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The Present Truth

A Weekly Family Paper
Devoted to the Teaching of Scripture Truth.

VOL. 29.

WATFORD, THURSDAY, JULY 31, 1913.

NO. 31.

My Lord, and My God!

WHEN in life's cheerless wintertide
All earthly sunlight is denied,
And e'en the flowers around my way
Seem wrapped in winter's robe of grey—
I see One walking by my side—
The Son divine, for me Who died.

When spring awakes in bud and flower,
Reminders of creative power,
I praise the One Who gave them me,
The Christ Who faced Gethsemane—
Yea, still Thou standest by my side,
Jesus, my Lord, once crucified!

When in life's conflict sorely strained,
My soul is faint, my heart is pained,
And all the strength that lingers there
Is flung into beseeching prayer—
Oh, let me still with Thee abide,
Jesus, my Lord, once crucified!

When brought into a wealthy place,
I praise the wonders of Thy grace,
And gladness sings a grateful song—
Yet still for this I thirst, I long,
To see Thee standing by my side,
Jesus, my Lord, once crucified!

—Edith E. Trusted, in *Christian*.

A Lesson in Faith.

ABRAHAM'S life was one long, almost unbroken demonstration of faith. In his early years he was called away from home and country to a land which God would show him, and he went in response to the call, not knowing whither he went. Heb. xi. 8. But there was a point in Abraham's experience when his faith took on a value and a reality such as it had not possessed in time past.

From the day of his first call in Ur of the Chaldees there had been held out to Abraham the promise of a seed who should possess a country, and Abraham had gladly believed the promise. But years went by, until he was an old man, and his wife could no longer hope for a son. Under these circumstances it was a very different matter to believe the promise of a seed. Faith was comparatively easy when there was a reasonable prospect that the promise would be fulfilled, but when that prospect disappeared it required faith of an altogether different quality to show

still the same confidence. The hope of a son was dead now. Abraham felt that it was not right at his age to defer longer making proper disposition of his property, and so Eliezer, his steward, was nominated his heir.

After this the Lord appeared to Abraham again in a vision and said to him: "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Gen. xv. 1. Abraham does not respond to this assurance in quite the same spirit as of old. He answers the Lord like a disappointed man, and asks what is there that can be given him now, seeing the one thing he desired above all others had been withheld, and soon he must die and leave his property to Eliezer of Damascus, the steward of his house. Verses 2, 3.

But the word of the Lord comes back to Abraham that Eliezer shall not be his heir, that he shall yet have a son of his own who will succeed him. How easy it was once to believe this cheering promise; but now Abraham and Sarah are old and it is physically impossible that a child can be born to them. Nor does the Lord seek to make belief easier to Abraham. He seems rather to try to make the promise appear too wonderful to be believed. Possibly Abraham may have had a thought lurking in his mind that, even if in some extraordinary way a son could even now be born to him, little could be expected from the offspring of an aged and infirm couple; such a son could be nothing more than the head of a feeble line, devoid of the vigour necessary to give the seed a place among the families of the earth. But the Lord has no thought of fulfilling His promise to Abraham in this weak and ineffective fashion. He takes the patriarch outside his tent door and

bids him turn his eyes to the starry heavens, and Abraham obeys. He beholds the familiar constellations with their myriad lights, the Milky Way stretching itself across the sky, and the voice beside him says: "Tell the stars, if thou be able to number them;" and then the words are added: "So shall thy seed be."

Abraham stands with upturned face. The heavens are speaking to his heart a new message of the unsearchable glory of their Maker. The patriarch sees the wonderful handiwork of God and realizes how far transcending human knowledge and wisdom is the power of the Almighty. He reads anew the promise of a son in the light of the radiant heavens, deeper faith springs up, and he believes in the Lord. Nothing can be too hard for the Architect and Builder of the universe. With all his heart Abraham accepts the gracious promise of an heir, fully persuaded that the divine promise cannot fail; and his faith is reckoned to him for righteousness. Gen. xv. 6.

Now the faith of Abraham is faith indeed. Heaven recognizes it as genuine. This was the crisis of Abraham's life, the test which has revealed whether or not he was a man of true faith. Before this his faith had been partly mixed with the calculation of human possibilities, and as such was capable of yielding under heavy pressure; now he has attained to real, living, working faith, that can live after hope is dead, and Heaven writes him down as a victor in the good fight. The future will reveal how real is the righteousness that is now reckoned to Abraham through his faith.

It is worthy of note that this important crisis in Abraham's life, which caused Heaven to reckon him definitely as a righteous man,

was not a great struggle with temptation over some sin, or the formal acceptance of some important doctrine. It was over the promise of a son that Abraham gained his victory. The old natural doubt on this point gives way to heaven-born assurance. We also may get our best victories in connection with promises that do not seem vitally connected with Christian experience. An unwavering faith manifested in the smaller concerns of life may bring to us our most decisive and far-reaching triumphs.

That the righteousness imputed to Abraham at this time was a genuine, working righteousness, James points out: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.*" James ii. 21-23. James, then, sees in the subsequent offering of Isaac an evidence that the righteousness reckoned to Abraham because of his faith was a real righteousness. The strength that enabled Abraham to meet the last and greatest test came to him when he believed anew and finally the promise of a son. In that night, James suggests, the decisive battle was fought that ensured future victories.

It may be likewise in our experience. We may have long believed the promises of God after a fashion, explaining away to ourselves those that seem no longer possible of fulfilment, prepared to accept Eliezer as an unsatisfactory but inevitable substitute for Isaac, persuaded that the time has for ever gone by when we can hope to see the good we had once believed possible. For us in such circumstances the experience of Abraham was written. "Being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, . . . he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith,

giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also." Rom. iv. 19-24.

So we also may get the victory that Abraham found. Notwith-

standing all past failures and disappointments we may, like him, lay hold of the strong assurance that when God has promised a thing He can perform it, and so there may come into our lives the miraculous operation of a genuine righteousness by faith, changing sadness and doubt into joy and invincible trust.

Why I Do Not Keep Sunday.

THERE exists in the Word of God no authority for the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, as a sacred day. This I have discovered from a personal, diligent search of the Scriptures; and others before me have reached the same conclusion.

Dr. Lyman Abbott said in the "Christian Union," June 26, 1890: "The current notion that Christ and His apostles authoritatively substituted the first day of the week for the seventh day is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament."

Cardinal Gibbons writes in "Faith of our Fathers," page 111: "You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday."

"There is no word, no hint, in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday," says Canon Eyton in "The Ten Commandments."

"No regulations for its observance are laid down in the New Testament," writes Dr. Phillip Schaff, in the "Schaff Herzog Encyclopædia," article "Sunday," "nor, indeed, is its observance even enjoined."

We read also in "The Voice from Sinai," page 163, by Archdeacon Farrar: "The Sabbath is Saturday, the seventh day of the week."

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. xiv. 23. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. x. 17. Whatsoever is not taught in the Word of God is not of faith; that which is

not of faith is sin. Sunday sacredness is not taught in the Bible, thus it is not of faith; its observance must be sin. To the majority of Christians it is a sin of ignorance, which God overlooks until light breaks in. The call of the hour is for repentance. Being made free from sin, and having become the servant of righteousness, I am under no obligation to observe Sunday.

Facts are eternal and unalterable. God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, thus making the latter the world's birthday. He pronounced His blessing upon the seventh day, sanctifying it for ever to the good of His children. These are facts of Biblical history, and as they exclude the element of sanctity from Sunday, I do not observe the day. God worked on the first day of the week; I make no mistake in following His example.

There are three institutions having their origin in Eden—the home, marriage, and the Sabbath. These have been assailed through the ages, and in these last days even more fiercely than ever in the past. Loyalty to these institutions is the call of the hour. To this call I respond, and as Sunday antagonizes the Sabbath, I reject it.

At the close of earth's first sixth day of time the Creator rested from the works which He had made, man's first experience being to enter into rest with his Creator. At the close of another sixth day, four thousand years later, Jesus made sure the world's redemption, in triumph crying: "It is finished!"

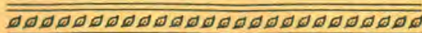
On the Sabbath He rested from the work of redemption in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa. Thus creation and redemption meet on the same day, the seventh day being the memorial of both. The believer in Christ ceases from his own works, the works of the flesh, and enters into the rest of faith. To him the Sabbath becomes a delight, reminding him of the power of God which made rest from sin possible. Loyalty to redemption means loyalty to the seventh-day Sabbath. Sunday can never become a memorial of redemption, neither can it be observed to honour redemption, hence it has no claim upon believers in Christ.

Christ's righteousness is infinitely perfect, and it is to be received in all its fullness as a gift from God. Into that righteousness has been woven by the Holy Spirit seventh-day Sabbath-keeping, for in Christ was the righteousness of the law revealed. To reject the seventh-day Sabbath is to reject part of Christ's righteousness, and to recognize Sunday is to seek to patch the divine robe with a pagan rag, one which is old, spotted, moth-eaten. The Roman soldiers did not part the garment of our Lord and Master; why should I mutilate His robe of righteousness? Taking it in all its perfection, I repudiate Sunday, which can never have a part in the perfect life of Jesus.

Faith in Jesus Christ establishes the law of God. Rom. iii. 31. Sunday observance makes void the law of God. The law of God in the heart of the believer. In the heart it will read as it did on stone, even as knowledge in the mind of a scholar agrees with the same knowledge written in a book. The Spirit of God can never write in the mind and heart anything contrary to the law of God. Sunday is contrary to the law of God, hence can never be imparted to anyone by the Holy Spirit. God has always imparted to His children Christ's seventh-day Sabbath-keeping, even though through lack

of knowledge they rested on Sunday.

Jesus did not observe Sunday as a sacred day, for He entered strong protest against transgressing the commandment of God by tradition, and teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Matt. xv. 3, 9. Thus Sunday has no place in the new covenant, the covenant of grace which brings to men salvation and every other blessing. Christ sealed the new testament with His blood, and even though it be but a man's will, nothing added



"Behold the Lamb."

John i. 29; Rev. v. 6.

FORETOLD by seers' prophetic pen,
Long-awaited in the years between,
The promise comes to sin-cursed men—
"Behold the Lamb!"

When none could help, Himself He gave,
Almighty Love finds cross and grave,
It was the Godhead's plan to save—
"Behold the Lamb!"

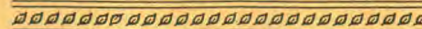
For thee, my soul, the Conqueror dies,
For thee the pangs of hell defies,
Behold the blood-stained Sacrifice—
"Behold the Lamb!"

But yet from heaven He comes again,
Ten thousand thousand in His train,
To claim His own, to judge, to reign—
"Behold the Lamb!"

The time is short, the judgment nears,
And memories of the wasted years
Shall wake a thousand haunting fears—
"Behold the Lamb!"

All power is His—prepare, prepare!
All eyes shall see Him through the air
Descend, in might beyond compare—
"Behold the Lamb!"

—W. H. Harding.



to it after the death of the testator is valid. Heb. ix. 16-28. Sunday observance by Christians, it is universally admitted, commenced after the death of Jesus Christ, after the new covenant had been ratified, therefore it has no more right to recognition than a codicil added to a will after the death of the one who made the will. The Judge of all the earth never can recognize it; and being in harmony with the mind of God, I cannot recognize the day as sacred.

To establish Sunday sacredness is to make void the atonement of

the Lord Jesus Christ. All, some time or other, have violated the day, and, admitting its sacredness, have thus transgressed a divine law, making atonement necessary. Atonement involves complete obedience, perfect righteousness. Rom. v. 18, 19. God declares Christ's righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. Rom. iii. 23-26. The Sunday-breaker confesses his supposed sin, asking God to declare Christ's righteousness for its remission. To enable God to do this, Jesus must have observed Sunday. No one believes that He did, consequently God has no righteousness to declare for the sinner's Sunday-breaking. Christ by His life and death made provision for all sin; He made no provision for Sunday-breaking, therefore Sunday work is not sin, and Sunday not a sacred day. The day not being sacred, there exists no reason for its observance.

The new covenant mercy seat in the temple of God now located in heaven, to which all are invited to come (Heb. iv. 15, 16 and x. 16-22), covers the ark containing the original ten-commandment law, of which the one given from Sinai was but a copy. Rev. xi. 19; xv. 5; Heb. viii. 5; ix. 24. The original law reads as did the one from Sinai. As the latter excludes Sunday, so does the one in heaven. The new-covenant law commands the observance of the seventh day of the week. The observance of two days each week not being required, Sunday should not be recognized. To work upon Sunday is to follow the example of the Almighty and of Jesus Christ and His apostles.

Every plant not planted by God will be uprooted. God has a tree which He intends to transplant into the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ. The natural branches (the Jews) were broken off. Rom. xi. 17. God's tree must be perfect, hence the place made vacant by these natural branches is taken by the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 17-21), who thus become Israelites, being united to the parent stock, revealing the fruits of righteousness in the life.

In this way all Israel will be saved. Rom. xi. 26. Certainly Israelites should keep the Sabbath, and as all Christians are Israelites, then all Christians are under obligation to keep the Sabbath. In the eternal ages the seventh day will be observed by all the redeemed. Isa. lxvi. 22, 23. Therefore as Sunday was not observed under the first covenant, as it is excluded from the second covenant, and will not be observed in eternity, there exists no reason for its observance at any time.

Sunday is a rival to the Sabbath of God. The only authority to be found for its observance is that of Roman Catholicism. Obedience is the test of true service; "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." Being a servant of God, and regarding the papacy as of the "earth, earthy," to observe Sunday would mean to reject God and decide for Rome. The result of this would be disastrous.

Sunday sacredness is a master-stroke of the enemy of all righteousness, as in moving the day one day forward, instead of backward to Friday or some other day, he makes of God's holy day the world's busiest day. God's word to this generation is, that we take our feet from off His day, and instead of trampling it in the mire, permit the Holy Spirit to place it in the heart. Isa. lviii. 13, 14. The acceptance of this word from God makes it impossible for anyone to observe Sunday.

Sunday is the sign of all apostasy, as its very name indicates. When men departed from God, not wishing to retain Him in their knowledge (Rom. i. 28), they began the worship of the things created. Chief among these was the worship of the sun, the first day of the week being dedicated to its honour. Sunday thus became "the wild solar holiday of all pagan times," the sign of apostasy. The continued observance of the seventh day of the week from the beginning of time even until the end of time would have prevented idolatry; to

observe the seventh day is to remember God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, beside Whom there is none else. Worshipping God as I do, I am forced to reject the day which God's enemy has instituted by which to lead men from God and His Word.

J. N. QUINN.

The Passover.*

Exod. xii. 1-42.

MOSES had been forbidden, on pain of death, to appear again in Pharaoh's presence; but a last message from God was to be delivered to the rebellious monarch, and again Moses came before him with the terrible announcement: "Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid servant that is behind the mill; and all the first-born of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants shall come down unto Me, and bow down themselves unto Me, saying, Get Thee out, and all the people that follow Thee: and after that I will go out." Exod. xi. 4-8.

Before the execution of this sentence the Lord through Moses gave direction to the children of Israel concerning their departure from Egypt, and especially for their preservation from the coming judgment. Each family, alone or in connection with others, was to slay a lamb or a kid "without blemish," and with a bunch of hyssop sprinkle its blood on "the two side-posts and on the upper

door-post" (Exod. xii. 1-28) of the house, that the destroying angel, coming at midnight, might not enter that dwelling. They were to eat the flesh roasted, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, at night as Moses said, "with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand: and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover."

In commemoration of their great deliverance a feast was to be observed yearly by the people of Israel in all future generations. "This day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever." As they should keep the feast in future years, they were to repeat to their children the story of this great deliverance as Moses bade them: "Ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, Who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

The passover was to be both commemorative and typical, not only pointing back to the deliverance from Egypt, but forward to the greater deliverance which Christ was to accomplish in freeing His people from the bondage of sin. The sacrificial lamb represents "the Lamb of God," in Whom is our only hope of salvation. Says the apostle: "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Cor. v. 7. It is not enough that the paschal lamb be slain; its blood must be sprinkled upon the door-posts; so the merits of Christ's blood must be applied to the soul. We must believe not only that He died for the world, but that He died for us individually. We must appropriate to ourselves the virtue of the atoning sacrifice.

The hyssop used in sprinkling the blood was the symbol of purification, being thus employed in the cleansing of the leper and of those defiled by contact with the dead. In the Psalmist's prayer also its significance is seen: "Purge

*International Sunday-School Lesson for Aug. 10, 1913.

me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psa. li. 7.

1. The lamb was to be prepared

whole, not a bone of it being broken; so not a bone was to be broken of the Lamb of God, Who was to die for us. Thus was also

represented the completeness of Christ's sacrifice.

The flesh was to be eaten. It is not enough even that we believe on



"IT IS THE LORD'S PASSOVER."

Christ for the forgiveness of sin; we must by faith be constantly receiving spiritual strength and nourishment from Him through His Word. Said Christ: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life." And to explain His meaning He said: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John vi. 53, 54, 63. Jesus accepted His Father's law, wrought out its principles in His life, manifested its spirit and showed its beneficent power in the heart.

The lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs, as pointing back to the bitterness of the bondage in Egypt. So when we feed upon Christ it should be with contrition of heart because of our sins. The use of unleavened bread was also significant. It was expressly enjoined in the law of the passover, and as strictly observed by the Jews in their practice, that no leaven should be found in their houses during the feast. In like manner the leaven of sin must be put away from all who would receive life and nourishment from Christ.

Before obtaining freedom the bondmen must show their faith in the great deliverance about to be accomplished. The token of blood must be placed upon their houses, and they must separate themselves and their families from the Egyptians, and gather within their own dwellings. Had the Israelites disregarded in any particular the directions given them, had they neglected to separate their children from the Egyptians, had they slain the lamb but failed to strike the door-post with blood, or had any gone out of their houses, they would not have been secure. They might have honestly believed that they had done all that was necessary, but their sincerity would not have saved them. All who failed to heed the Lord's directions would lose their first-born by the hand of the destroyer. By obedi-

ence the people were to give evidence of their faith.

The Israelites obeyed the directions God had given. Swiftly and secretly they made their preparations for departure. Their families were gathered, the paschal lamb slain, the flesh roasted with fire, the unleavened bread and bitter herbs prepared. The father and priest of the household sprinkled the blood upon the door-post and joined his family within the dwelling. In haste and silence the paschal lamb was eaten. In awe the people prayed and watched, the heart of the eldest-born, from the strong man down to the little child, throbbing with indefinable dread. Fathers and mothers clasped in their arms their loved first-born as they thought of the fearful stroke that was to fall that night. But no dwelling of Israel was visited by the death-dealing angel. The sign of blood—the sign of a Saviour's protection—was on their doors and the destroyer entered not.

At midnight "there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." All the first-born in the land, "from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle," had been smitten by the destroyer.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

Always Eloquent.

DURING a revival in a certain church there was one humble, ignorant churchmember who night after night sought for lost souls and led them to Christ. His success was far beyond that of any of the ministers connected with the meeting, and at last one of them said to him: "What is the secret of your power? You know you don't speak very distinctly, you stammer in talking, and I don't see how you produce such an effect." "Sir," said the stammerer, "I can tell you how it is; I just give the Word of God and it don't stammer at all."—*From the Armoury.*

Signs of the End.

IN the last days of our Saviour's earthly ministry He spoke at some length of the future that lay before His disciples. He pictured the fall of Jerusalem and said that this event would be followed by a long period of sore persecution, so relentless that if the days were not shortened His church would be utterly destroyed. After those days false christs and false prophets should come to deceive the elect if it were possible, but those who should stand this test would soon have the joy of seeing their Lord return in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. From the time that He left them His disciples were to look forward continually to His return, and it is because that return is now near at hand that I ask you to consider the words of Jesus regarding it.

You will perhaps remind me that, according to Christ's saying, "of that day and hour knoweth no man." That is true. But you will find Him also saying that certain signs would be given when His coming was near, and that when these signs should be seen, we might know that His coming was at hand, "even at the doors."

First, the Saviour gives us some idea when we may expect the signs. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days," Matthew reports Him. Mark varies the wording slightly and renders it thus: "In those days, after that tribulation." Mark xiii. 24.

The persecution of the church of Christ which abounded in the Middle Ages was practically stopped about the middle of the eighteenth century. It was in 1773 that the infamous Order of the Jesuits was suppressed. After that point we may begin to look for the signs that were to be manifested in those days after that tribulation.

What were these signs to be? "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall."

Surely such phenomena as these would constitute signs striking enough to arouse the world and

give warning of the approaching end. There would be no chance for human trickery. No conspiracy of men could bring about or conceal signs in the heavens. They would be manifestly of superhuman origin, and would proclaim themselves.

Do we find any such signs about the time when the tribulation ended? Yes. Not many years from that time we find a marvellous darkening of the sun, of which "Webster's Unabridged Dictionary" says:—

"THE DARK DAY, May 19, 1780, so-called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day, extending over all New England. In some places persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."

Is it not a striking fact that, within the period of time to which the Saviour called our attention, we find a darkening of the sun so unmistakable that it confers the title, "THE DARK DAY," upon the date of its occurrence.

Some may think that the darkening of the sun was not sufficiently prominent since it took place in New England. Nevertheless, it attracted universal attention. Herschel, the celebrated astronomer, wrote of the event:—

"The Dark Day in Northern America was one of those wonderful phenomena of nature which will always be read with interest, but which philosophy is at a loss to explain."

What philosophy, however, cannot explain the words of Christ make clear. The time spoken of by Christ had come, and the sun was darkened as a notice to the world that it was about to enter upon the last stage of its history. Such was the impression made by the wonder. President Dwight, of Yale College, said: "It was the general opinion that the day of judgment was at hand."

The second sign came close upon the first. "The moon shall not give her light." On the night succeeding the Dark Day this word was fulfilled. One observer wrote:—

"The darkness of the following evening or night was probably as gross as

has ever been observed since the Almighty first gave birth to light. I could not help conceiving at the time that if every luminous body in the universe had been enshrouded in impenetrable darkness, or struck out of existence, the darkness could not have been more complete."

To the eye-witnesses of the promised signs there was no doubt about their being sufficiently striking. The same was true of the next sign: "The stars shall fall from heaven."

Of course, we should not expect the fixed stars and planets to leave their places. That would be far more than a sign; it would mean the breaking up of the universe. When we speak of "falling stars," we mean meteors, and what one writer calls "the most sublime phenomenon of shooting stars of which the world has furnished any record," appeared on the night of November 13, 1833. Describing the scene, the "Encyclopædia Britannica" says that the sky was "thick with streams of rolling fire; there was scarcely a space in the firmament that was not filled at every instant. An almost infinite number of meteors fell like flakes of snow."

Those who witnessed the scene felt that they were looking upon the sign promised by Christ. One writer says:—

"The zenith, the north, and the west also showed the falling stars in the very image of one thing, and of only one, I ever heard of. I called to my wife: 'That is the wonder;' and we felt in our hearts that it was a sign of the last days."

What comes after the falling of the stars? "The powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

It is bad enough when the earth shakes, but what will it be when the powers of heaven are shaken as well? Heb. xii. 26, 27. That is the next thing to happen. It will be an event full of terror for the unprepared, but it will mean the

coming again of the blessed Lord to those that love Him. Jesus did not forewarn us of these things in order to fill us with dread and fear of the future. "When these things begin to come to pass," He said, "then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke xxi. 28.

Can we know for certain that the coming of Christ is now near at hand? You may perhaps think: "Well, if there were so many years—more than fifty—between the darkening of the sun and the falling of the stars, there may be a long period of indefinite length between the falling of the stars and the coming of Christ." Let me call your attention to the very emphatic language used by Christ on this point. He says: "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." We have seen all the signs that were to be given in the way of warning. Ever since then the coming of the Lord has been at the doors. To His servants who are living at this time Jesus gives the firm assurance: "This generation shall not pass till these things be fulfilled."

Then again He adds, as though He were looking down to our time and foresaw the strong temptations to doubt His statements: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away."

Will you not think and pray over these things? Not only in the heavens have the signs appeared. All about us, in the world, in the church, in commerce, in politics, we are witnessing signs, foretold in the Scriptures, which show that the end of human history is close at hand. Now as never before men ought to be standing free from the worldly things that are soon to pass away, and laying up treasure in heaven that they may be ready to meet the Saviour at His glorious appearing.

A great many are ridiculing the idea that the end is at hand. So did the people in Noah's time, which Jesus says was a type of the days prior to His second coming. The day that is coming will take them unawares. May it find our readers watching.

"Desire the Sincere Milk of the Word."

THE more completely men's minds become absorbed in merely material pursuits, whether business, pleasure, or the culture of the intellect, the more increasingly difficult it becomes for them to accept and appropriate the simplest spiritual truths. The learned Nicodemus, brought up in and surrounded by the atmosphere of intellectual pride and formalism, which characterized the Jewish religion of his time, found it hard to grasp the simplest fundamental truths of the Gospel. Christ's emphatic declaration to the ruler in Israel, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," was at once so simple, and yet so profound, that it sadly perplexed him. Here was a miraculous experience he had never yet had. Indeed, the necessity for a new birth seemed never to have entered his mind. True, he had believed in God in a vague, formal, intellectual way, but never had he been brought face to face with the supernatural realities of God's spiritual kingdom. Nor did Christ attempt to satisfy the ruler's astonished query: "How can these things be?" He left him to work out for himself the answer to his own question. Christ did not begin to explain to him the mysterious working of the divine power that could change a proud, intellectual formalist into a humble child of God. Nevertheless, He made it very clear how it was possible for Nicodemus to put himself in touch with the regenerating power of God. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16. Nicodemus, then, might understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God, not by the exercise of his finite reasoning powers, but simply by believing on Him Whom God had sent to save a lost world.

Christ's message to Nicodemus is for all who are groping after

God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. And all who receive it and take hold of its life-giving power may learn the blessedness of the peace that passeth understanding and the promise of life everlasting. "Born again," says the Apostle Peter, "not of corruptible seed, but by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Peter i. 23. Only as the life-giving word is received into the human heart without question or scruple will it germinate within and bring about the birth of the new man in Christ Jesus. But just as a new-born babe must receive care and attention and be properly nourished in order that it may be fortified against sickness and disease, and thus retain its hold on life, so the Christian must be fortified against all spiritual disease and decay. The new birth is but the beginning of a stern battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil, which grows fiercer and more intense as the child of God reaches out after spiritual maturity. Natural desires assert themselves continually and fleshly lusts wage ceaseless warfare against the soul. The life-giving power of God's Word will not carry the Christian along without patient, earnest, and well-directed effort on his part. He must cultivate assiduously a desire for that Word in order to maintain his hold upon the life which has become his through the germination of the incorruptible seed. "As new born babes," continues Peter, "desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." 1 Peter ii. 2. Just as the natural appetite needs to be rightly controlled and directed if bodily health is to be maintained, so the spiritual appetite must be carefully trained to relish the wholesome correction and reproof of the inspired revelation, if the soul is to "prosper and be in health." That this desire does not come naturally and spontaneously is evident from the apostle's exhortation: "Desire the sincere milk of the Word." Otherwise there would be

no force in his words. Whether the Christian convert be old or new, if he would be preserved from spiritual ruin and death he must acquire an appetite for the pure and wholesome truths of God's Word.

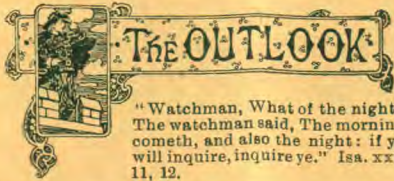
A similar exhortation is given to the youthful Timothy by the Apostle Paul: "Preach the Word." 2 Tim. iv. 2. Timothy must not pander to the depraved appetite of those who have become restless and weary of the correction of the Lord and who are reaching out after pleasing but soul-destroying fables. He must feed the people with the spiritual food they need, and pay no attention to the popular demand for pleasant platitudes and pleasing philosophies. "For the time will come," continues Paul, "when they [the professing Christians of his time] will not endure sound doctrine." And why? Because instead of cultivating a desire for "the sincere milk of the Word," they have encouraged carnal desires for pleasing but harmful doctrines, and have destroyed all taste for the solid, satisfying Word of God. The healthful, life-giving manna has palled on their taste, and like rebellious Israel of old they cannot "endure" it, but cry out for the fleshpots of Egypt.

In these days of depleted churches and growing irreligion, when there is a loud popular demand for the more pleasing fables of human philosophy and science falsely so-called, Peter's inspired exhortation reaches this generation with added force: "Desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."

H. F. D.

SOME persons follow the dictates of their conscience only in the same sense in which a coachman may be said to follow the horses he is driving.—*Whateley*.

IT is astonishing how soon the whole conscience begins to unravel if a single stitch drops. One single sin indulged in makes a hole you could put your head through.—*Buxton*.



"Watchman, What of the night?
The watchman said, The morning
cometh, and also the night: if ye
will inquire, inquire ye." Isa. xxi.
11, 12.

"THERE are significant indications," says the "Observer," "not only in this country but also on the Continent, in South Africa and in America, that the industrial world is again on the verge of a crisis through unrest among the workmen." At Leith there is a dock strike with accompanying rioting, the Edinburgh tramway system has been paralysed, the dock dispute is renewed at Hull and has meant a general stoppage of work, and there are in many trades throughout the country threats of strikes. In South Africa railway men and miners cause trouble, there are dock strikes in Russia, at Hamburg and Kiel, while the vinegrowers of France are ready to fight.

OBSERVERS of current events seem to be impressed with the way individuals and nations are learning to resort to unscrupulous violence whenever they cannot have their own way. One of these students of passing history writes in the "Methodist Times":—

"This universal tendency to appeal to lawless force when you cannot have your own way is a singular phenomenon of the times. . . . It is pure anarchy thus to appeal to force whenever you cannot have your own way. What is the explanation of this extraordinary phenomenon at once in South Africa, in Ulster, or in England?"

That we are actually facing the danger of a break-up of civilization is evident. It may be due to the spread of education among the masses, to the leavening of the backward races with new ideas, to the progress of militarism, but whatever the cause, there is not the old confidence in peaceful and constitutional methods, and when they can individuals and nations take things into their own hands.

It is a significant fact that the days before the flood are said to

have been characterized by an outbreak of violence (Gen. vi. 11); and Jesus tells us that as it was then, so it will be again prior to His second advent: "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. xxiv. 37. The Revelation gives us a similar picture of the last days. Heavenly beings look with dismay on the scenes of that time, and break into a song of rejoicing that God has taken to Himself His royal power, and will quickly terminate the story of earth's misrule:—

"We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. xi. 17, 18.

When Jesus comes the second time He is represented as bearing a rod of iron, wherewith to smash, as a potter's vessel, the refractory peoples who have transgressed every principle of righteousness and mercy. When the throne of justice is at last set up, its establishment will be a blessed relief from the rule of violence and tyranny that has gone before.

PROF. STARR JORDAN, of Stanford University, has been pointing out the effects of war upon the manhood of a nation, and the striking collapse of Bulgaria adds force to his conclusions. He says:

"The final argument against war and against all those accessories which, in the name of peace, invite war, is found in its effect on the breed of men. The destruction of the strong means the perpetuation of the weak. The loss of the bold, dashing, and courageous means the rule of the cautious, the timid, the time-serving. . . .

"Four millions of men fell in Napoleon's campaigns. No wonder the life of Europe is impoverished. No wonder that France is a wounded nation, as are all others whose men were caught up in that holocaust. Napoleon, it was said, 'has

peopled hell with the elite of Europe.' Stacked up on the field, as at Novara, their skulls would make a pile twenty-five times as high as the tallest spire in Europe. To this cause of reversed selection almost alone we may ascribe the social and personal deficiencies of the common folk of Europe.

"By a strange confusion of cause and effect it has been assumed in some quarters that the waste of virility from war could be repaired by universal military drill. . . . We who believe in the value of sound physical training to the growing youth cannot admit that barrack life comes under this head or that it is in any important degree a substitute for it. The drill assigned to the soldier comes too late in life to be of much value. It is narrow and limited in kind, with a sinister purpose behind it. It is under incompetent teachers to whom physical training is only an incident, not a means to an end.

"The camp is always a school of idleness, and usually of vice also. It interferes with the industrial or professional training which it should be the duty of every young man to acquire. Moreover, if compulsory, all these evils are intensified."

NOTES & COMMENTS

At the Sanitary Congress at Exeter, Prof. Kinwood remarked in an address to medical officers of health that if public water supplies contained one per cent of the filth found in the average sample of milk there would be an immediate outcry that no government would venture to ignore. The essential factor was the education of those engaged in the milk trade.

THE increase of insanity in Great Britain continues with an accelerating ratio. On January 1st of this year there were 138,377, an increase for the year of 2,716, as against an increase for 1911 of 2,504. For the past ten years there has always been an advance of about two per cent on the number of insane persons. These figures are exclusive of some 70,000 persons, for whom some provision is sought to be made by the Mental Deficiency Bill.

THE number of exemptions under the Vaccination Act, granted to conscientious objectors, has steadily increased of recent years. In 1907 there were 57,675 exemptions, being 6.3 per cent of the total births, while in 1912 there were 279,929 exemptions, or 31.6 per cent of the total births. At this rate another ten years would see an end to the vaccination of infants in England.

"IMPATIENCE dries the blood sooner than age or sorrow."

"A WISE man ought to hope for the best, be prepared for the worst, and bear with equanimity whatever may happen."



I Please Him.

John viii. 29.

As we may learn to please a friend
And cause our ways with his to blend,
That fellowship complete attend,
So may we please Thee, Lord.

By making every wilful thought
Captive to Christ, to service brought,
That all our work in Him be wrought,
So may we please Thee, Lord.

By humbly walking in Thy way,
Thy Word our guide, Thy love our
stay,
Communing with Thee day by day,
So may we please Thee, Lord.

By speaking of Thy grace and power,
By making Thee our refuge tower,
By watching every day and hour,
So may we please Thee, Lord.
—Lillian S. Connerly.

Luther's Brave Stand for the Bible.

As soon as Martin Luther discovered there was such a book as the Bible he lost no time in searching it through and through. The more he read the sacred Book the more sure was he that the Roman Catholic Church, to which he belonged, taught many things that did not agree with the Bible. For instance, the priests of that church claimed that they had power to forgive sins; but the Bible told him plainly that no one but Jesus can forgive sins. God's Word taught that Christ was the one and only Head of His church, while the priests told the people they must look to the Pope of Rome as their head. There was one doctrine above all others, however, which the priests taught, that more and more filled Luther with alarm and horror as he read his Bible. It was called the "doctrine of indulgences"; and the more this teaching spread among the people the richer the priests became. The people were taught

that by paying a certain sum of money for a written pardon, sold in the name of the pope, they could have all their past sins forgiven them; so that when they had bought this letter of forgiveness, they were as fully and freely forgiven as though God Himself had granted the pardon. And of course it came to be thought that those who had the most money could be forgiven the most sins. This was not all. The people were actually told by the crafty, greedy priests that by paying extra sums of money they could get forgiveness for all the wrong things they expected to do and say in the future. But the falsehood did not stop here even. The priests taught that when a person died he or she went to a place called purgatory, which was supposed to be somewhere about half-way between earth and heaven. In this place, it was said, the souls of the dead were tormented by a horrible fire, either for a short or a long time, according to the number of sins they had committed during their lives on earth. Now if these poor souls were to be rescued from the torture of the flames in purgatory, their friends and relatives on earth, said the priests, must pay money into the church. The more they gave to the church, they were told, the quicker would their suffering ones who had left this life be rescued from their agony.

Now, as I have already said, Martin Luther could see clearly, as he studied his Bible, that such teachings were pure falsehoods, invented by the cunning priests in order to make themselves and their church rich. So he determined he would lift up his voice against such wicked teaching. Wherever he

went he condemned the wrong teaching of the priests and gave the people the pure words of truth from the Bible; that is, so far as he himself had learned it. Luther told the people that Christ and not the pope was the Head of the church, and that the priest had no power to forgive sins; only Christ was able to do that. Moreover, he told them that no amount of money paid to the priests would free them from their sins, or help in any way those of their loved ones who had gone from this life. Indeed, he told them there was no such place as purgatory, where people were tormented after death. Luther might also have told the people that since their departed friends were dead, they were therefore past all feeling; for the Bible teaches us that the "dead know not anything," but simply remain in the grave until God calls them to rise again to life. But Luther had not learned this Bible truth.

One day a monk by the name of Tetzel came into the town where Luther lived, and began to sell his paper pardons, telling the people that they were of just as much value as if God had written them. Fearing the people would be deceived by this crafty and talkative monk, Luther publicly exposed the fraud by getting out in writing a long protest against the teaching of Tetzel and his followers, and nailing it on the door of the church where he usually preached: for Martin had now become a great teacher and preacher for God. Crowds of people came round to the church door to read Luther's protest against the wicked teaching of the travelling monk. Tetzel's trade was ruined, for very few of those who had read Luther's protest would come and buy the monk's so-called pardons. At last he got very angry and left the town in a great rage against Luther, who had dared to preach against a servant of the pope. Luther's friends thought him very bold and daring, and feared that his life would be in danger on account of what he had done. For you must

remember that in those days it was a dangerous thing to speak against the teachings of Rome, so completely were the people under the power of the priests. Luther, however, feared no man so long as he knew that God was on his side, helping him to open the blind eyes of the people to the truth of God's Word. From the day he nailed his protest to the church door at Wittenberg Luther's life was full of storm and peril, as he preached and wrote against the false teachings of the Romish priests.

All through his life did Luther uphold the Bible as the Word of God. He found the Church of Rome so corrupt and wicked, and so far removed from the teaching of the Bible, that he felt at last he could no longer be a member of it. But he was not alone. Thousands of people left the Church of Rome and formed a church among themselves, taking the Bible as their only guide. Thus did God use Martin Luther, once a poor boy who had to sing in the streets for his bread, to bring about what is now known as the Great Reformation. Many were then led out of the darkness of Romish error into the blessed light of God's holy Word. Luther and his many friends protested very earnestly against the wrong teaching, the wickedness, and the idolatry of the Romish Church. But that church would not change its ways, so Luther and his friends were obliged to leave it. And that is why those who believe that the Bible and the Bible only is the Christian's guide to heaven are called Protestants. I trust that every boy and girl who reads this will grow up to love the Word of God and thus be a true Protestant. But whatever you do, don't feel that you are better than those who are still deceived by the wrong teaching of the priests of Rome. Remember there are many boys and girls belonging to that church who are very earnest and sincere

in what is taught them; they have not yet been able to learn anything different. A true Protestant is one who not only protests against all false teaching, but who also does his or her best by love and kindness to win others for Christ and the Bible.

UNCLE HERMAN.

"But might we not call, anyway?" asked Laura, thoughtfully. "What's the use? She couldn't see us yet."

Laura walked home, still thoughtful.

"Mother," she said when she had laid down her books, "could I call at Margery's house, just to



"LUTHER'S FRIENDS THOUGHT HIM VERY BOLD."

The Girl Who Went.

A GROUP of high-school girls stopped on their way home to talk over the day's happenings, and to regret the serious illness of one of their classmates.

"I should like to go to see her," said one, "but it wouldn't do any good. Margery can't see anyone."

"Of course not. We can go as soon as she's better."

inquire for her, and leave my card?

"Certainly, my dear. Write a little message on your card, and draw a line through the formal 'Miss.' That makes it more cordial."

At the door of her schoolmate's house, the maid told Laura that the patient was better; but she hastened to add, "She does not see any visitors."

"Oh, no. I did not expect to see her," Laura answered, and she gave the maid her card.

That was not the last of Laura's calls. Several times before Margery was convalescent, her card, with its pleasant messages, sometimes accompanied with a rose or a few violets, brightened the dragging days in the dim room.

Several months later, the group of high-school girls stopped again

on their way home; this time Margery was among them.

"I do think you are very ungrateful, Margery," one was saying.

"I am sure we all went just as soon as we knew you could see us."

"I know you did, and it was good of you. I'm not ungrateful, Jean. But Laura"—she laid an affectionate hand on her friend's arm—"came when she knew she couldn't see me. That was what counted so much."—*Selected.*



Where True Beauty Is.

BEAUTIFUL faces are those that wear,
It matters little or dark or fair,
Whole-souled honesty printed there.

Beautiful eyes are those that show
Like crystal panes where hearth-fires
glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below.

Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart, like songs of birds,
Yet whose utterance prudence girds.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest and brave and true,
Moment by moment the long day
through.

Beautiful feet are those that go
On kindly ministry to and fro,
Down lowliest ways if God wills so.

Beautiful shoulders are those that bear
Ceaseless burdens of homely care
With patient grace and daily prayer.

Beautiful lives are those which bless,
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountains none may guess.

Beautiful twilight at set of sun,
Beautiful goal with race well run,
Beautiful rest with work well done.

—*Selected.*

The Odd Man.

HE was brought into the ward by the orderlies, and not a man in the barracks was sorry he had "gone sick." In a few hours there was not a patient in the ward who did not wish he had been taken somewhere else.

He was an "odd man," without any friends outside the barracks; and he never tried to make any inside. No one ever knew him to do a comrade a good turn, but

there were a number to whom he had done many bad ones.

In oaths and curses he took delight; believed in neither God nor devil; knew he was dying, and that no one would be sorry when his end came; and yet he lay there in his cot doing his utmost to make all within his reach as miserable as he could.

He would watch the chaplains come and go, listen to their talk with a leer on his face, fling aside with a contemptuous laugh the books and papers left on his cot, and make himself so disagreeable that one and all dreaded coming near him.

But one day a new chaplain came to the ward where the odd man lay—a chaplain with a bright, cheery smile and face; one who knew nothing about this patient; who spoke to him just a word as he passed between his cot and the next, the cot of a man who had gone sick the day before. The chaplain sat down, and began to talk to the man he had come to see; and the patient whom he had not come to see listened to the conversation, trying, out of sheer curiosity, to hear what he had to say about religion. Certain words fixed themselves on his memory: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Those words haunted him. They kept him awake that night; and the next day he was so quiet that the others thought he was dying. They asked him, "What's up?"

The odd man looked at them, and demanded the name of the new chaplain.

"Oh, he's the one at the Soldiers' Home down in the town! They always look up their men when they're sick. It doesn't matter what's your religion, it's all the same; if a man goes to the Home, he's looked after."

"Belongs to the Home, does he?" the odd man said; then he relapsed into silence again, and they could get nothing more out of him, except that he wanted to be quiet and think.

Suddenly in the night the orderly found him so much worse that he sent for the surgeon, who, on seeing him, thought he could not live until morning.

They listened while his words came slowly and painfully, and found he wished to see the chaplain who belonged to the Soldiers' Home. In great astonishment they heard the request and granted it.

The chaplain arrived about two in the morning, and was straightway taken to the odd man's cot. Then the man who the day before had been thinking began to express his thoughts in words:—

"You said God loved—God sent His Son to die—for the world. Does that mean me?"

When assured that the words certainly meant him, he went on talking, slowly and painfully, but very distinctly: "I never knew any one—who loved me. My mother I don't remember—my father died in penal servitude. I have no relatives or friends. I want you to tell me—what love means—and why God loves me. I have been longing—for someone—to show me—what love means. I have had a hard life—and I have

hated and been hated in return—but I have never loved or been loved before."

So there in the hospital ward in the stillness of the night, with the screen drawn around the cot, the chaplain told the man the old, old story of Jesus and His love; and he told it with such power that the sick man burst into tears.

"God loves me," he repeated over and over; "and all my life I have fought against Him. Now I am dying; I can do nothing for Him—nothing for Him Who loves me. God loves me."

And then he lapsed into unconsciousness. The chaplain stood waiting with the others to see the end. But the end did not come. After a little time the man roused himself, and looking straight at the chaplain, he asked, "Are you quite sure God loves me?" with an emphasis on the "me," which all the listeners noticed.

"Quite," was the reply.

Suddenly the odd man seemed to receive a new lease of life. He rallied; the crisis had passed for a time.

"I'm going to live," he said. "I'm going to show I love Him. I'm going to do something here in this hospital for Him Who loves me. God loves me. God loves me."

And when the chaplain left, the "odd man" was still repeating, "God loves me."

"You have given him the spur for a time," the surgeon remarked, as he and the chaplain left the ward together; "but he is a doomed man; he can't live very long."

The two shook hands, and parted to go their separate ways. "No wonder," thought the chaplain, as he unlocked his door, "no wonder that verse took hold of him—'God so loved the world.'"

Next day the men in the ward noticed a great change in the "odd man." Each oath and murmur was broken off short—for however ill this patient was, he could always swear and grumble—and as the days passed, and he seemed

to grow stronger, he was on the watch to do little deeds of love and kindness for others.

He offered to read aloud to a man in the next cot, whose eyes were too painful to allow him to read. The "odd man" read well, too; he had the rare gift of reading as if he really felt an interest in the article read. He had learned to read in an institution for the sons of men and women in prison, and his reading delighted his comrades. That was one thing he could do for Him Who loved him, and he did it well.

The patients asked one another, "What's up with him?" but each could only shake his head and wonder.

The days came and went, and so did the men in the hospital. The chaplain from the Home came and went, too; and the "odd man," the unloved one, was the helper of all, the brightest and happiest man in the ward.

As he grew weaker, the men's eyes grew dim with sorrow; for the "odd man" had become the odd man from quite another standpoint. He was the man everyone loved, and who seemed to love everyone.

He told the secret of his changed life and the story of God's love; and some who had once tried to be Christians, and had given up in despair, because they had tried in their own strength, thought that if God could help and keep him true, He would help and keep them; and so they turned about, and they were kept because they trusted in Him Who is able to keep from falling. One or two others saw in the "odd man" a genuine Christian, and, thinking there must be something in religion to change a man as he was changed, began to look at God's love for themselves.

After a time the end came; and suddenly as he had done once before, the surgeon sent for the chaplain from the Home. But although the chaplain came in haste he was too late.

"He had just a smile on his face

and he stretched out his arm and raised his hand," the orderly who was attending him said, while the tears glistened in his eyes. "I thought he wanted something, so I went up, and I caught the words, 'God loves me. God loves me.'"

"Yes," said the chaplain, "those were his favourite words. I am not surprised they were his last."

After a moment or so of silence, the surgeon quietly said: "I think I never saw a more peaceful ending to months of fearful pain. He must have suffered agonies at times, and yet, since that first time when I sent for you, he has never grumbled nor complained."

—*Bombay Guardian.*

An Old Hand.

THAT worn and wearied hand you view,
Veined, withered as an autumn leaf,
No charm betrays of shape or hue,
Written with such a script of grief.

Like yours, it once was fair and fine,
Dimpled, with slender finger-tips,
As beautiful in lovely line
As some white flower the brown bee sips.

But what a tale those wrinkles tell
Of care and love and comfort given!
To hear that story angels well
Might lean and listen out of heaven.

They speak of work for others done,
Patient and tireless, work of love,
From dawn of day to set of sun,
Long labour dear to powers above.

They tell of childhood served, of age,
Of dying pillows smoothed, of years
Of high endeavour none may gauge,
And of the Lord's feet washed with tears!

And, as you look, that hand, in truth,
Fairer than ivory swiftly seems,
Lovelier than any hand of youth,
A hand one sees in heavenly dreams.
—*Harriet Prescott Spofford.*

The Value of Time.

THE first piece of advice that one has to give anybody, especially to young men and young women who are going out into the battle of life, is to take care of time. Of all things a waste of time, the diffusion and dispersion of interest through waste of time, is the deadliest disability that can overtake any human character.—*John Morley.*

The Present Truth.

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THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS,

BY

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A "WEEKLY REST-DAY" Bill has been laid before the House of Commons by Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, supported by members of various parties. As drawn, the Bill makes illegal the employment of any person on Sunday in any business, trade, or labour. It does not forbid the doing of work at home by an individual working for himself, but it forbids his performing any act of labour on the premises of any other person. It also prohibits buying or selling on Sunday, or taking any part in, or attending a public performance at which any fee is charged on any ground whatever. Works of necessity and mercy are excluded.

The Bill also calls for the closing of all shops on Sundays, with certain exceptions. Where the occupier of a shop is "a person of the Jewish religion," and closes his shop from Friday evening till Saturday evening, the shop may, if the local authority permits, be kept open on Sunday till eleven a.m., provided the persons employed in the shop are of the Jewish religion, and the customers served are also of the Jewish religion.

Where street-markets have been held on Sundays, or where street-hawking by costermongers has been permitted, licences may be granted yearly to individuals who have already been engaged in such Sunday traffic, but no new licence is to be given, so that such Sunday traffic will gradually die out.

The penalty for a first offence is a fine not exceeding £5; for the second offence, within two years, a fine not exceeding £10; and for

every subsequent conviction, a fine of twice the last maximum amount; no fine, however, to exceed £50.

A number of occupations are exempted from the Bill on the ground of necessity, including the sale of drugs and appliances for the immediate relief of suffering; the sale of bread before ten a.m.; the sale of fresh milk before ten-thirty; the sale of refreshments, not including tobacco, the sale of newspapers and periodicals in shops and bookstalls only, during a period not exceeding two hours, telegraphing and telephoning; the starting and maintaining of fires where absolutely necessary; the conveyance of milk and fruit and other perishable articles by rail; the hiring of horses, cabs, bicycles, etc.; and any unavoidable work after six p.m. in the manufacturing of bread or for the preparation of the Monday morning newspaper.

This Bill is the outcome of the labours of "The Imperial Sunday Alliance," the object of which is to secure the compulsory observance of Sunday. The promoters of the Bill assert that it has no religious aspect whatever, being simply designed to secure a weekly day of rest for all toilers. They give it the title: "A Bill . . . to regulate the conditions of labour upon a basis of six working days in the week, with Sunday as the normal weekly rest-day."

This title is misleading. It is only when Sunday is observed that the promoters of the Bill are willing to concede a basis of six working days in the week. If the Jewish shopkeeper closes his shop on the Sabbath he is not dealt with on the basis of six working days, but is compelled to close his shop at eleven a.m. on Sundays. Thus he is penalized to the extent of two-thirds of a day every week because his religious convictions do not coincide with those of the promoters of the Bill. It is obvious that the Bill is designed to exalt the Sunday institution rather than to secure equality of rest for the working-man. Notwithstanding its pretensions of disinterested

anxiety for the welfare of the labourer, the real object is a religious one, and the Bill falls into the odious category of religious legislation. This is further apparent in the provisions of the Bill. Its Jewish exemption applies only to persons of the *Jewish religion*. The assistants employed in the shop must be of the Jewish religion, and nobody may be served in the shop on Sunday except a person of the Jewish religion.

Under this Bill the officers of the law will therefore be required to determine matters of religion. Religious questions will be involved and religious persecution will result. It is sincerely to be hoped in the interests of religion that the Bill will be rejected by the House of Commons. Genuine religion is not and never has been advanced or profited by State enforcement.

If the religious bodies who are combined in "The Imperial Sunday Alliance" would follow the instruction contained in the Scriptures, they would not be seeking the power of the State to buttress up their traditionary institutions. They are seeking to have enforced upon men and women the observance of a day which God never set apart as a day of rest. The churches have presumed to ignore the divine requirement that the seventh day of the week be kept holy, and they excuse themselves for thus doing violence to the commandment on the ground that it does not require a definite day of the week, that so long as one day in seven is kept nothing more is called for. When, however, they try to enforce the observance of their own day they want to penalize everybody whose loyalty to the divine, original law forbids their keeping the first day instead of the seventh. The churches claim entire liberty for themselves in the matter of selecting their day of rest, but they do not want to grant like liberty to those who differ from them. In this they show the intolerant spirit that invariably goes with a corrupted form of Christianity. Parliament will make a sad mistake, both for religion and for the nation, if it consents to fasten church corruptions and unscriptural traditions upon the people of England.