

THE PRESENT TRUTH

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No. 12.

Thursday, March 25, 1915.

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The Eastern Question.

Readers of PRESENT TRUTH are earnestly invited to read in connection with the paper just issued, entitled, "Armageddon," "The Eastern Question," which contains matter that is very closely connected with the subject dealt with in that paper. "The Eastern Question" is an illustrated 6d. magazine (complete in itself) quite recently published for the express purpose of throwing light on the burning question of the East and the unparalleled preparations for war. The following list of chapter headings will give some idea of the contents: A Disappearing Empire, Mohammedanism in Prophecy, The Ottoman Empire in Prophecy, Mohammedanism and the Papacy, The King of the North, Hope for the Moslem, Prepare War, Peace, Armageddon.

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The International Tract Society, Ltd.,

Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts.

The Present Truth

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

VOL. 31.

WATFORD, THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 1915.

NO. 12.

Greetings.

I'VE never known a day so dark
But somewhere, in the chilly rain
A warm, bright-hearted ruby burned,
Fair as a poppy in the grain.

I've never known a day so still
But through the huddled years, gone
By,
A hum, like that of swarming bees
On gauzy wings, was ever nigh.

I've never seen a withered flower
But bore some secret news for me;
Some message, as of Sabbath peace,
On life's green hills, dear friend, for
thee. —Herbert Randall.

What Is Prayer?

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

PRAYER, like holy incense, has been ascending to God since the time Adam offered his petition. Abel, the first Christian martyr, implored divine mercy as he offered, by faith, an acceptable sacrifice to the Most High. Through all the millenniums of sin holy men have interceded at the throne of God for help and guidance.

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend." Prayer does not bring God down to man, but lifts man up to God. And He Who sits on the throne of exaltation and power bids us to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. iv. 16.

Prayer is more than mere meditation upon God. Through His Word God talks to man; through prayer man talks to God. Abraham said, "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." Gen. xviii. 27. Blessed communion indeed!

"There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads—
A place than all beside more sweet;
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.

"There is a scene where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with
friend—
Though sundered far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy-seat."

If prayer is *anything* to a Christian, it is *everything*. We can do nothing without prayer. Through prayer we lay hold of that which will enable us to do all things. "Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence." Through this avenue we are enabled to lay hold upon all that God has. Truly, puny, destitute man should pray, and draw heavily on the bank of heaven. If the owner of a great bank should place in our hands the key to his vaults, and tell us to help ourselves to the contents, we should respond without delay.

Prayer has to do with God and heavenly sublimities. It is adoration. The Lord's prayer opens with the words, "Our Father which art in heaven." Daniel began his prayer, "O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments." Dan. ix. 4.

Prayer brings us into the presence of God. To pray we must realize, so far as mortals can, the exalted position and holy character of the Being Whom we are addressing, and in whose presence we are permitted to stand.

Prayer is confession. Who could stand in the presence of the holy and omnipotent God without having an awful consciousness of his own insignificance and vileness? His purity stands contrasted with our sins. Like Job we shall be led to exclaim, "Behold, I am vile;" or the seer of God, who, when he had seen Jehovah, said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I

am a man of unclean lips." Isa. vi. 5. Burdened with a sense of guilt and our overwhelming need, we shall petition Heaven for forgiveness and deliverance from sin.

Prayer is thanksgiving. The psalmist continually breaks forth into words like these: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name." Paul exhorts, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." By faith we accept the things God has promised, and which we have asked for, and thank Him for His inestimable gifts.

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

"Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

"Prayer is the sinner's contrite voice
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice
And cry, 'Behold, he prays!'

"Nor prayer is made by man alone;
The Holy Spirit pleads,
And Jesus on the eternal throne,
For mourners intercedes.

"O Thou, by Whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hath trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray!"

G. B. THOMPSON.

The Barrier that Was Turned Into a Gateway for the Truth.

IN the early days of this generation, when the time had come for the missionary occupation of the great heathen lands, Japan was determined to keep its doors barred against the Gospel, even though it had opened two gateways for commercial exchange with foreign ports. Nagasaki was one of these ports of call for ships; and the Dutch were allowed a trading settlement on the island of Deshima, in

Nagasaki harbour. But this concession only made the authorities the more determined to keep out the foreign religion.

How the effort to set up a barrier for this purpose was overruled by Providence for the opening of Japanese eyes to the light is told as follows in Griffiths's "Verbeek of Japan":—

"To guard the coast and keep up both the policy of exclusion and inclusion, the daimio, or baron, of Hizen was given charge of the work of defence and surveillance. He appointed one of his karo, or ministers, named Murata, a brave and trusty officer whose title was Wakasa no Kami, that is, the honorary lord of Wakasa. In those days titles did not mean necessarily either rank, revenue, or office. Murata posted his troops at advantageous points, and set a cordon of boats around the harbour, so that no hungry scholar eager for knowledge, or student hoping to slip out from Japan to see the world, could break the blockade and get aboard the English ships. . . .

"Wakasa frequently went out by night and day in a boat to inspect personally the means of defence and of guard. On one of these excursions he saw floating on the water a little book, which, in type, binding, and language, was different from anything he had ever seen. Curiosity at once seized him to know what it contained. After much inquiry, conducted with wariness, one of the interpreters, able to talk Dutch and read words printed in European letters, told him that it was about the Creator of the universe, and Jesus, Who taught His mind and truth, and that there was much also between its pages about morals and religion. All this only whetted the governor's desire to know the whole contents. He sent one of his men named Eguchi Baitei, to Nagasaki, professedly to study medicine, but in reality to find out from the Dutch more of the book, and they told him much. When he heard that there was a translation of this book into Chinese he sent a man over to China and secured a copy. Murata's home was in Saga, the castle city and capital of Hizen, and there with the Chinese translation he began the study of the New Testament."

It was in 1854 that Wakasa found the floating book as he patrolled the harbour to keep out foreign ideas. A few years later, in 1862, Verbeek began his great educational work for that land by a class of two young men, one of whom was Wakasa's younger brother. Two years later Verbeek received a call from Wakasa himself, a tall, dignified man of fifty. He was already an intelligent believer in Christ, and related this story of "the Moses of his deliverance—the book drawn out of the water twelve years before." He said to Verbeek:—

"Sir, I cannot tell you my feelings, when, for the first time, I read the account of the character and work of Jesus Christ. I had never seen, or heard, or imagined such a person. I was filled with admiration, overwhelmed with emotion, and taken captive by the record of His nature and life."

The government heard of his conversion and ordered him to be punished, but the only thing done was to burn some of his books. He died a believer in 1874. To us this oft-told story has now an added interest in view of the fact that the daughter of Wakasa no Kami is a member of our (S.D.A.) church in Japan. W. A. SPICER.

Another Unscriptural Millennial Dawn Theory.

NOTWITHSTANDING that Pastor Russell's followers claim that he has no theories, but that for all his teachings he can produce solid Bible proof, yet the publications issued in his name frankly confess that he leans to more than one theory in support of which there is not the smallest shred of Biblical evidence. For instance, we read in part one of the programme of the Photo Drama now being exhibited throughout the United Kingdom, under the heading "Second Day or Epoch," these words:—

"We follow the theory that each of the seven days of the creative week was a period of seven thousand years."

Now it seems strange that those who claim loyalty to the Bible as the Word of God should frankly admit that they hold to a theory which is so contrary to the plain teaching of the Scriptures. Certainly an attempt is made to justify from the Scriptures the belief in this theory, but it is lamentably weak and lame. We read again:—

"The word 'day' applies to any period, or epoch, as for instance, the 'day of temptation in the wilderness'—forty years. Psa. xciv. 8. Note again, that we read of the 'day of Christ' . . . In the common affairs of life we use the word 'day' similarly, when referring to Caesar's day, Napoleon's day, etc."

Of course every Bible student knows that the word "day" is

used figuratively many times in the sacred volume and elsewhere, but what possible connection is there between this well-known fact and the days of the creative week? There is not the slightest suggestion or hint in the Bible that those days were anything but literal twenty-four-hour days. To regard them as periods of thousands of years is a pure and unwarranted assumption. The record in Genesis distinctly states that each day of the creative week was composed of an evening and a morning just as they are now and have been since the beginning of time. Ever since the world began time has been divided into weekly periods of seven days, each marked off by the Sabbath. Traces of this division can be found among all the ancient peoples of the earth. Everywhere in the world this division is known and recognized.

When God spoke His law from Sinai He placed in the bosom of that law the Sabbath commandment, and the reason He gave why man should work six days of each week and rest upon the seventh was because God in the beginning worked upon the first six days of time and rested upon the seventh. Now, no reasonable mind would suggest that the days upon which

man is commanded to work and rest are other than twenty-four hour days. Any descendant of Israel would look aghast at the bare suggestion of such a thing; and well he might. Then by what process of reasoning can it be shown that the days upon which man is commanded to work and rest differ in length from those on which God worked and rested? In both cases they are simply called "days," and nothing else can possibly be meant than that they were natural twenty-four hour days marked off by the sun. To admit that the days mentioned in Exod. xx. 9, 10 are literal days and then suggest that in verse eleven of the same chapter the days are long periods of thousands of years not only destroys the force and significance of the commandment but reduces the words of Jehovah to sheer nonsense.

The fact is, the teachers of Millennial Dawnism claim to harmonize modern scientific theories with the Bible, and this is an instance of the absurd and unreasonable lengths to which they have gone in order to pander to the pride and wisdom of this world, "science falsely so-called." To say that it took God thousands of years to create heaven and earth and sea and all that in them is, is pure and unwarranted speculation and is in flat contradiction to the plain, straightforward statements of the Scriptures. This explaining away of the days in Genesis is only one of many expedients men resort to in their attempt to evade the claims of the fourth commandment. Those who prefer to exalt the theories of men above the plain facts of God's Word and then try scripturally to justify themselves in so doing will have to answer before the judgment bar of God for thus wresting His Word. The seventh day is still the Sabbath of the Lord and the commandment to keep it is still binding upon mankind. It is the perpetual memorial of God's creative power which calls the attention of mankind to the fact that in

six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and that we each and all belong to Him by right of creation and redemption; and those who faithfully observe it reap an abundant harvest of peace and joy and hope which can only come to those who take God at His word and walk in the path of His commandments.

H. F. D.

Tempting the Devil.

WE take almost no precaution against our adversary. We expose to him our weak points without fear. We go into the day, to be with all kinds of people, to be exposed, we know not how, without prayer or other spiritual strengthening for the day's demands. We go armed into an enemy's country, we protect ourselves against disease, but we take almost no precautions against the perils to our spiritual life we know to be all about us. It is strange that we who find it so hard to trust God should find it so easy to trust the devil. Dean Howson tells of a Spartan soldier who went into battle without his armour, and although he won a brilliant victory, was fined by the authorities for his recklessness. We all have weaknesses of character and evil susceptibilities, the results perhaps of previous sinning. Any needless exposure at these points is inexcusable recklessness. No man can be so fully saved that he can tamper with an old besetment without peril. John B. Gough said to his host in Philadelphia, "You must take that wine from your mantel, or I shall have to leave your house." We need ever to remember that God's delivering grace is not a substitute for, but a supplement to, our best endeavour.

There is a disputed territory—a sort of moral "no man's land," which we call imprudence. We venture too much and too far into this borderland to find at length that it is all covered by the enemy's guns and flanked by his

forces. We find, too late, that "Imprudence is the door to sin, And one small fault may let large vices in."

It is perilous enough to be in sinful company and amid sinful surroundings when duty requires it, but to be there from choice, not to say with pleasure, is more than to tempt the devil; it is to run after him with eagerness. The only safety lies in purity and an absolute righteousness that will take no risks. No one can look with longing upon any sin with safety: there will come what Victor Hugo calls "the appeal of the abyss." Often when God would undertake for us, the first thing He would do would be to order us to our place of duty, where alone He has promised to be responsible for our safety. Macaulay relates that at the siege of Namur, William of Orange, who was giving his orders amid a shower of bullets, saw with surprise and anger, among his staff officers, Mikel Godfrey, deputy governor of the Bank of England, who had come to his headquarters on business and was curious to see real war. "Mr. Godfrey," said King William, "you ought not to run these hazards. You are not a soldier, and can be of no use to us here." Godfrey replied, "I run no greater hazards than your majesty." "Not so," said the king, "I am where it is my duty to be, and I can without presumption commit my life to God's keeping; but you ——" At that word a ball laid Godfrey dead at his feet.

Paul strikes at the root of the matter when he writes, "Neither give place to the devil." That is to say, If you do not want to encounter the possible downfall, do not give the tempter a foothold—any chance with you. The farther back we make the fight the easier and the surer the victory. Here, if anywhere, prevention is better than cure. It is instructive to note the emphasis which the Scriptures put upon the rootings of conduct. We are bidden to keep the heart with all diligence, because out of

it are the issues of life. We think we can stop when we choose, but the Scripture admonition is, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. . . . Pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

We must beware of those subjective conditions and attitudes which betray us to the tempter. The purrulent desire, the unchaste imagination, the unholy mood or temper, will deliver us bound into his hands. Furthermore, we need to be intelligent as well as devoted, else, like the patriotic Trojans, we shall lug in the devil's wooden horses, and armed men will come forth and open our gates to the enemy.—*Rev. F. W. Bartholomew.*

The Resurrection.*

Matt. xxviii. 1-10.

THE night of the first day of the week had worn slowly away. The darkest hour, just before daybreak, had come. Christ was still a prisoner in His narrow tomb. The great stone was in its place; the Roman seal was unbroken; the Roman guards were keeping their watch. And there were unseen watchers. Angels that excel in strength were guarding the tomb, and waiting to welcome the Prince of life.

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven." Clothed with the panoply of God, this angel left the heavenly courts. The bright beams of God's glory went before him, and illuminated his pathway. "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men."

An earthquake marked the hour when Christ laid down His life, and another earthquake witnessed the moment when He took it up in triumph. He Who had vanquished death and the grave came forth from the tomb with the tread of a conqueror, amid the reeling of

the earth, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder. When He shall come to the earth again, He will shake "not the earth only, but also heaven." Heb. xii. 26. "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage." "The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll;" "the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." But "the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Isa. xxiv. 20; xxxiv. 4; 2 Peter iii. 10; Joel iii. 16.

At the death of Jesus the soldiers had beheld the earth wrapped in darkness at midday; but at the resurrection they saw the brightness of the angels illuminate the night, and heard the inhabitants of heaven singing with great joy and triumph: "Thou hast vanquished Satan and the powers of darkness; Thou hast swallowed up death in victory!"

Christ came forth from the tomb glorified, and the Roman guard beheld Him. Their eyes were riveted upon the face of Him Whom they had so recently mocked and derided. In this glorified being they beheld the prisoner Whom they had seen in the judgment-hall, the One for Whom they had plaited a crown of thorns. This was the One Who had stood unresisting before Pilate and Herod, His form lacerated by the cruel scourge. This was He Who had been nailed to the cross, at Whom the priests and rulers, full of self-satisfaction, had wagged their heads, saying, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." Matt. xxvii. 42. This was He Who had been laid in Joseph's new tomb. The decree of Heaven had loosed the captive. Mountains piled upon mountains over His sepulchre could not have prevented Him from coming forth.

At sight of the angels and the glorified Saviour the Roman guard had fainted and become as dead men. When the heavenly train was hidden from their view, they

arose to their feet, and as quickly as their trembling limbs could carry them, made their way to the gate of the garden. Staggering like drunken men, they hurried on to the city, telling those whom they met the wonderful news. They were making their way to Pilate, but their report had been carried to the Jewish authorities, and the chief priests and rulers sent for them to be brought first into their presence. A strange appearance those soldiers presented. Trembling with fear, their faces colourless, they bore testimony to the resurrection of Christ. The soldiers told all, just as they had seen it; they had not had time to think or speak anything but the truth. With painful utterance they said, It was the Son of God Who was crucified; we have heard an angel proclaiming Him as the Majesty of heaven, the King of Glory.

The faces of the priests were as those of the dead. Caiaphas at last found speech. Wait, wait, he said. Tell no one the things you have seen.

A lying report was then given to the soldiers. "Say ye," said the priests, "His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept." Here the priests overreached themselves. How could the soldiers say that the disciples had stolen the body while they slept? If they were asleep, how could they know? And if the disciples had been proved guilty of stealing Christ's body, would not the priests have been first to condemn them? Or if the sentinels had slept at the tomb, would not the priests have been foremost in accusing them to Pilate?

The soldiers were horrified at the thought of bringing upon themselves the charge of sleeping at their post. This was an offence punishable with death. Should they bear false witness, deceiving the people, and placing their own lives in peril? Had they not kept their weary watch with sleepless vigilance? How could they stand the trial, even for the sake of

*International Sunday-School Lesson for Sunday, April 4, 1915.

money, if they perjured themselves?

In order to silence the testimony they feared, the priests promised to secure the safety of the guard, saying that Pilate would not desire to have such a report circulated any more than they did. The Roman soldiers sold their integrity to the Jews for money. They came in before the priests burdened with a most startling message of truth; they went out with a burden of money, and on their tongues a lying report which had been framed for them by the priests.

The priests, in putting Christ to death, had made themselves the tools of Satan. Now they were entirely in his power. They were entangled in a snare from which they saw no escape but in continuing their warfare against Christ. When they heard the report of His resurrection, they feared the wrath of the people. They felt that their own lives were in danger. The only hope for them was to prove Christ an impostor by denying that He had risen. They bribed the soldiers, and secured Pilate's silence. They spread their lying reports far and near. But there were witnesses whom they could not silence. Many had heard of the soldiers' testimony to Christ's resurrection. And certain of the dead who came forth with Christ appeared to many, and declared that He had risen. Reports were brought to the priests of persons who had seen these risen ones, and heard their testimony. The priests and rulers were in continual dread, lest in walking the streets, or within the privacy of their own homes, they should come face to face with Christ. They felt that there was no safety for them. Bolts and bars were but poor protection against the Son of God. By day and by night that awful scene in the judgment-hall, when they had cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matt. xxvii. 25), was before them. Nevermore would the memory of that scene fade from their minds.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

Life and Death.

IN those early days when Paulinus was seeking to win heathen Northumbria to the Christian religion, he was pleading his cause one night in the banqueting-hall of King Eadwine when a bird, entering by an open door, flew be-

in wintertide, with the warm fire lighted on the hearth, but the icy rain storm without. The sparrow flies in at one door and tarries for a moment in the light and heat of the hearth fire, and then flying forth from the other vanishes into the wintry darkness whence it came. So tarries for a moment



THE EMPTY TOMB.

wildered across the chamber and finally disappeared through a window on the opposite side of the hall. An aged counsellor of the king's noted the flight of the bird, then turned to Eadwine and spoke: "So seems the life of man, O king, as a sparrow's flight through this hall when you are sitting at meat

the life of men in our sight, but what is before it, what after it, we know not. If this new teaching tells us aught certainly of these, let us follow it."

In the heart of man there has always been a craving for knowledge as to his own origin and hereafter. He feels that he was

not born merely to die and be no more; yet he sees others continually passing away, and knows that one day his own turn must come to be laid in the earth. Philosophers have speculated, and men of science have pursued their investigations into the mystery of life, but for all that these are able to tell us we are no wiser than the men who gathered in King Eadwine's hall. One book alone solves the problem. The Bible tells us what life and death mean; it lifts the curtain and allows us to see what lies beyond the grave.

The case of the first man will afford us the best opportunity to study God's purpose and find out just what was involved in the gift of life bestowed upon him. Let us look at Adam as he comes fresh from the hand of his Creator. The record of his appearance is brief but instructive: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. ii. 7.

There are three stages in the process of making a man. First, he is formed, and the material out of which he is fashioned is the dust of the ground. Chemically he is one with the earth on which he lives, but the elements are combined with such skill, and the formation of the man is so wondrously and artistically perfect, that none but the great Chemist and Supreme Artist of the universe could produce such a masterpiece. The inanimate form is modelled as perfectly as it can be; but it has not yet received the gift of life. The bestowal of life is the second stage in the process. God breathes into the nostrils of the body He has fashioned and the delicate mechanism begins to move, the lungs breathe, the blood circulates, the nerves thrill with sensation, the eyes see, the ears take note of sound, the brain cells record impressions and begin to assimilate them; the whole machinery of life is in motion by virtue of the breath of life, and the man that was a beautiful but life-

less form has become a living soul.

In this man, Adam, breathing, thinking, living, we recognize two elements. The body was made of the dust, the breath was breathed into the lungs by God; and as the result of this combination of the dust of the earth and the breath of God we have a living soul. The body is the material portion of the man, the breath of God is the life principle, and the two combined make a perfect living being. The third stage is complete.

Now what will death be? Simply the undoing of the work, the taking apart of the man. The elements that have been derived from the earth will return unto the earth, and the breath of God breathed into his nostrils will return to Him again. This is how the Bible describes death: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it." Eccles. xii. 7. That which is here spoken of as spirit is identical with the breath; the same Hebrew word occurs in Gen. vii. 22, where we read, "All in whose nostrils was the *breath* of life, of all that was in the dry land died."

We look again at Adam, with his body of dust, animated by the breath, or spirit, of God, the combination of the two forming one living soul, and we ask the question, Is he mortal or immortal?

No one supposes for a moment that Adam was immortal so far as his body was concerned. We know from the record that at the end of nine hundred and thirty years he died. But though his body was confessedly mortal, what of his soul? We have already seen that Adam's soul was nothing less than himself: the "man became a living soul." Therefore the body was an essential part of the living soul. When the body turned to dust, the living soul was dissolved. So we read: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. xviii. 4, 20. It was the whole Adam that sinned; his mind conceived the sinful desire and the body gave it effect, so that the

whole of him was involved in the transgression; the living soul was the whole man; the soul that sinned must die; obviously the soul must have been mortal.

It is a very common and popular belief that the soul of man is immortal, but the Bible does not furnish any support for this belief. The word "soul" is found in the Old Testament over 470 times, and the Hebrew word which is translated "soul" is used 745 times. Yet not once in 745 times is the adjective "immortal" attached to the word. On the other hand, the soul is many times referred to as subject to death, and as being dead. See, for instance, Lev. xix. 28, where the word rendered "dead" is the same word in the original that is translated "soul" in Gen. ii. 7.

Well, then, if the body is mortal and the soul is mortal, what about the spirit? Since that comes from God, not from the dust, must it not be immortal? Not so do the Scriptures speak of it. The words translated "spirit" are used in the Old Testament 466, and in the New Testament 385 times, but never once is the spirit of man said to be immortal. The spirit or breath is not the man, but the life principle that animates the dust of the earth, and makes of that dust a living soul. It is the living soul that is the man. The breath of life is the means by which God bestows the boon of existence upon the individual. When God withdraws the spirit, the gift of life is withdrawn with it, and the man perishes. It is something like the withdrawal of heat from the boiler of a steam-engine. The Psalmist states the fact thus: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Psa. cxlvi. 4. When the life principle goes back to God the man ceases to be. "If He set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust." Job xxxiv. 14, 15. Before a man

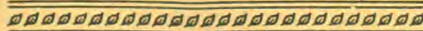
thus dissolved can live again, God must anew bestow upon him the life principle, the breath or spirit of life: "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy spirit [the same Hebrew word that has just been translated "breath"], they are created: and Thou renewest the face of the earth." *Psa. civ. 29, 30.*

So as we look at the man Adam we see in him not an immortal being, but a mortal man. He has not had put within him an immortal soul; he is himself a living soul. "The first man Adam was made a living soul," says Paul. *1 Cor. xv. 45.* The soul is only alive as long as God continues to bestow the breath of life. When that breath of life is withdrawn, the man will return to the dust whence he came.

Was Adam given to understand that he was mortal, subject to death, or was he taught to regard himself as an immortal being, dowered with a never-dying soul? The answer to these questions appears very clearly in the sacred narrative: "The Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." *Gen. ii. 16, 17.*

Adam might enjoy the gift of life, then, just as long as he pleased. If it seemed good to him to remain in the world God had made, and to enjoy all the beauty and wholesome pleasure with which nature abounded, God would not be the one to withdraw the good. It was for man himself to decide how long Eden should continue to be his home. He might go on ruling over the works of God as long as he remained obedient to the will of God. And that will laid only one small prohibition upon him; he was forbidden to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. To disobey that injunction would be to forfeit all.

The answer, then, to the question whether Adam was created immortal is that he was not so created; he was made capable of dying, but at the same time there was no need for him to die. With this fact he was made clearly acquainted. Death could only come through one door and that door was disobedience. If Adam



"Lord, Let Me Stay with Thee!"

"The man from whom the demons were gone out prayed Him that he might be with Him: but He sent him away." *Luke viii. 38.*

"LORD, let me stay with Thee! The crowd

Which watched my frothings from afar,

And later bound me with the chains,
Will not permit me where they are.

In any house I could not come
On yesterday. And now the mob
Will kill, or scorn, or cut me,
And of Thy peace will fiercely rob—
Lord, let me stay with Thee!"

Sweet yet strong the voice—the Master's
Eye with love and cheer aflame—
Makes answer to the demon freed:

"Yet must thou publish forth My name.
Return now to thy house. Declare
How great things God hath done for thee.

I will not e'er forget thee there.
Thou hast a mission sure from Me!"

Back to the city wild, forthwith
The man from demons freed returns:
No craven he, but glad to speak

The love which in him brightly burns.
In his own house, where each man must,
And in the city thoroughfare,
Before each one who stops to hear,
He tells how great things God hath done

For him, erstwhile unclean, in chains,
A desert wanderer, a care
To friends, a menace to his foes,
And now made free by God's own Son!

So doth the King empower His own,
And on the past the records close!

—Ernest Bournier Allen.



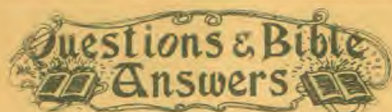
had never disobeyed the injunction of his Maker he would still be enjoying the blessings of life in the garden of Eden. The continuance of life was made dependent upon rightdoing.

This is obviously the only wise and sound basis on which the gift of life could be granted. If Adam had been made incapable of dying, bound to live for ever and ever, and then had perversely chosen to sin, the result would be an immortal sinner, a wretched being who

was unfit to live, but who could never die. And if Adam should beget children to follow his example, this would mean in time a vast multitude of miserable and wicked human beings, every one of them immortal. The horrible result would be that in the course of the eternal ages there would come about an incalculable mass of sin and degradation, which would be a curse to itself and to the universe. The existence of such endless and hopeless iniquity would be a sad reflection on the wisdom of the Creator, even though He should do all He could to save the transgressors. Men would ask, What dire necessity was there for the Creator to bring into existence this race of immortal sinners? Why did He without first consulting them force an undesired immortality upon them? How much better to have proved their capacity for righteousness first before endowing them with an eternal existence! How much happier would the universe be if only God had withheld immortal life from all who failed to show themselves capable of using it wisely and well!

Fortunate indeed is it for the happiness and wellbeing of the creation, and fortunate also for the good name of the wise and loving Father of all, that He did not perpetrate the folly with which so many credit Him, of vesting all His children with immortality, bestowing upon them never-dying souls, before it was known whether or not they would make proper use of the gift. God does not make any immortal without consulting their own individual wishes. When Adam was created he was not made immortal: he was not invested with immortality in such a way that God would never be able to take it back; Adam was given the opportunity of becoming immortal, and the test by which his fitness for immortality was to be demonstrated was the test of obedience to God's commandments. It was made known to Adam in the plainest possible way

that as long as he remained obedient he would have the privilege of living on and on in the beautiful creation; but as soon as he should become disobedient to God's command he must forfeit his existence: as it was put to him in the words of God: "He must surely die." (*To be continued.*)



Saved so as by Fire.

"May we understand from 1 Cor. iii. 15 that a man once saved can never be lost, because even though he falls away God will find some means to bring him back?"

THERE is nothing mechanical about the plan of salvation. There is no form of words which, once pronounced over an individual, guarantees his salvation; no ceremony performed over him will seal him thenceforth among the saved. We may go farther, and say that there is no isolated act of faith that can save, regardless of a man's future course. Salvation is an experience of life and growth. A man who is saved is born again, but the new life must be nourished if it is to be preserved. Unless the new man is sustained with spiritual food and drink, and developed by spiritual exercise, he is as certain to die again as a human being who is starved to death or who, through lack of proper care, allows his body to fall under the power of disease.

Many times in the New Testament the Christian is warned against supposing that he is beyond reach of danger. "Let him that thinketh he standeth," says the Apostle Paul, "take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x. 12. "Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee." Rom. xi. 20, 21.

The epistles to the seven churches are full of intimations that it is possible to fall away from the Gospel and be lost. To the church at Ephesus the Son of

man says: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Rev. ii. 4, 5. Again a solemn warning is addressed to the Laodicean church which believed itself rich in all spiritual wealth: "Because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth." Rev. iii. 16.

It is quite true that God does show much longsuffering in His dealings with His wayward children. It is not His fault if any are finally lost, but unless we co-operate with the grace of God it may be bestowed upon us in vain. 2 Cor. vi. 1. The Apostle Peter speaks of some who do not make progress in the Christian life, adding one grace to another, with the consequence that in time they forget that they were once purged from their old sin. 2 Peter i. 9. We see then that a man who has once been forgiven may fall back into the old bondage, and forget that he was ever delivered. Unto them, says Peter, it has happened according to the true proverb, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." It will not do to reply that such individuals were never soundly converted and did not know the grace of God in truth, for the apostle speaks of them as having "escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter ii. 20-22.

A careful reading of the passage to which our attention is called shows that the Apostle Paul is writing about the work he himself had done in Corinth. He, like Apollos, was simply a labourer in God's service. It was Paul who had originally laid the foundation of the church in that city, and now Apollos and others had been building upon the foundation laid

by the apostle. 1 Cor. iii. 6-10. The foundation Paul had laid was the Lord Jesus and nobody could lay down any other foundation. The only question was, what should be built upon the foundation? Should it be material of lasting worth, answering to gold, silver and precious stones; or should it be such worthless material as might be typified by wood, hay and stubble?

The fourth verse of the second chapter will tell us what the apostle regarded as gold and silver, such as he himself had endeavoured to use upon the building: "My preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

What did Paul mean by wood and stubble? He tells us in the first chapter. In verse 17 the apostle writes: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: not with wisdom of words lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." Throughout the first chapter the apostle asserts that the wisdom of this world is only foolishness with God. To build with such materials would be to lay only stubble and hay on the foundation.

What would happen to a superstructure of wood and stubble when it was tried by fire? The flimsy materials would be quickly consumed. So a church that had been built up by words of human wisdom would not endure stern tests, but would rapidly vanish away; whereas a church that had been raised up on the basis of confidence in the power of God, in the truth of His Word, and by the working of His Spirit, would endure all tests, no matter how severe.

Such is the test that will try every man's work. One who had been following up Paul's labours, and trying to build up the Corinthian Church with words of human wisdom, would see all his work

come to naught when the time of trial arrived, whereas Paul was confident that the work he himself had done would stand every test. The labourer who committed an error that would bring all his labours to naught might himself still be saved, but he would be saved "so as by fire." Like a man who had been rescued from a burning house but had lost all his property in the flames, so would be the worker who, although himself a child of Christ, had spent his life seeking to raise up a church out of such worthless material as human wisdom and eloquence.

The question of personal salvation does not arise here. Paul is only contrasting sound, valuable service in Christ's cause with unwise and perishable work. An illustration of the latter may sometimes be seen in the labours of a man who is himself sincere and desirous of doing what is right, but who fails to give to the Scriptures their proper place and teaches instead his own ideas and fancies, supposing that he can build up souls out of such beggarly elements. Such a man is wasting his life. He may be saved himself, but he will have nothing to show for his life-work. He needs to learn a better and more practical way of working.

The Charge Against Spurgeon.

"WHEN the — [a certain journal] cast up to Spurgeon that there was never anything new in his sermons because he was always saying the same old thing over and over again, the great preacher replied that the charge was quite true. For wherever he took his text in the whole Bible, it was his principle and it was his practice, he said, to make across country as fast as possible to Jesus Christ."

—Dr. Alexander Whyte.

The Gift of God.

LIFE is found alone in Jesus,
Only there 'tis offered thee;
Offered without price or money,
'Tis the gift of God so free.

—Selected.



The Bible Year.

Thirteenth Week.

March 24th.—1 Samuel 1-3. Birth of Samuel. The sin of Eli's sons. Samuel's ministry. God's message to Samuel concerning the destruction of Eli's house.

March 25th.—1 Samuel 4-6. Death of Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Philistines capture the ark but eventually return it.

March 26th.—1 Samuel 7-9. Israelites repent. Philistines subdued. Israelites ask for a king, Saul is chosen.

March 27th.—1 Samuel 10-12. Saul anointed king of Israel. Samuel testifies to his own uprightness and rebukes the ingratitude of his people.

March 28th.—1 Samuel 13-15. Samuel reproves Saul for his disobedience. Jonathan's miraculous victory over the Philistines. Saul rejected for not destroying all the Amalekites and their possessions.

March 29th.—1 Samuel 16-18. David anointed king by Samuel. David kills the Philistine giant with a stone from his sling. Saul seeks David's life.

March 30th.—1 Samuel 19-21. Jonathan pleads with Saul on behalf of David. Saul seeks to kill Jonathan, who flees. David feigns madness before the king of Gath.



SIR EDWARD CLARKE writes in the "Times": "If on a given day, say, on Easter Sunday (there could be no more appropriate day), the whole body of the ordained ministers of the Church of England—archbishops, bishops, deans, archdeacons, canons, vicars, curates—were, as a great united act of patriotic self-denial, to pledge themselves to drink no intoxicants, as long as this war shall last, I believe their example would have results of good which would make the event for ever memorable in the history of our church and country. The laity, high and low, would follow their lead. Other Christian bodies would be stirred to emulation." All over Europe those who have laboured for total abstinence must rejoice to see how public opinion is coming round to their point of view, and recognizing that alcohol is truly the deadly foe they have declared it to be. It seems strange that it should be necessary today to utter such an appeal as Sir Edward Clarke addresses to the clergy of the Established Church.

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States lately adopted a resolution, part of which runs thus: "We are in the presence of the insidious and determined efforts of a dethroned ecclesiasticism to regain its lost power in civil legislation and government. That way lies danger and dismay. The State must be Christian, but not ecclesiastical. The liberties secured by Reformation principles must by the same principles be preserved. Ecclesiasticism must be rebuked in any attempts for recognition and power through partisan politics. The Christian citizen should guard the money and offices of the State against any encroachments by sectarian ambition, and our public officers should be compelled to hold churches aloof from the suspicion of such influences. The life of the republic lies in the separation of Church and State." Probably the resolution has reference to the encroachments attempted by the Romish church in the States, but the language applies just as forcibly to those who would invoke the arm of the civil authority in behalf of any religious observance. Sunday laws are a favourite project of this type of ecclesiasticism, in the United States and in the United Kingdom also.

It grows more apparent that immense social problems will soon press for settlement. Sir Horace Plunkett says: "The wisest and most far seeing amongst us can form but the vaguest notion of the economic, social and political agony which this war may be piling up for years to come. We must be prepared for a period of depression, the like of which this generation has not known. Every man of sense must know that the killing and maiming of workers by the thousand, the vast destruction of material, the closing of markets and the interruption of transport will cause an unparalleled dislocation of the nation's industry. Not even an early and triumphant issue to the war can save our millions of workers from the consequences of this wholesale turning of the ploughshare into the sword." Shortage in the world's food supply will add one terrible element to the general distress. The editor of the "Irish Homestead" says: "It is towards the middle and later end of this year that those who have thought most over this question look with painful apprehension. They fear, nay they are certain of, a shortage in the food supply of the world. They fear for the workers in the towns. They anticipate food riots and a red conflagration breaking out of men and women maddened by the hunger of their families and their own hunger."

Her Alabaster Cruse.

A METHODIST woman in Los Angeles telephoned to me to come to see her. When I went she said: "I am going to send my daughter to China." "I would like to meet her," said I. She came in, a beautiful girl, a graduate from one of the great colleges of America. I asked her age. She was twenty-

three. I turned to her mother and asked, "How long have you had it in your heart that this daughter should go to China?" Looking me squarely in the face, she said: "For nearly twenty-four years; from the time that that girl was, she belonged to China."—*A. E. Cory, in Militant Methodism.*

Your Missionary Investment.

BARON JAMES DE ROTHSCHILD once sat for a beggar to Ary Scheffer. While the great financier, attired in the rags of a beggar, was in his place in the estrade, I happened to enter the studio of the great artist, whose friend I had the honour to be. The baron was so perfectly disguised that I did not recognize him, and believing that a veritable beggar was before me, I went up to him and slipped a louis into his hand. The pretended model took the coin and put it in his pocket. Ten years later I received at my residence an order on the office in the Rue Laftte for 10,000 francs, enclosed in the following letter: "Sir—You one day gave a louis to the Baron Rothschild in the studio of Ary Scheffer. He has employed it, and to-day sends you the little capital with which you entrusted him, together with the interest. A good action always brings good fortune. Baron James de Rothschild." On receipt of this order, I sought the billionaire, who proved to me from the books before him that under his management my louis had actually fructified so as to have swelled to the large sum sent me. So Christ is walking through the world in the guise of a beggar—hungry, naked, and outcast. Blessed are we if we give to the Master in the person of these His poor brethren, or take the Gospel to those who have it not.—*The Expositor.*

THE end of our study is not knowledge, but conduct.—*Aristotle.*



The Unobliging Boy.

"RUFUS, I want you to go and pull up the weeds round the currant bushes, near the honeysuckle," said Mr. Newton to his son of ten years.

"Can't I do it at noon, father? I just want to finish this." Rufus was making an arrow.

"Well, noon then; only, don't forget it," said the father.

Noon came; Rufus came home from school, and his father came home from the shop.

"Have you done the weeding I told you to do?" asked his father.

"Oh, father, 'tis so awfully hot," said Rufus in a fretful tone; "can't you get old Doloff to do it?"

What do you think of a boy who will say that to his father? or, indeed, of a father who will allow him to say it?

"Rufus, run upstairs and get my purse," said his mother.

"Can't Carrie go? You never ask her to do things," answered the little boy, without offering to move.

Carrie jumped up, and went and brought the purse to her mother.

As Rufus took his cap, "Stop," said Mrs. Newton, "I want to give you a bundle to take to Mrs. Thorne."

"Oh, mother," said Rufus, with an unwilling twist of the shoulders, "won't it do just as well after school?"

Dear old grandmother sat with her hands folded all the morning for want of wool. When Rufus came in, she took her knitting work, and unrolling it, "Rufus," said she, "I want some little boy to go to the shop and buy me some wool. Do you know any little boy who would like to do so much for his old grandmother?"

"I don't know that I do," answered he.

"Well, don't you want to go?" asked the old lady, finding a more direct application necessary to meet her wants.

"Oh, grandmother, it rains!" cried the little boy.

"Rains, does it? That alters the case. I did not know it rained;" and she turned to the window, looking out over her spectacles.

"It's just going to," said Rufus, "and I'm so beat out playing football."

"Oh, well," said the old lady, patiently folding her hands again.

"Rufy, lend me your knife just one minute," asked his sister.

"You are always wanting my knife," cried Rufus in a cross tone. "Why don't you have a knife yourself, and not for ever keep asking for mine?" He handed it to her, but in a way that made her feel unwilling to take it.

Here is a picture of an unobliging boy. How do you like it? Possessed of a temper never willing, always making objections, how would such a child like to be paid in his own coin?—how would he like to be treated as he treats his best friends? When Rufus has outgrown his coat, and worn out his boots, and about used up his cap, and asks his father for new clothes, how would he feel to hear him say, "Oh, you cost me so much; go and ask somebody else for clothes?"

Suppose the sun should make objections to shining, or the clouds to rain, or the cow to give her milk, or the fire to burn! Ah, children, there is no room for an unobliging spirit here. Everybody and everything is obliging you. Should you not "do as you would be done by"?—*Selected.*

The Wrong and the Right Way to Do Good.

It was a crowded street in Jerusalem. Shopkeepers sat by the roadside offering their wares for sale. Brightly-dressed men and women passed up and down, while here and there a beggar slouched, keeping his eye on the people around him to see if they showed any signs of giving. Suddenly the sound of a trumpet was heard. The beggars straightened themselves and hastened off in the direction of the sound. They knew what it meant. It told them that a rich Jew had some money or food for the poor. Sure enough at the corner of the street a man was distributing grain or money to an admiring crowd of beggars while the passers-by looked with pleased expressions at the one who was kind to the poor. The man himself looked round quite proudly to see whether those who were standing by were paying much attention to his generosity.

Presently the crowd departed and the street assumed its usual aspect. Soon a richly-dressed Jew, called a Pharisee, came along. A beautiful silk girdle kept his long flowing robes in place so that they might not be defiled by touching the dirty clothes of the poor. He was very careful to put his sandalled feet down on the cleanest part of the road, and as he walked along he carried his turbaned head proudly and glanced with a haughty look at those around him. Suddenly he stood still, and looking up to heaven commenced to pray. His prayer was very long and full of big words. The simple folk around looked at him with awe and admiration. They thought that here must surely be a man of God, one whom God would richly reward for his piety and goodness. Having finished his prayer the Pharisee moved on, noticing with gratification the respectful looks of those who were watching him.

In sharp contrast to the richly-dressed Pharisees were other men with ashes on their heads and dirty faces. They looked very sad and

miserable. They were Pharisees too, and the people remembered seeing them only the day before going about in their gay, rich robes. But to-day their appearance showed that they were fasting. They, too, were respected by onlookers as godly men mourning over their sins.

There was one Man Who had watched scenes like these day by day and Who felt only pity, not

as He did. We never read of His making a big fuss or drawing people's attention to Himself before helping the poor. When a blind man came to Him to be healed Jesus took the man away off by himself and cured him. He did the same when a deaf man came to Him, while a great crowd was looking on; and when He had cured these men He strictly commanded them not to tell others



PRAYING FROM THE HEART.

admiration, for the proud Pharisees. This man was Jesus. He did not call them Pharisees, but hypocrites. I wonder who knows the meaning of this word. I will tell you. A hypocrite is a person who pretends to be what he is not. Jesus saw that these men were not really the children of God; their religion was not heart religion but outward show. When Jesus told His disciples about them He called them hypocrites and said that no follower of His should do as these Pharisees were doing. One that follows Christ will try to do just

about it. Mark vii. 33-37; viii. 22-26.

When Jesus turned the water into wine at the marriage feast no one but the servants knew about it till long after it happened. The rich man who helped the poor did not do so because he felt truly sorry for them, but because he wanted to be thought of as a great and good man. And Jesus said that he had his reward. The people did think highly of him as he desired, but God did not value his gift. He was not seeking for the approval of God, but to be seen of

men. God wants us to do right out of a pure, loving heart and a right motive. Even though no one is watching us, the One Who knows every secret thing will reward us at the right time.

When Jesus wanted to pray He went alone into the wilderness, and there talked with His Father. When we want anything from our earthly parents we ask them for it plainly and simply; we do not wait until others are present, and we do not search for long words. God wishes us to treat Him in the same way. He loves to hear us ask Him simply and plainly for what we want, and He has promised to give it to us if it is for our good. When we would pray Jesus tells us that we should go off into our own rooms and shut the door, and there in quietness speak to

Him. He does not want us to be thinking of other things either, in the midst of our prayers, but He likes us to show Him reverence and respect by keeping our thoughts upon what we are saying to Him. This way of praying was quite new to the disciples, so they asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Then He taught them that little prayer that we all know so well:—

"Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen."

R. E. J.



Flower and Seed.

WHAT power is this, when in the dark
And underneath the frozen sod
The small seed thrills in regions where
No wind has blown, no foot has trod?

It starts; it trembles into life;
It breaks the bond; it seeks the light;
Strong is its stem; its blossom seems
Some winged thing just poised for flight.

And, swaying in the breeze, the sun,
Its own small seed grows round and
ripe,
And scatters in the dust at last,
And keeps for evermore the type.

What power is this the wonder works
And so transforms the deathly clod?
The unknown force? Nay, we who love
And worship call the great power God!
Harriett Prescott Spofford.

The Study Habit.

THE more one saves, the nearer one comes to being rich. The more you know, the better educated you are. Every bit of knowledge you store up enriches your life by so much. All these little

self-investments make you so much better off—make you so much larger, fuller, so much better able to cope with life.

I am acquainted with a young man who travels a great deal by rail and water, who always carries with him wherever he goes some good reading-matter in as condensed a form as possible, miniature classics or the lesson papers of the correspondence school. He is always doing something to improve himself in the odds and ends of time most people throw away. The result is that he is well-informed upon a great variety of subjects. He is very widely read in history, in English literature, in books of travel, in the sciences, and in the various other important branches of knowledge.

What this man has accomplished in the odds and ends of time is a constant rebuke to those who waste their time in doing nothing, or in

doing that which is infinitely worse than nothing.

Such eagerness to improve oneself is an indication of a mark of superiority, the genius that wins.

Tell me how a young man uses his little ragged edges of time after his day's work is done, during his long winter evenings, what he is revolving in his mind at every opportunity, and I will tell you what that young man's future will be.

A person might as well say that there is no use in trying to save anything from his small salary because the amount would never make him rich, and he might as well spend it as he goes along, as to say he never can get a liberal education by studying during his spare time. But have you ever stopped to think that scores of people have given themselves the equivalent of a college education in their spare moments and evenings?

There never was a time in the history of the world when education was worth so much as to-day, when added knowledge gives so much power. Competition is so terrific, and life so strenuous, that you need to be armed with every particle of mental culture possible. The greatest work you can do is that of raising your own value.

The trouble with most of us is that we are too ambitious to do great things at once. It is the persistent trying to make ourselves a little larger, a little broader, the continual effort to push the horizon of ignorance a little farther away by good reading or study, that counts.

What a golden opportunity confronts you for coining your bits of leisure into knowledge that will mean growth of character, promotion, advancement, power, riches that no accident can take from you, no disaster annihilate! Will you throw away the opportunity as so many others are thoughtlessly doing?

It is painful to see persons reading carelessly, thinking carelessly, with no purpose, instead of absorbing valuable knowledge from the conversation of others and from

newspapers, periodicals, and text-books at home. How little they realize they are throwing away material that to many would be absolutely beyond price, material that would make their lives rich beyond measure!

If you are ambitious to make the most of yourself, and especially if you are trying to make up for the loss of an early education, remember that every person you meet can add something to your stock of knowledge. If you meet a printer, he can post you in the printer's art. A bricklayer can tell you many things you did not before know. You will find the average farmer wonderfully wise on points upon which you are sometimes surprisingly ignorant.

It is the constant absorbing from every possible source that makes a man well informed, and it is a great variety of knowledge that makes him broad and sympathetic where he would otherwise be narrow, ratty, and hard. The habitual absorber of knowledge has the advantage of touching life at a vast number of points. His interests are wide, and, as a rule, he is an interesting man because of his great variety of experiences.

There is, with the man that does not possess one, a tendency to over-emphasize the advantages of a college training. Those who were obliged to leave school to help support the family, or because of ill-health, and were not able to go to college, think they have suffered an irrevocable loss—that there must necessarily be a great deficiency in their lives that can never be made up—that as they could not get the liberal education they wanted, they are for ever barred from getting an equivalent. They think that what they themselves can pick up from reading and self-study will not amount to much. But as a matter of fact, many of the best-educated and most-cultured and most-efficient men and women in the world have never gone to college—many of them have never even gone through a high school.

There are tens of thousands of examples of those who have triumphed over all sorts of handicaps and disheartening surroundings, exploding all excuses of the youth who claims he has no chance because compelled to leave school at too early an age.

Think of the greater possibilities with the text-books now at hand prepared especially for home study. It is quite possible to pick up a splendid education in one's spare time by taking a course in a good correspondence school. Thousands of men have been saved from the mortifications and embarrassments to which they have been subject because of their ignorance, by courses in these schools; and they owe practically all their business and social success to the knowledge thus obtained.—*Orison Swett Marden, in Ambition.*

Look Out for Your Face.

"MY boy," said a wise father to his twelve-year-old lad, "you do not own your own face."

The boy looked puzzled. He had come to the breakfast-table with a frowning, clouded countenance, and had started moodily to eat his food. Everybody felt the shadow of his ill-spirits. His father's unexpected words caused him to look up with a half guilty expression.

"You do not own your own face," his father repeated. "Do not forget that. It belongs to other people. They, not you, have to look at it. You have no right to compel others to look at a sour, gloomy, and crabbed face."

The boy had never thought of that, but he understood and did not forget. And all of us should understand, and none of us should forget the fact that our faces belong to other people.—*Christian Herald.*

Home Training.

It is one of the many rewards of the schoolmaster's profession that it gives—or ought to give—an insight into the real quality of

home-life. He can judge it by its earliest product. If the study of that product teaches him the main truth on which the best homes live and thrive, he learns something rich and nourishing, which it is his duty to pass on to others. No less clearly does that truth stand out when the results of ignoring it, or of obeying it half-heartedly, are noted. It comes to this: Good home-training means bringing up children in surroundings which quietly and persistently illustrate the principles taught by word of mouth, where unselfishness is not only heard of but seen every day. If the surroundings are consistent and of one type, the character which results in the children is, as a rule, not only admirable, but winning, "lovely and of good report."—*E. Lyttelton, D D.*

A Wasted Life.

"SHE is wasting her life," a lady said indignantly, concerning the oldest daughter in a large family. "She is just at the age to enjoy herself if her circumstances were different. But she stays on at home, year after year, caring for her sick mother and trying to bring up that flock of boys. I can't bear to see a young girl wasting her life in that way." As you have sat by a glowing fire some winter evening, reading by the light of a well-trimmed lamp, have you ever thought of the coal and oil which were being used to add to your comfort and entertainment? The coal burns as it sheds its grateful heat, and the oil is consumed as it gives out light, but neither is wasted. Do not think of your life as wasted because it is more full of work than enjoyment. If you are shedding light and warmth about you, you are meeting the great end of living. Mistaken friends may cry, "To what purpose is this waste?" but the Master's verdict is: "Thou hast wrought a good work upon Me."—*From the Girl's Companion.*

The Present Truth

Published weekly for
THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS,

BY

The INTERNATIONAL TRACT SOCIETY
LTD.,
Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts.

Annual subscription by post, 4/4.
Make orders and cheques payable to The
International Tract Society, Ltd., Stan-
borough Park, Watford, Herts. Regis-
tered for transmission by magazine post
to Canada and Newfoundland.

WE acknowledge with thanks
the receipt of £2 tithe from J.P.

Studies in James.

"My brethren, be not many masters,
knowing that we shall receive the
greater condemnation." Chap. iii. 1.

THE word "masters" is evi-
dently used here in the sense of
"teachers." The Jews invariably
addressed their teachers and doc-
tors of the law as "Rabbi," or
"Master." Christ Himself was
often addressed thus by those who
recognized Him as a divinely-sent
teacher, thus distinguishing Him
from a disciple or learner.

It seems that some at least of
those to whom James wrote were
clamouring continually for the
office of teacher, they were not
willing to remain learners, con-
stituting the rank and file of the
church merely.

Nothing is more destructive to
the power and effectiveness of
individual Christians and churches
than an unholy ambition for of-
ficial position. The church in all
ages has been sorely crippled and
weakened by the presence of this
spirit among its members. It
must needs be in the very nature
of things that the majority
of churchmembers hold no promi-
nent or leading positions in the
body of Christ. Certainly all,
officers included, should be humble
learners in the school of Christ.
No individual who is not content
to be such is fit to take a position
of trust and responsibility in the
church. Every sincere, humble
churchmember may not neces-
sarily be fitted for office, but cer-

tainly no one is fitted to be a
teacher of others who is not him-
self a humble learner and disciple
of the meek and lowly Jesus. It
invariably happens, however, that
those who clamour most loudly for
office in the church are least fitted
for it. On the other hand, those
who shrink from taking the respon-
sibility which an office entails more
often than not are most fitted to
hold it. Their very sense of un-
worthiness and unfitness is one, at
least, of the proofs of their fitness
to take the position. Moses, who
at first shrank from holding the
position of leader in Israel, proved
himself to be the wisest, most
capable, efficient, and influential
leader the church of God
has ever known. But he was so
because his trust was in God and
because he depended continually
upon the guidance of Heaven.

Those who shrink from taking
office in the church of Christ
usually do so because they sense
deeply the solemn and heavy
responsibility attached to it.
Hence, these, when once called to
office can usually be depended upon
to discharge their official duties in
a way that will bring strength and
blessing to the flock over which
they are called to be shepherds.
But those who grasp and strive
for leadership in the church do so
because they lightly regard the
grave responsibility involved in
holding the coveted position. Such
do not make genuine, reliable lead-
ers of the flock of God.

To a certain extent God holds a
teacher responsible for the spiri-
tual welfare of His flock, so that at
the final reckoning such an one
will have far more to answer for
than those upon whom no such
responsibility has been laid. To
whom much is given much is ex-
pected. The man with one talent
is responsible only for the use and
improvement of that one talent;
while he who has been given ten
is expected to use and improve all
of them to the glory of God and
the blessing of others; and his
neglect to use or his misuse of
those talents will work far greater

loss and havoc to the church than
a similar neglect or misuse on the
part of the man who has but one
talent. It therefore behoves all
that name the name of Christ to
ponder well before they rush
blindly after positions of trust and
responsibility in His church.

The greatness of Christ's char-
acter is revealed in His total free-
dom from unholy, selfish ambition.
Of Him we read that although He
was originally in the form of God
He thought it not a thing to be
grasped to be equal with God.
Phil. ii. 6, R.V., margin. The same
spirit characterized all His deal-
ings and associations with man-
kind. When His disciples, in
their pride and self esteem, refused
to perform the office of servant to
one another, Jesus girded Himself
with the customary towel and
washed His disciples' feet, con-
cluding with the words, "If I then,
your Lord and Master, have washed
your feet, ye also ought to wash
one another's feet." John xiii. 14.
In rebuking the unholy ambition
of the two sons of Zebedee He laid
down a principle which was to
guide the church for all time in
selecting its officers and teachers
in these words: "Whosoever
would become great among you,
shall be your servant: and whoso-
ever would be first among you
shall be bondservant of all. For
verily the Son of man came not to
be ministered unto, but to minis-
ter, and to give His life a ransom
for many." Mark x. 43-45, R.V.,
margin.

H. F. D.

I SHOULD like to see a huge pile
of all the books, good and bad, that
were ever written, prayer books
and sermons, and hymn books, and
all, smoking like Sodom of old, if
the reading of these books keeps
you away from the reading of the
Bible; for a ton weight of human
literature is not worth an ounce of
Scripture; one single drop of the
essential tincture of the Word of
God is better than a sea full of our
commentings and sermonizings,
and the like.—*Spurgeon*.