach he could find to the wicker basket nest of his foster parents. Then he made love to a biddy sparrow, and conducted her in triumph to the nest he had built. But alas, she would have none of it. After a hasty look round she took hold of a twig and threw it overboard, to show her disapproval, then flew away, and remained absolutely deaf to all his entreaties to return. Nothing daunted, the cock set to work to demolish the nest that he had so carefully made—the work of a week—and before long nothing remained of it save a pile of sticks heaped up on the ground below. Next day he returned once more with Biddy, who, finding the nest demolished, expressed her satisfaction, and at once began to help him make another—this time of hay.

The days went on, and egg after egg was added to the new nest, till at last there were five. Then it occurred to Mr. Thompson to try a little experiment. Watching his chance, late one evening he dropped a marble into the nest. "What happened at once," he says, "I do not know;" but early the next morning he saw these two sparrows locked in fierce combat, hammering and pecking at one another in deadly earnest. That afternoon he found below the nest not only the intrusive marble, but also the remains of the five eggs.

There was evidently neither luck nor peace in the old nest, and the two (having decided to forget the past) agreed to abandon it, and hit upon the somewhat original idea of building a nest upon the top of an electric light. This, however, was also doomed to

failure, though not until a week's labour had been expended on it. The third site chosen was the high fork of an elm tree. This time Biddy decided to use horsehair wherewith to line her nest; but alas! the nest was all but finished when she put her head through one of those dangerous hair-nooses she had so skilfully made, and was caught suspended in the air. The more she struggled, the tighter became the noose. Her mate did all he could to release her, but only made matters worse, till at last Biddy hung stiff and silent, and the cock sparrow knew that all was over.

He had never been very alert; he was always venturesome and heedless, and now he became more so. One day he was run over by a bloyole, and his wing got injured; he managed to hop away, but was eventually captured by a little girl, and now he is restored to his original owner, and will probably end his days where he began them—in a canary cage.

AN OFFENDED CROW.

IN his book entitled "Turbans and Tails," Mr. Bamford records some entertaining observations which he made upon crows in the East Indies. He incurred a crow's displeasure, and does not wish to do so again.

There was a pandanus-tree near my veranda, which was one of my favourite trees. In various parts of the garden there were already four or five crows' nests, with the occupants of which I was on the best of terms, but one pair of birds determined to build in this pandanus.

At first I offered no objection, but when the nest was finished the male bird found his energies suddenly deprived of direction. He therefore occupied his leisure moments by digging with his strong beak at the heads of the pandanus shoots. It was a piece of the most wanton mischief.

Now as the pandanus is an inside grower, this treatment threatened the tree's life. I expostulated with the bird. He would listen with mock gravity, and the moment I had finished, would dig out a fresh piece of the plant and throw it down to me as I stood beneath him.

When I found that he was not to be reasoned with, I gave the *mali* orders to

remove the nest from the tree. This was done, and as far as I could see, the *mali* remained in favour, but I was visited with the most serious displeasure.

Whenever I ventured into the garden that crow would signal to his friends, and in an instant from twenty to fifty crows, according as the exigencies of the hour might allow, would flock around me and make most unpleasant remarks. If I even showed myself on the upper veranda, that offended bird would at once fly on the balustrade of it, and stretching out his neck, would accuse me of every conceivable enormity in such deep, sepulchral tones as went far toward making my life miserable.

THE BIRD OF PARADISE.

MOST of us have seen in a lady's hat a stuffed bird of paradise, or what purports to be one. Just now ornithologists can see the real article alive at Mr. Holmes Seward's, of Liverpool, the well-known naturalist. The proper name of this rare bird, which comes from New Guinea, is "The King Emerald Bird of Paradise"—*paradisaea apoda*. The old ornithologists never got near enough to discover what the bird's feet were like, so they concluded he hadn't any—quite a false assumption. The plumage of this wonderful creature embraces all the colours of the rainbow, and his tail is a "train of golden glory." His price is £150, and he lives in a parrot cage, and has a voracious appetite, eating water-melon as often as it is offered. Only two others are said to be alive in captivity in Europe, and the various "Zoos" will soon no doubt be competing for the possession of this remarkable specimen.—*Selected*.

The Unwearying Wings of a Bird—Dr. F. H. Knowlton, of the United States National Museum, says that perhaps the longest straightaway flight made by birds in their migrations is accomplished by some of the shore and water-birds that nest in the islands of Behring Sea and spend the winter at Hawali and Fanning Island, 2,200 miles away. As some of these birds live entirely on the shore, and are probably unable to rest on the surface of water, they must, says Doctor Knowlton, accomplish the whole distance in a single flight. Yet, although there are no landmarks for them upon their long journey over a waste of waters, they make their way to their destination "with the precision of a rifle-bullet."

"TELL me what my wings were made for,
Trembling, fluttering, helpless things;
If this cage be all of birdland,
Tell me why a bird has wings."



LAST week another negro was burned at the stake in Arkansas (U.S.A.); yet we hear nothing of "European intervention," as would be the case if there should come news of some hypothetical "Turkish atrocities." The Bible teaches that persecution of the saints will be rife at the coming of the Lord; and therefore we know that these affairs in America, in the cases of possible or probable criminals, are only the preliminary training for the revival of the horrors of the Inquisition.

A BILL has been introduced into the French Chamber of Deputies, ordering that all churches now recognised and partially supported by State subventions be separated from the State. The Bill included a denunciation of the Concordat and all compacts between the State and religious bodies, whether Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish, the suppression of the Budget of Public Worship, and of the Embassy at the Vatican, and application of the funds thus obtained to old age pensions. While France is taking steps to make the separation between Church and State complete, most other countries are making the union more complete.

It is reported from Sydney that the Narandera Meat Preserving Works have purchased 120,000 sheep at 6d. to 1s. each, the owners being unable to keep them, on account of the absence of fodder through the drought. It is well known that disease is always prevalent among poorly-nourished stock, and it may safely be taken for granted that the sheep that are slaughtered to keep them from starving to death are not by any means in the best condition. People who eat mutton this winter must not think much about it, if they wish to enjoy it. A far better way, however, would be to think of it so seriously as not to eat it.

In the Clerkenwell Police Court the other day a father complained to the magistrate that his son, aged ten, was beyond control. When asked what he had done to correct the lad, the man said that he had beaten him with the open hand, and had used a cane. The magistrate said: "Now, take my advice. Return home with the boy, and beat him well with a strap. It is no good beating a boy with the open hand." Then, addressing the boy, he told him that if he were brought up again he would be severely flogged; and in order to impress him with the meaning of this threat, the gaoler, at the magistrate's direction, showed the boy a formidable rod, and whizzed it about his ears.

Not a word of censure to the father, or of intimation that he was the one who was most in need of the rod. A child of ten years may certainly be a tartar; but never without the parent being to blame. No more humiliating confession of weakness and incapacity can be made, than for a man to say that he cannot control his ten-year-old son.

It is a disgrace for any parent to acknowledge that he, or she, cannot control a child; yet it is no uncommon thing to find children not half ten years old, who are beyond control of their parents, and the parents have no thought of shame. Disobedience to parents is given as a characteristic of the last days; but the blame always rests with the parents.

At a recent inquest held on the body of a baby that had died from gastric irritation, one of the physicians from St. Thomas's Hospital stated that a very large number of children suffered from intestinal irritation through constantly sucking the so-called "baby comforter," which is so well known as to need no description. This gets very dirty through being dropped, and illness is the result. In short, the baby is poisoned. The coroner said to the jury: "Well, gentlemen, I suppose you will call this a natural death. A very convenient term for such cases as these." Quite right, too: a natural death from an unnatural habit. Of course, many babies thrive in spite of it, just as they do in spite of much worse treatment; but that only shows the strength of vitality, and does not justify the wrong habits.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has been telling a story that illustrates the working of altogether too much of what is called education. He was examining a school, and finding that zoology was in the list of subjects taught, he asked the boys what they had learned of it. A bright lad answered that he had learned that ruminants were vegetarians. On being asked what the word "ruminants" meant, the boy answered, "A class of animals;" but when he was asked if he had ever seen one, he replied that he thought not, and that he would not know one if he did see it. Yet, said the Archbishop, the school was in the country, and the boy must have passed half-a-dozen cows that morning. But he had not been taught to think, or to attach any meaning to the words that he learned parrot-like from the book. The more one gets of such education, the worse it is for him.

THE *Daily Mail* recently published statements from several men who are between ninety and one hundred years of age, as to the secret of their longevity. Without exception they attributed it to simple living—plain diet, and plenty of fresh air and exercise. Abstinence from intoxicants and tobacco is also emphasised by each one. The *Christian World*, in referring to these cases, says that "all fail to recognise that year by year the possibilities of living such lives grow less and less." If it had said *probabilities*, it would have been quite right, for the people are in general manifesting more and more disregard and even contempt for life, and by increased self-indulgence, and the study of new ways to gratify the desires of the flesh, show that they are anxious to use up the

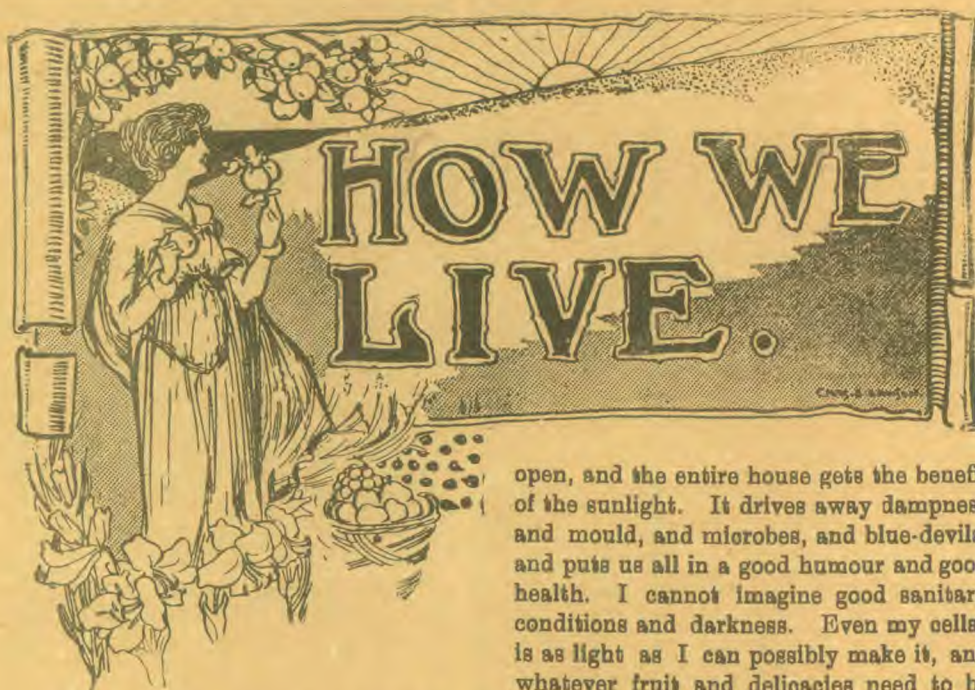
gift as rapidly as possible. But the possibilities are as great now as ever. The way of life is as free to all as ever it was, and whosoever will may take of the water of life freely. The words of the Lord: "Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and He shall bless thy bread and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee," are as good now as when they were first uttered.

THE Rev. Dr. Cobb, who has been officiating several years at St. Ethelburga's, Bishopsgate, said recently, in a noon-day discourse, that he was "appalled by the dominant paganism of this great city," and that, "with a dozen splendid exceptions, his parishioners took not the least interest in the religious work of the parish." What is still worse, he said that it is "much the same throughout the city." In view of this "dominating paganism," he declared that people's "idea of Christianity must be of a very low order, if they could think that England was justified today in calling herself a Christian country." The strange part of the matter is that any Christian could ever have imagined that this or any other country is a Christian country; and the sad feature is that so many who like to be known as Christians do not know Christianity from paganism.

A LITTLE story that recently came to our notice throws light on some "modern educational methods," and goes well with the Archbishop of Canterbury's story of the country boy who had never seen a ruminant. A text book on physiology, which was written for the purpose of enabling children to learn some truths about themselves, and not for the purpose of stuffing them with technical terms, was handed to a head master for examination. After reading it, he replied that the book would be an excellent thing to put into the hands of parents or any others who had the training of children, and wished to teach them right habits of living, but that it would be of no use in preparing them for examinations. That speaks volumes. The children are drilled with reference to an examination; and if they can pass that, after cramming, it is considered of secondary or no importance whether they understand anything. In fact, thinking is directly discouraged on the part of both teacher and pupil, by much of what is called education.

CATHOLIC papers are indignantly protesting against what they call the irreverence, or even insult, to the Pope, in making him a character on the stage, as is done in the dramatisation of Hall Caine's book, "The Eternal City." They think it scandalous that such liberties should be taken with the Pope. Yet for many years the Passion Play has been a fixed institution among Roman Catholics, and in that, Jesus Christ Himself is represented, or rather misrepresented, on the stage. Is this protest against the "indignity" offered to the Pope by representing him on the stage, an indication that his person is held more sacred among Catholics than is the person of the Lord?

WE are glad again to acknowledge the receipt of £2 from "A friend," to be applied as will "best help forward the dear Lord's work," and we join in the prayer that He may "accept and add His blessing."



NOT A FLATTERING PICTURE.

COMMENTING on the manner of M. Zola's death, the *Hospital* remarks: "In the newspaper accounts of M. Zola's death we are told that his window 'naturally had to be closed at night,' as if so doing were quite a matter of course, as indeed it is in ninety-nine houses out of a hundred. The English are always boasting that they are a cleanly people, and undoubtedly an upper-class Englishman does spend an inordinate amount of time in cleansing himself. As *Punch* has it, 'E's orful proud of 'is flesh, 'e is.' But the average Englishman—with his woollen shirts, which are only washed in tepid water, his cloth clothes which are never washed at all, his carpets which retain the dust of years, his stuffy woollen-covered furniture which lasts for generations, and with his beds which are hardly ever unpleoked or stoved—is by no means the cleanly animal that he thinks himself. Still, even these things would not be so bad, if John Bull would but ensure a free current of air all through his living rooms. But that is just what Mrs. John Bull will by no means allow."

LIGHT ROOMS.

I THINK that of all follies that a housekeeper can be guilty of, one of the worst is the darkening of rooms, and the habit of closing window-blinds," said a bright, cheery housekeeper, as she threw open the shutters, and let the Southern sun into her sleeping-room. "I think the superb health of my family is to a great extent chargeable to the habit we have of almost living in the sunshine. Every bright day, all of the shutters are thrown

open, and the entire house gets the benefit of the sunlight. It drives away dampness and mould, and microbes, and blue-devils, and puts us all in a good humour and good health. I cannot imagine good sanitary conditions and darkness. Even my cellar is as light as I can possibly make it, and whatever fruit and delicacies need to be shut away from the light, I put into close cupboards or covered boxes. I have sheets of canvas that can be thrown over them before they are put away, and always take pains so to arrange my stores that nothing will be injured by an abundance of light.

"People who live in badly-lighted apartments have little colour and less health; and I for one do not intend to spend my days in an atmosphere of gloom. That is my greatest objection to living in a flat. It is almost always the case that some of the rooms are so dim and cheerless that they would give the best dispositioned person the blues. I prefer a snug cottage, with any inconvenience which may attach to it, to stuffy, closed-in rooms, where all the light and air I get are, to some extent at least, second-hand."

LIGHT AND HEAT.

"I am willing to economise in anything in the world except light and heat," said a sensible mother of a large family of healthy, happy, and well-behaved children; "but these two items I try never to take account of in the general expenditures of the household. To be sure I never allow any prodigal waste, but at the same time I am generous to extreme liberality in this department. Cold and darkness are depressing, demoralising, and dispiriting. There is very little chance for good humour and good feeling with a house in semi-darkness, and as cold as the proverbial atmosphere of charity.

"I used to notice, before I became so settled in my present way of thinking, that when the family came home to a rather dark, not very well-warmed house, they were quiet and undemonstrative, unless they were noisy from ill-temper. When the boys and girls came tearing home from their play or errands, and burst into a room full of brightness and warmth, a smile or an exclamation of satisfaction almost invariably escaped them. It was this observation that first led me to what

some of my good friends think my prodigious extravagance in lights and fuel. Of course, in almost all families, there is need of prudence and good management if the best results are to be expected from the heating apparatus of the establishment.

"One of the first things that I do if I move into a new house is thoroughly to examine the chimney flues. If they are wide and cavernous, as is frequently the case, especially in houses that have been built for some time, I lose no time in having them about half filled, either with brick or a sheet-iron lining that closes up a large portion of the open space. Good draught is possible without such an enormous open throat as is found in most chimneys. Indeed, a seven-inch pipe in a large flue, with every air-hole and inlet tightly closed, will do the most satisfactory work; but the precaution of shutting every crevice and crack around the pipe must not be overlooked, or all of the work is about as good as thrown away.

"It is possible to so arrange a grate that it will heat an ordinary-sized room to comfortable temperature; but to do this there must be some way to partly close the chimney, and also a damper, where the draught can be fully turned on if necessary. Upper rooms may be heated by pipes running up the inside of the chimney and coming out into the room just above the floor level. If a hole is cut into the chimney and properly cased with zinc and provided with a suitable air-chamber pipe, then carried almost to the ceiling to enter the chimney again at that point, the heat will be sufficient for a room used only as a sleeping apartment."

HINTS FROM AN ATHLETE.

"Early hours, good plain food at regular times, and plenty of outdoor exercise are," explains Mr. Holbein, the famous swimmer, in the *Sunday School Chronicle*, "the simple though effective means to sound health."

He is a great believer in the beneficial effects of walking, and for his Channel swim began training in February by walking every day from ten to fifteen miles, and swimming in the baths an hour three times a week to start with, increasing the times as the months passed.

Mr. Holbein is a teetotaler and non-smoker. "I am certain," he adds, "that, at any rate while training, smoking would be most injurious—in athletic parlance, it spoils your wind."—*Daily Mail*.

Perhaps these words from a man who has had Mr. Holbein's experience may impress some people more than anything that could be said by an ordinary worker. They are simple common sense. Note what he says about smoking, and then remember that everybody ought always to be in training. Everybody is in duty bound to keep his body all the time in the best condition of health and strength which he finds it possible to attain to by special training for a particular purpose. To do otherwise is to show that he loves ease and self-gratification more than the ability to serve God with all his might, mind, soul, and strength. Whoever lives at a lower level when it is possible for him to reach a higher one is guilty of robbing God.

Just a word to our subscribers.



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"Much More."—This may and should always be the Christian's watchword. Read the fifth chapter of Romans, and you will see that however great the need, God gives much more. However much we have received from Him, He still has much more to bestow. Now since neglect to receive what God has for us indicates ingratitude and lack of appreciation, it follows that the true Christian can never think that he has all there is to have in any line. There is no place where one can rest satisfied with his attainments. He must always be "reaching forth unto those things which are before," knowing that however much God has done for him, He is always ready and waiting to do as much more, and when He has done that, to do as much more, and so on indefinitely. Whether it be holiness, wisdom and knowledge, or health and strength, we must always expect much more from God, who "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," and is as willing as He is able.

THE POWER OF "THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS."

AFTER the deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea, Moses and the children of Israel sang an inspired song of triumph, at the beginning of which are the following words: "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation." That which God set His hand to do with Israel was not accomplished, for we are told that they could not enter into His rest because of unbelief. Yet the rest remains, and "some must enter therein;" therefore the Lord has "set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people," the true seed of Abraham, that is, all who belong to Christ, and bring them to His own dwelling place.

The prophecy of this is in the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, where we are told that the Lord shall "shake His hand over the River, and shall smite it into seven streams,

and cause men to march over dry shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of His people," "like as there was for Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt."

Immediately following this, in the twelfth chapter, in the song of triumph that the redeemed shall sing in that day, we have a repetition of the passage quoted from the song of Moses: "The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; and He is become my salvation."

In the fifteenth chapter of Revelation this redeemed company are brought to view standing before the throne of God, the place to which God would have brought Israel if they had been faithful. "And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

This connects the experience of God's people in the last days with that of ancient Israel, showing that the power by which we are delivered from sin and death is the power by which the Red Sea was divided. Israel sang the song on the shores of the Red Sea while still in the wilderness. We also may now in this wilderness of sin sing the song of victory, because our faith is the victory that has overcome the world. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion."

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

THE Scriptures tell us that God "covereth Himself with light, as with a garment" and "dwelleth in light that no man can approach unto." Yet in Ps. xvii. we read that "clouds and darkness are round about Him." These apparently contradictory statements are brought together and harmonised in Ps. cxxxix: "Even the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."

This does not mean merely that God can see in the dark; but darkness and light are to Him who made them the same thing. This He demonstrated at the creation, when He "commanded the light to shine out of darkness," and again when He caused the dark cloud to give light to the children of Israel "There was the cloud and darkness, yet gave it light by night."

The truth that "the light shineth in darkness" and "out of darkness" is shown in all nature. It is from the black thunder cloud that the vivid lightnings shoot forth. The black coal, which is stored-up sunshine, yields the glaring gas

and fire-light. Blackness is but absorbed light, even as whiteness is reflected light. The thick cloud is itself the evidence of sunshine, for it is the sun's rays that draw up the vapours which form the clouds that sometimes veil its glory before they again descend in blessings upon the thirsty land.

This is not merely a bit of scientific curiosity. The story of the cloud and darkness that gave light, and which we see repeated in some form every day, was "written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The lesson that we are to remember is that "the light shineth in darkness," and the darkness cannot hinder it. It is to keep us from ever being depressed by clouds and darkness. It is to show us the reality of the promise that our darkness shall be as the noonday. Isa. lviii. 10 Though we walk in darkness and have no light, we shall stay on our God, who is light, and so even the valley of the shadow of death will have no terrors for us. Even there our path will be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The House of Bread. Bethlehem, the town where Jesus was born, means "the House of Bread," for He is the living Bread that came down from heaven to give life to the world. The tabernacle was a "House of Bread," for in it the Lord's table was always spread with cakes of showbread. Every house of God should be a house of bread, a place where hungry souls can come and feed upon the Bread of life. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" If we feed upon Christ, the heavenly Bread, then wherever we go we shall carry Him with us to make us a blessing, to feed and give life to others.

One Bread.—"We being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." This was the meaning of the twelve separate cakes of bread. It was all "one bread" representing Jesus the true Bread; but it was in twelve cakes, one for each tribe, to show the children of Israel that they were meant by God to be the bearers of that bread to the world. The bread had to be changed every Sabbath in order to be kept fresh. If we would be ever ready to feed others with the Bread of Life, we must have constantly a fresh supply for ourselves. And the Sabbath is especially the day when we may receive life and blessing that shall make us a blessing to others through the week.