

# THE PRESENT TRUTH

"Thy Word is truth."

No. 17, Vol. 34.

WATFORD, JUNE 14, 1917.

Price 2d

## SODOM'S FATE: A WARNING.

THE sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar." The bright rays of the morning seemed to speak only prosperity and peace to the Cities of the Plain. The stir of active life began in the streets; men were going their various ways, intent on the business or the pleasures of the day. The sons-in-law of Lot were making merry at the fears and warnings of the weak-minded old man. Suddenly and unexpectedly as would be a thunder peal from an unclouded sky, the tempest broke. The Lord rained brimstone and fire out of heaven upon the cities and the fruitful

plain; its palaces and temples, costly dwellings, gardens and vineyards, and the gay, pleasure-seeking throngs that only the night before had insulted the messengers of heaven—all were consumed. The smoke of the conflagration went up like the smoke of a great furnace. And the fair vale of Siddim became a desolation, a place never to be built up or inhabited—a witness to all generations of the certainty of God's judgments upon transgression.

The flames that consumed the Cities of the Plain shed their warning light down even to our time. We are taught the fearful and solemn lesson that

while God's mercy bears long with the transgressor, there is a limit beyond which men may not go on in sin. When that limit is reached, then the offers of mercy are withdrawn, and the ministration of judgment begins.

The Redeemer of the world declares that there are greater sins than that for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Those who hear the Gospel invitation calling sinners to repentance, and heed it not, are more guilty before God than were the dwellers in the vale of Siddim. And still greater sin is theirs who profess to know God and to keep His commandments, yet who deny Christ



LOT AND HIS DAUGHTERS FLEEING FROM DOOMED SODOM.



in their character and their daily life. In the light of the Saviour's warning, the fate of Sodom is a solemn admonition, not merely to those who are guilty of outbreaching sin, but to all who are trifling with Heaven-sent light and privileges.

There is cause for alarm in the condition of the religious world to-day. God's mercy has been trifled with. The multitude make void the law of Jehovah, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. xv. 9. Infidelity prevails in many of the churches; not infidelity in its broadest sense—an open denial of the Bible—but an infidelity that is robed in the garb of Christianity, while it is undermining faith in the Bible as a revelation from God. Fervent devotion and vital piety have given place to hollow formalism. As the result, apostasy and sensualism prevail. Christ declared, "As it was in the days of Lot, . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke xvii. 28, 30. The daily record of passing events testifies to the fulfilment of His words. The world is fast becoming ripe for destruction. Soon the judgments of God are to be poured out, and sin and sinners are to be consumed.

Said our Saviour: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth"—upon all whose interests are centred in this world. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

Before the destruction of Sodom, God sent a message to Lot, "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." The same voice of warning was heard by the disciples of Christ before the destruction of Jerusalem: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains." Gen. xix. 17; Luke xxi. 20, 21. They must not tarry to secure anything from their possessions, but must make the most of the opportunity to escape.

There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escape for life. So it was in the days of Noah; so with Lot; so with the disciples prior

to the destruction of Jerusalem; and so it will be in the last days. Again the voice of God is heard in a message of warning, bidding His people separate themselves from the prevailing iniquity.

The state of corruption and apostasy that in the last days would exist in the religious world, was presented to the prophet John, in the vision of Babylon, "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Rev. xvii. 18. Before its destruction the call is to be given from heaven, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. xviii. 4. As in the days of Noah and Lot, there must be a marked separation from sin and sinners. There can be no compromise between God and the world, no turning back to secure earthly treasure. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. vi. 24.

Like the dwellers in the vale of Siddim, the people are dreaming of prosperity and peace. "Escape for thy life," is the warning from the angels of God; but other voices are heard saying, "Be not excited; there is no cause for

alarm." The multitudes cry, "Peace and safety," while Heaven declares that swift destruction is about to come upon the transgressor. On the night prior to their destruction, the Cities of the Plain rioted in pleasure, and derided the fears and warnings of the messenger of God; but those scoffers perished in the flames; that very night the door of mercy was forever closed to the wicked, careless inhabitants of Sodom. God will not always be mocked; He will not long be trifled with. "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Isa. xiii. 9. The great mass of the world will reject God's mercy, and will be overwhelmed in swift and irretrievable ruin. But those who heed the warning, shall dwell "in the secret place of the Most High," and "abide under the shadow of the Almighty." His truth shall be their shield and buckler. For them is the promise, "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation." Psal. xci. 1, 4, 16. E. G. WHITE.



## The Seven Seals.

### THE SIXTH SEAL.



THE sixth seal, if we may judge from the space given to it, exceeds in its importance to the church all the rest. Eleven verses are given to the first five seals, but twenty-three are given to the sixth. That subject occupies the remainder of the sixth chapter and the whole of the seventh.

One picture alone tells the story of each of the preceding seals, but four pictures are required to set forth the events of the sixth seal. Each picture is prefaced by the words: "I saw."

First John saw a great earthquake, followed by a darkening of the sun and moon and a casting of the stars to the ground. Then the firmament is rolled up like a parchment scroll, disclosing to human eyes the throne of God, while the mountains and islands are moved out of their places as though the visible universe were about to collapse in total ruin. He saw the great and powerful of mankind moved with unspeakable terror, not so much because of the terrestrial convulsions that

threatened to swallow them up, but because they cannot endure the sight of the glory of Him Who sits upon the throne, whose dreadful day of wrath has now arrived.

But what about the people of God in this hour of wrath and destruction? The sixth seal has a full answer to this question, but before the answer is given John is shown another picture. He sees four angels, whose duty it is to hold the forces of violence in check that they may not break loose upon their avenging mission of devastation.

Still another picture follows this. Another angel appears, bringing in his hand the seal of the living God, and he bids the four angels not to relax their grip upon the agencies of destruction until the servants of God have all been sealed in their foreheads. John does not at this time see the servants of God, but he hears the number who are thus sealed, and it is given as 144,000, consisting of twelve thousand out of each tribe of Israel.



One more picture is shown to John. He looks again at the throne, the sight of which had sent such terror to the hearts of the kings and captains of the earth, and now he sees before it an innumerable multitude, drawn from all nations and tongues. These sing a song of adoration and triumph, ascribing salvation to Him Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. How different their cry from that of the mighty men whom John first saw! Next one of the elders tells John whence the thronging myriads of white-robed singers came, of the ineffable bliss that is reserved for them in the glorious kingdom to which they have now been brought by their divine Redeemer, the slain Lamb.

Thus under the sixth seal the story of decline and apostasy and persecution changes into one of purity and triumph and everlasting bliss. The Saviour proves Himself able to lead His church through all the perils of earth, through all the ages of darkness, and to present to His Father at last a glorious Church, without spot or blemish. The song which the angels had sung when the Lamb first took the seven-sealed book in His hand (chap. v. 9.) is now shared with an uncounted choir of the redeemed.

Let us look in detail at each of the pictures presented to the vision of John.

First, we will consider the signs and wonders that heralded the day of God's wrath and proclaimed the termination of the reign of sin. The imagery of the picture is sublime in its grandeur. The earth itself, the sun, moon, and stars, and the firmament, are the elements out of which the picture is made up. Are these to be regarded as symbols, or are we to understand that

even the heavenly bodies have a part to play in the warning of a sinful and rebellious world that its day of judgment is at hand?

There is no reason why the celestial bodies should not be thus used. In the beginning, when God set His lights in the firmament to divide day from night, He said: "Let them be for signs." Gen. i. 14. A star announced Christ's first advent, and a miraculous darkening of the sun bore witness that His was no common death. Before He

and at once the attempt breaks down. The kings of the earth with their princes and captains are in the picture, but not disguised by symbols; they are referred to in their own persons. Verse 15. The mountains are not here representative of governments for they are spoken of immediately afterwards as literal mountains, in which fugitive men seek to hide. Verses 15, 16.

Evidently the picture brings to view a real breaking up of the order of the universe; a real earthquake and real obscuration of the sun and moon, with real disturbances among the stars.

The heaven that is removed as a scroll is the very firmament that is over our heads, and its rending will reveal the dazzling glory of Him Who comes to judge the earth. There is nothing symbolic or figurative about the woe of earth's great men

as they realize that the time has come for them to give account to Him Who rules on high.

We inquire therefore: Seeing the first five seals have been already accom-

plished in the history of the Church, are the sights revealed in the fifth seal entirely in the future, or have they been partly fulfilled? Of one thing we may be satisfied, that if any portion of the sixth seal has already come to pass, we may look for its fulfilment in events on a vast and impressive scale, worthy of the universal plan of which they form an important part.

The fifth seal brought us down to about the end of the seventeenth century. Has there been any earthquake since that period eminently worthy on all accounts to be recognized as "the great earthquake" of the sixth seal? We look through a list of some six thousand earthquakes, compiled by Professor Milne, occurring between the



THE DEAD SEA BY MOONLIGHT.

*The waters of the Dead Sea are believed to cover the ruins of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.*

comes again the sun and moon and stars may well assist to herald to earth's inhabitants the glorious return of Him by Whom all things were made.

At the same time we must remember that the book of Revelation abounds in symbols and figures, and that the sun and moon and stars are sometimes employed in its chapters as symbols. Is it so in this present instance? A brief test will serve to answer the question.

An earthquake is a symbol of political convulsions; the sun stands for imperial dignity; the lesser lights for princes and rulers of minor authority. Mountains are also used as symbols of kingdoms. See Rev. xvii. 9, 10. Attempt to interpret the opening vision of the sixth seal by such symbolism



years A.D. 7 and A.D. 1899, and we notice that there is just one in this list which is marked out from all the rest as "the great earthquake." It is the "great earthquake of Lisbon," which began on November 1st, 1755. The area of this convulsion is estimated to have been four times that of Europe, and the loss of life anywhere between thirty and ninety thousand people. Sir George Lyell speaks of it as follows:—

"In no part of the volcanic region of southern Europe has so tremendous an earthquake occurred in modern times as that which began on November 1st, 1755, at Lisbon. The inhabitants had had no warning of the coming danger, when a sound like that of thunder was heard underground, and immediately afterwards a violent shock threw down the greater part of their city. In the course of about six minutes, about sixty thousand persons perished. The sea first retired and left the bar dry; it then rolled in, rising fifty feet or more above its ordinary level. The mountains of Arrabida, Estrella, Julio, Marvan and Cintra, being some of the largest in Portugal, were impetuously shaken, as it were, from their very foundations; and some of them opened at their summits, which were split and rent in a wonderful manner, huge masses of them being thrown down into the subjacent valleys. Flames are related to have issued from these mountains, which are supposed to have been electric; they are also said to have smoked; but vast clouds of dust may have given rise to this appearance.

"Among other extraordinary events related to have occurred at Lisbon during the catastrophe, was the subsidence of a new quay, built entirely of marble at an immense expense. A great concourse of people had collected there for safety, as a spot where they might be beyond the reach of falling ruins; but suddenly the quay sank down with all the people on it, and not one of the dead bodies ever floated to the surface. A great number of boats and small vessels anchored near it, all full of people, were all swallowed up, as in a whirlpool. No fragments of these wrecks ever rose again to the surface, and the water in the place where the quay had stood is stated, in many accounts, to be unfathomable; but Whitehurst says he ascertained it to be a hundred fathoms.

"The area over which this convulsion extended is very remarkable. It has been computed, says Humboldt, that on November 1st, 1755, a portion of the earth's surface four times greater than the extent of Europe was simultaneously

shaken. The shock was felt in the Alps, and on the coast of Sweden, in small inland lakes on the shores of the Baltic, in Thuringia, in the flat country of northern Germany, and in Great Britain. The thermal springs of Töplitz dried up, and again returned, inundating everything with water discoloured by ochre. In the islands of Antigua, Barbadoes and Martinique, in the West Indies, where the tide usually rises little more than two feet, it suddenly rose above twenty feet, the water being discoloured and of an inky blackness. The movement was also sensible in the great lakes of Canada. At Algiers and Fez, in the North of Africa, the agitation of the earth was as violent as in Spain and Portugal; and at the distance of eight leagues from Morocco, a village with the inhabitants, to the number of about eight thousand or ten thousand persons, is said to have been swallowed up; the earth soon afterwards closing over them.

"The shock was felt at sea, on the deck of a ship to the west of Lisbon, and produced very much the same sensation as on dry land. Off St. Lucar, the captain of the ship 'Nancy' felt his vessel so violently shaken that he thought he had struck the ground, but, on heaving the lead, found a great depth of water. Captain Clark, off Denia, on the east coast of Spain, in latitude 36°24' North, between nine and ten in the morning, had his ship shaken and strained as if he had struck upon a rock, so that the seams of the deck opened, and the compass was overthrown in the binnacle. Another ship, forty leagues west of St. Vincent, experienced so violent a concussion, that the men were thrown a foot and a half perpendicularly up from the deck.

"A great wave swept over the coast of Spain, and is said to have been sixty feet high at Cadiz. At Tangier, in Africa, it rose and fell eighteen times on the coast. At Funchal in Madeira, it rose full fifteen feet perpendicularly above high water mark, although the tide, which ebbs and flows there seven feet, was then at half ebb. Besides entering the city and committing great havoc, it overflowed other seaports in the island. At Kinsale, in Ireland, a body of water rushed into the harbour, whirled around several vessels, and poured into the market place." *Lyell's Principles of Geology*, (1875 ed.) Vol. II, pages 147-150.

In the year 1756 a Lisbon printer named Manoel Soares published a pam-

phlet giving a description of the earthquake. An abstract of this pamphlet was read before the Seismological Society of Japan on Oct. 3, 1887. The account thus presented reads as follows:—"The first shock, although preceded by a dreadful rumbling noise, was so slight that it scarcely frightened anybody, although it lasted over one minute. However, after an interval of from thirty to forty seconds, the next shock came so violently that houses began to crumble. The day turned dark owing to the thickness of the dust, and the tremors continued for a little over two minutes. After the lapse of two minutes the earthquake recommenced with great force. The houses which had resisted the previous shocks, fell with a terrible noise. The sun became dark, and the oscillating soil seemed to threaten utter destruction. The groans of the dying, the cries of thousands imploring Divine mercy, the incessant shocks, and the darkness, all helped to increase the horror, fear, and tribulation. At last, after two or three minutes of the greatest suffering, the bustle subsided. The height of misery, however, had not yet been attained. Scarcely, says the author, had we begun to breathe more quietly, when a fresh shock came to foretell further disasters. A strong northeasterly gale sprang up and the sea rose suddenly and afterwards retired with equal haste. It carried away all it met, and then drew back all it had carried. The infuriated waves invaded the streets, squares, and gardens. Many of the people who sought refuge on the banks of the river were swept away by the sea without there being anyone able to assist in saving them. Those who jumped into the boats foundered with them, and the river Tagus with its ebb and flow, was soon converted into a confused forest of entangled masts, and a horrible cemetery of floating corpses.

"Nothing can describe the deplorable condition in which the city of Lisbon was left. The town was first destroyed by the earthquake, then razed by fire, and pillaged by robbers. On the sites of wealthy palaces and mansions nothing remained but gloomy ruins and mounds of stones and rubbish."—*Transactions of the Seismological Society of Japan*, Vol. 12.

(To be continued.)

THE day is dark only when the mind is dark; all weathers are pleasant when the heart is at rest.—*Hamilton Wright Mabie*.





## Questions and Bible Answers.

We invite questions from our readers on the subjects dealt with in our columns, or on Bible themes generally. Questioners are asked to give name and address.



# The "Presence" of Christ.

"Is the second advent of Christ to be a visible and public one? I am told by some people that the New Testament promises only a spiritual manifestation of the presence of Christ; that the word translated 'coming' in the Authorized Version does not mean 'coming' but 'presence.'"

IT is true that the Greek word, *parousia*, which is translated "coming," literally rendered should be "presence." It is a compound word, consisting of the preposition "with" and the verb "to be," so that it means "a being with." Twice the Authorized Version translates the word by "presence." See 2 Cor. ii. 10; Phil. ii. 12.

The Revised Version goes a little further and translates the word by "presence" also in Phil. i. 26.

In every other instance, however, in which the word is used the Revised Version renders it by "coming" and puts the word "presence" in the margin. This means that in the judgment of the revisers it was better to translate the word by "coming" than by "presence."

Their position is obviously sound in 1 Cor. xvi. 17, where Paul rejoices over the "coming" of certain of his friends, and again in 2 Cor. vii. 6, 7, where the apostle similarly expresses his gladness over the "coming" of Titus. Here the word might have been translated "presence," but manifestly Titus could not have been *present* with Paul unless he had *come*. It was the fact of the *coming* of his friend that filled Paul's heart with joy.

The same reasoning justifies the preference for "coming" in every other instance where the word occurs. Christ's "presence" is the theme in almost every other passage where the word is used, but Christ's "presence" depends on Christ's "coming."

It is therefore a mere quibble to insist that the word should be translated "presence" instead of "coming." Even if we translate the word as "presence" every time it occurs, we do not get away from the fact that Christ cannot be *present* before He *comes*, just as Titus and other companions of the Apostle Paul could not rejoice his heart with their *presence* until they had first *come* to him.

When the disciples ask, "What shall be the sign of Thy *coming*" (*parousia*), they mean the event of Christ's personal return. Matt. xxiv. 3. When Jesus compares His return to the flash of lightning that illuminates for a moment the face of the sky (Matt. xxiv. 27), or again to the days of Noah (v. 37), and to the destruction of the antediluvian world (v. 39), He obviously has in mind the point of time when His "coming" would take place. When Paul locates the resurrection of the righteous at the "coming" of Christ, his mind is fixed on the definite moment of the Lord's return. 1 Cor. xv. 23. The "coming" of our Lord Jesus with His angels is evidently the moment of His personal appearance. 1 Thess. iii. 13. It is to that moment that Paul looks for the time of his own triumph. Chap. ii. 19. When he connects the resurrection of the righteous with the "coming" of the Lord, it is the actual, literal return that he thinks of. 1 Thess. iv. 15. He has the same event in mind when he prays that the spirit, soul and body of the Thessalonians might be preserved unto that day. 1 Thess. v. 23. The time of Christ's "coming" is the time of our gathering together unto Him. 2 Thess. ii. 1. Then is revealed the brightness of His "coming." Verse 8. In view of this same definite event James counsels patience under oppression. James v. 7, 8. Peter declared that he had taught no fable when he made known the power and "coming" of the Lord. 1 Peter i. 16. This is the literal "coming" that the mockers deride (2 Peter iii. 4), but for which the believer makes ready (v. 12); when there shall be new heavens and a new earth. John also points his converts to the same awe-inspiring event, and tells how it may be met with confidence. 1 John ii. 28.

In the foregoing paragraph we have referred to every passage in the New Testament that uses the word "coming," or "presence," in connection with the second coming of Christ, and a careful study of these passages will show how unjustifiable is any attempt to separate between the thought of "coming" and

"presence" when endeavouring to get the full meaning of the word. Whenever the word is used in that connection we are perfectly safe in following the revisers in giving it first of all the idea of "coming."

While this particular word only occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament, the ordinary word "come" occurs over six hundred times, and it is this word that is always used whenever the coming of Christ is referred to. We read that the lepers "came" to Jesus, that He "came" to Nazareth, and the word that is employed is identical with that employed by Christ Himself when He said: "They shall see the Son of man *coming* in the clouds of heaven (Matt. xxiv. 30); or, "Ye know not what hour your Lord doth *come*." Verse 22. The same word occurs in the familiar promise: "I will *come* again, and receive you unto Myself." John xiv. 3. The angels employ the same expression when they say: "This same Jesus . . . shall so *come* in like manner as ye have seen Him go." Acts i. 11. Paul uses the same word when he speaks of the Lord's Supper as showing forth the Lord's death "till He *come*." 1 Cor. xi. 26. "He shall *come* to be glorified in His saints," says Paul. 2 Thess. i. 10. "He that shall *come* will *come* and will not tarry." Heb. x. 37. "Behold He *cometh* with clouds." Rev. i. 7. And the New Testament closes on this note: "I *come* quickly." "Even so, *come* Lord Jesus." Rev. xxii. 20.

The most obvious idea associated with the promise of the future "presence" of the Lord Jesus with His people is the idea of a personal "coming," which will be literal, visible, attended by audible sounds, the "voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God," also by tremendous events that could not possibly be kept secret.

ART Thou coming soon, Lord Jesus?  
Coming soon, to claim Thine own?  
Long, in mercy, Thou hast tarried,  
Seated on Thy Father's throne.

Anxious hearts await Thy coming,  
Watchful souls look up to Thee;  
Is the Bridegroom coming shortly?  
Many ask enquiringly.

WM. J. YOUNG.



## Did Samuel Appear to Saul?

THE advocates of Spiritualism although they sometimes speak with contempt of the Scriptures, regarded as a trustworthy revelation, often endeavour to make the Bible support their own claims by saying that Jesus was merely an extraordinarily powerful medium, and that it was through the spirits that He wrought His mighty works, and from them He derived the doctrines He taught. They take the Scriptures that speak of the Holy Spirit, its presence and operation in believers, and endeavour to apply such texts to the phenomena of Spiritualism. In such perversions they sometimes display remarkable ingenuity.

There is one incident recorded in the Scriptures which is regarded by many as substantiating the foundation principle of Spiritualism, namely, that it is possible for a human being to get into touch with one who has passed away, and by this means to obtain information otherwise inaccessible. We refer to the experience of the first king of Israel in the cave of Endor.

Saul was in trouble. The Philistines had invaded the land in great strength and had made their way as far as Shunem, only a few miles from the sea of Galilee. The forces of Israel rallied around their king on Mount Gilboa, but they were weak in comparison with their enemies: "and when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly." 1 Sam. xxviii. 5. The discouraged monarch enquired of the Lord, but no answer came. The priests in the temple received no guidance for him through the Urim and Thummin on the high priest's breastplate; the school of the prophets could report no answer from heaven to the king's question; nor did God speak to the king himself by dreams. At last Saul in despair resolved to seek aid from a forbidden source, and begged his servants to find for him someone who had a familiar spirit. It was not easy to learn of such an individual, for in his happier years the king had, in obedience to the voice of God, banished from Israel the diviners and sorcerers. At Endor, however, there was to be found a woman who practised divination by the help of a familiar spirit, and to this woman Saul determined to go. Taking

only two men with him, and disguising himself so that none might suspect him to be Saul, the unhappy king of Israel came to the sorceress by night and said: "Divine unto me, I pray thee, by the familiar spirit, and bring me up whomsoever I shall name unto thee." Verse 8.

At first the sorceress repulsed her visitor and charged him with coming as a spy, to denounce her afterwards to the king for carrying on the necromancy which had been prohibited by royal edict. But at last his solemn assurance that she should be held harmless, satisfied her, and she said: "Whom shall I bring up unto thee?" Then said Saul: "Bring me up Samuel."

"And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what seest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I see a god coming up out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a robe. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance. And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?"

"And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more. . . . Therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known to me what I shall do."

"And Samuel said, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee and is become thine adversary. . . . The Lord will deliver Israel also with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord shall deliver the host of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines."

Now there are three ways in which we may understand this narrative. Either, (a) there was a real appearance of Samuel to Saul due to the power of the woman to recall the dead; or (b) God chose to send Samuel in reponse to the summons, but to the surprise and alarm of the witch, with a last message

of doom to king Saul; or (c) in this story we have simply a case of impersonation, a familiar spirit assuming the form and features and perhaps the voice of Samuel.

The first explanation will not stand. There is no power in human beings or angels to raise the dead. Nothing but the power of God can bring forth from the tomb those who have fallen into the sleep of death. In those days death was regarded, much more than it is to-day, as a state of unconsciousness. When Job thinks of what his condition would have been had he died in the hour of birth, according to his bitter wish in the time of suffering, that condition in his mind differed in no wise from that of dead kings or unborn babes.

"For now should I have lain down and been quiet;

I should have slept; then had I been at rest: With kings and counsellors of the earth, Which built up waste places for themselves, or with princes that had gold, Who filled their houses with silver: Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been;

As infants which never saw light; There the wicked cease from troubling; And there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners are at ease together; They hear not the voice of the taskmaster. The small and great are there; And the servant is free from his master." Job iii. 13-19. R.V.

It was the prevalence of this idea in the days of Saul that made it necessary for the spirit to ascend out of the earth, and not come down from some higher region, as the spirits always do at the present time. It was for the same reason that the supposed spirit of Samuel began with the question: "Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?"

Where was Samuel as a matter of fact? If he was indeed in the earth where he had been buried, then unquestionably he was dead there, and no power short of divine power could raise him up. If Samuel was not lying in the earth, but was in the presence of God above, he would have come down from heaven to meet Saul, and would not have ascended out of the earth. Further, on the last supposition, he would not have said to the rebellious king whose doom was so near at hand: "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me."

From the story it is obvious that Samuel is thought of as lying in the earth, where Saul would shortly join him. This being so, to bring him up from that state of death would mean nothing short of a resurrection, and the



woman with a familiar spirit could not raise the dead. In death, "the wicked cease from troubling." Satan and his angels may harass the child of God while he is alive, but when he is once dead Satan has no further power to annoy him. It is inconceivable that the pious Samuel after death could have been at the beck and call of a woman whose practices were so abhorrent in the sight of God that His command was: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

Turning to the second possibility, can we suppose that God, for some reason of His own, chose to bring Samuel up from the dead to speak a last message to Saul in the witch's cave. Dr. Adam Clarke and others take this view of the passage. As they point out, Samuel is definitely spoken of as appearing and speaking to Saul. In this case God would have performed the miracle of raising Samuel from the dead. Notice, however, that the supposed Samuel does not assert that God has raised him. He attributes to Saul, and consequently to the witch, the fact that he has been disquieted and brought forth. But can we believe that God, Who has under the severest penalties commanded His people not to resort to witchcraft and divination of any kind, would yet co-operate with a woman who had a familiar spirit and allow His dead prophet to rise at her summons. Nothing could be more unlikely and inconsistent. Dr. Adam Clarke suggests that the god, or gods, that the woman first saw ascending out of the ground were angels, and that by the sight of these she knew that God was intervening, and that it was His power, not her spells, that brought up Samuel. But angels do not come up out of the earth; they always come down from heaven, their native region.

Only one conclusion remains: the supposed Samuel that appeared to king Saul was but a lying spirit, personating the dead prophet. The passage, carefully read, bears out this interpretation. The woman undertook to bring up any spirit desired by the king. When the supposed Samuel appeared, the woman

at once knew that her visitor was really king Saul. But how did she know? The spirit must have told her. Then Saul asked her what she saw. This is important. The apparition did not appear to Saul, but to the woman, the medium; and it was from her description that Saul "perceived" the figure to be that of Samuel. Saul does not see the apparition for himself; and in the same way he does not speak to it

death, and of the defeat of his army, show that God was indeed speaking once more through His own prophet Samuel, temporarily raised from the dead for that purpose? The answer is that God was not confined to Samuel, dead or alive, as a channel of communication with Saul. Had God wished to announce his impending fate to the guilty king He could easily have done so through a dream, or through a live prophet, or through Urim.

There is nothing in the message delivered to Saul that might not have been easily within the knowledge of supernatural beings. It was probably well known throughout the kingdom that God had rejected Saul, and that his kingdom had been promised to David. The evil spirit associated with the witch of Endor would know the strength of the Philistine army, and the comparative weakness of Saul's forces. He would know that a decisive battle was to be fought on the morrow, and that with a discouraged leader the defeat of Israel was an absolute certainty. Saul was not the man to fly before victorious foes, nor were his sons likely to desert him in the hour of his defeat. It hardly needed the cunning of a demon to foresee the outcome of the morrow's conflict. But if there was one thing more than another better calculated to insure beyond question the discouragement and demoralization of Saul, it was the poison of despair that was poured into his heart by the message of the spirit. If on that last night Saul had only turned with full repent-

ance to the God Who loved him, Israel might yet have been spared the bitter experience through which it was about to pass; but instead of turning heartily to the Lord in repentance and confession Saul sought counsel rather from an unclean and forbidden source: and it was for this last sin that he died, according to the record: "So Saul died for his trespass which he committed against the Lord, because of the word of the Lord which he kept not; and also because he asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire thereby, and inquired not of the Lord: therefore He slew him, and



THE DEATH OF SAUL.

himself. It is the woman who acts as a medium in the intercourse. Possibly the woman herself was hidden from Saul's view in the inner portion of the cave, and he depended entirely upon her for an account of what the spirit was like and what it said. This is at least suggested by the fact that when Saul fell prostrate on the earth at the last words spoken to him, "the woman came unto Saul and saw that he was sore troubled." Verse 21.

But how could any evil spirit foretell what was to take place on the following day? Did not the prediction of Saul's



turned the kingdom unto David." 1 Chron. x. 14.

Now if the Lord had assisted the witch of Endor by sending Samuel in response to her call, He would have been a partner with her in the guilt, and it would have been unfair of Him to condemn Saul to death for resorting to the diviner. The very fact that Saul was slain for going to the witch is clear proof that the Lord had nothing whatever to do with the scene that was enacted that night in the dwelling of the witch. And if the Lord had nothing to do with the event, we can only conclude that the supposed Samuel was only an impersonation of Samuel, accomplished by the familiar spirit of the woman.

Demons had lured Saul on from sin to sin, persuading him that his offences were but trivial, and then when his guilty course had led him into the depths of ruin, they complete their evil designs against his soul by telling him that God is his foe, and fill him with discouragement, so that he goes forth a beaten man, entirely unprepared to lead the army of Israel against its well-prepared and numerous foes. Thus they greatly help to bring about the accomplishment of their own prediction.

Still the fallen angels are carrying on the same work on a vast scale. They make light of sin till they have entangled their victims almost beyond hope of recovery; then they change their tune and begin to terrify the sinner with fears that he has committed unpardonable sins, and tempt him to seek in self-destruction an escape from his unendurable misery.

ALL immigrants entering the United States are now required to be able to read a passage from some book in their own language, and the test passage is to be taken from the Bible, "because it is now the only book in virtually every tongue. Translations of the Bible were made by eminent scholars, and, what is more to the point, the translating was done by men whose purpose it was to put the Bible in such simple and idiomatic expressions in the various languages as would make it possible for the common people of foreign countries to grasp the meaning readily and thoroughly."

This regulation bears interesting testimony to the fact that in the providence of God the time has now come when His Word is found, simply and idiomatically translated, in practically every existing tongue. The fact is in itself significant for it was only when the Gospel of the Kingdom should be preached in the whole world for a witness that the end could come.

## "Whoso Readeth, Let Him Understand."

IT is generally admitted by Bible students that verses 15-20 of Matt. xxiv. refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. To the casual reader of this chapter, it may be difficult to see why the events and conditions connected with the downfall of the sacred city of the Jews should be so closely woven together with those associated with the second advent. A closer study of the chapter, however, reveals the fact that there are valuable lessons to be learned from the predictions of Christ concerning that city and their subsequent fulfilment, which have a bearing on the course of those who look for the second advent.

In the first place, a sign was given which would indicate that the fall of the city was imminent, so that those who watched for it and carried out their Master's instructions could escape the perils and horrors that would inevitably follow. Moreover, that sign had been foretold centuries before the beginning of the Christian era by the sure word of prophecy: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand): then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." Verses 15, 16. The disciples no doubt were vaguely aware of the existence of this prophecy, but had never seriously associated it with the downfall of the city upon which they lavished such pride and affection. Now it was brought home to them with startling definiteness. Just what the prophet meant by the "abomination of desolation" Luke makes quite clear in his gospel: "when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Luke xxi. 20.

Very naturally the question might arise, How could any one flee from the city when it was surrounded by armies? The prediction was one calculated to arouse the criticism of the unbelievers until its fulfilment made the mystery plain. According to Josephus, Cestius, the Roman general, who led the preliminary attack upon Jerusalem, four years before its actual destruction, became unaccountably dismayed in the moment of triumph, and after having taken much of the city and undermined the gate of the temple, raised the siege. "He retired from the city without any reason in the world," we are told. And

adds Josephus, after this calamity had befallen Cestius, "many of the most eminent Jews swam away from the city, as from a ship when it was going to sink." Thus the sign spoken of by Daniel over five hundred years before Christ, and pointed out by the Master Himself, was fulfilled in the sixty-sixth year of the Christian era, nearly forty years after Christ had drawn His disciples' attention to it.

The lesson is obvious. Just as the faithful Jews knew by the promised sign that the desolation of Jerusalem was nigh at hand, and prepared to meet the crisis, so the faithful followers of Christ will discern and heed the signs of the times and will be led to prepare accordingly to meet the final issue. And so surely as the prediction of the sign was followed by its actual appearance and then by the event which it heralded, so the signs given by Christ of His second coming are being fulfilled before our eyes, and must soon be followed by that glorious event.

Another lesson is taught by the Saviour's counsel to His disciples. "Pray ye," said the Master, "that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Verse 20. The Master did not wish that His disciples should be exposed in their flight to the rigours of winter. Nor did He desire that the calm of the holy Sabbath should be suddenly broken into by the appearance of the promised signal. From this it is evident that the law of God would be very precious to the faithful few who would be watching the signs of the times and preparing to flee from the desolator. According to the example of their Lord they would be rendering full honour to the holy Sabbath.

So will it be with the faithful who live to greet the returning Saviour with joy unspeakable. Responding to the call, "Fear God, and give glory to Him," they will be led to behold wondrous things out of His law, and will find in the Sabbath a delightful memorial of the creative, redeeming and sustaining power of the true and living God, Who "made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. xiv. 6, 7. They will keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Verse 12. H. F. D.

THERE is always light enough to take one step at a time.



## "This Generation Shall Not Pass."

**A**FTER foretelling the signs which would in due time show His coming near, the Saviour, speaking from the standpoint of the future, when the signs He had given should be fulfilled, said: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matt. xxiv. 34, 35.

Everything foretold by our Saviour in this line of prophecy as signs, everything that could possibly serve as a timely warning, has been fulfilled; and to those who would be in a position to recognize these things as signs, our Saviour says: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it [margin "He"] is near, even at the doors." Verses 32, 33.

It is true, other signs are mentioned; but they run into the event itself to such an extent that it is difficult to tell where the signs end and the event foreshadowed by them begins.

"There is a line by us unseen,  
That crosses every path—  
The hidden boundary between  
God's patience and His wrath."

This is true of individuals and it is true of the world as a whole. That line is the close of probation, whether of the individual or of the world. The world will cross it sometime, but the Lord has not revealed the exact time. This event steals upon a careless world as a thief in the night. The Lord did not give the signs of His coming in such a way as to enable former generations to locate the close of probation.

### NOT A MATTER OF INDIFFERENCE.

But now, we having passed nearly all those things which we know to be signs, the coming of the Lord cannot be a matter of indifference to us: for Jesus has said of the generation that would be in a position to learn "a parable of the fig tree": "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Truly—

"We are living, we are dwelling,  
In a grand and awful time;  
In an age on ages telling,  
To be living is sublime."

The writer recalls hearing, years ago, as a small boy, a number of Presby-

terian ministers discussing informally in his father's home the question of how long it would take to finish the work of giving the Gospel to all the world. All who participated in the discussion were in their prime, but not one hoped to live to see the work accomplished. But now a large part of the Christian church has adopted as its war-cry: "The Gospel to all the world in this generation." Why this change?—Ah, we have reached the generation that is to see this work finished, the generation that "shall not pass," till all these things be fulfilled.

Think of the wonderful changes that have taken place in the world within the last century. A hundred years ago, a large part of the world was closed against the Gospel. The interior of Africa was practically unknown; Japan, Korea, and China were for the most part sealed books. India was locked, bolted, and barred by caste. In Turkey, Mohammedanism barred the way. In Russia, the Greek church seemed an impassable obstacle to the giving of the Gospel to the millions in that land. In Italy, Spain, Portugal, Austria, and Belgium, Roman Catholicism sternly forbade the preaching of the Gospel, as it did also in South America and many of the islands of the sea.

But a new day has dawned; and now there is scarcely a corner anywhere into which the light of the Gospel truth has not penetrated. Bible societies are printing and circulating the Bible by millions of copies every year. All who will may buy at a price within their means; while to those who have nothing, the Bible in whole or in part is freely given. The meaning of all this is that God has set His hand to the work. The work of giving the Gospel to all the world is soon to be finished; and then comes the end, the end for which we pray.

Think, too, how modern invention has made it easy to do this work, and to do it speedily. Rapid transit by means of steam and electricity has made even the most distant nations near neighbours, until to-day there is scarcely a nook or corner in all this world which is not in close touch with every other part, if by no other means at least by wireless telegraphy. Less than seventy-five years ago, telegraphy was unknown; but more than five hundred years before Christ, an angel of

God had said to the prophet Daniel, "knowledge shall be increased." To-day we see that word fulfilled—literally, strikingly fulfilled; and this fulfilment is a most significant sign of our times, for it means that the work of giving this Gospel of the kingdom to all the world is almost accomplished. "Then shall the end come."

CALVIN P. BOLLMAN.

## Character Forming.

THE education of the Will is of far greater importance as shaping the destiny of the individual than that of intellect. Theory and doctrine, and inculcation of laws and propositions, will never of themselves lead to the uniform habit of right action. It is by doing that we learn to do, by overcoming that we learn to overcome; by obeying reason and conscience, that we learn to obey; and every right act which we cause to spring out of pure principles, whether by authority, precept, or example, will have a greater weight in the formation of character than all the theory in the world.—*Dr. J. D. Morell.*

LEAVE God to order all thy ways,  
And trust in Him whate'er betide;  
Thou'lt find Him in the evil days  
A very present help and guide.  
Who trusts in God's unchanging love  
Builds on a rock that naught can move.  
—Margaret E. Sangster.

## The Chart and the Course.

A WELL-KNOWN minister retells an illustration which he heard from the lips of Henry Ward Beecher. Beecher was crossing the Atlantic, and had an interesting talk with the mate of the vessel who showed him the charts, and explained what each detail signified. Presently, near the Newfoundland banks, they ran into dense fog, and it was feared that they had drifted out of their course. It was impossible to rest, and Beecher again sought the mate in the chartroom. He was looking now with the eyes of a man who had but one chance, and when he had a word for Beecher, it was an intensely expressive word, "We've got the course!" It is all very well to examine the Bible in a detached, critical, and interested spirit when all is going smoothly, but when one of the crises of life is upon us then we search it eagerly, intensely, as the mate searched the chart.—*Selected.*



# Our Little Folks.

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me . . . of such is the kingdom of God."

## The Folk that Laugh.

THE folk that laugh—God bless them !  
They lighten all the day.  
They bring the cheer of sunshine clear  
Though skies be brooding grey.  
They lift the load of trouble ;  
They ease the grip of toil ;  
They leave less room for grumbling gloom  
Our precious hours to spoil.

The folk that laugh—God bless them !  
What ills do they not mend !  
For them the rose in beauty glows,  
And every man is friend.  
For them the skies grow bluer,  
For them the stars are bright,  
Gloom flees away across the day  
And comfort bides at night.

—Wilbur D. Nesbit.

## Denver & Co., Ltd.—Chapter XVII.

### More Love-Gifts. Some Fragrant ; Some Tasty.

TWO minutes of intense excitement passed and then the door opened and the grumpy old gatekeeper, plainly feeling embarrassed, told the children to come in. They were admonished to keep perfectly quiet, not to talk to the patients beyond a word or two, and to be as quick as possible ; to all of which they readily agreed.

How happy they were to have attained their object and got inside ! But this was eclipsed by the joy of seeing so many pain-racked faces beam with pleasure at sight of the children with their little "love-gifts." Each wounded man received a bunch either of primroses or violets, and Ronald arranged it so that between every two bunches of primroses a bunch of violets was given, so that the men could exchange easily, should they wish to do so.

The children found it very difficult to keep their promise not to talk. It was such a change for the men to see children in the hospital that they wanted them to stay some time and chat. Eventually the head nurse said she thought it was time for the children to leave ; but it was not without many blessings, good wishes, and hopes that they would soon come back, from the men, that they took their departure. Having two bunches over, Mary sent them by one of the nurses to the matron, thanking her for allowing them the privilege which they had all appreciated and enjoyed so much.

Once more outside the hospital, the

children turned their steps towards home, supremely delighted with the success of their undertaking and full of joy at having been able to give so much pleasure to the wounded soldiers.

They were half way up the street when Richard suggested going back to see how the school looked after the fire.

"Good idea ; I'd like to see the place as well," said Ronald.

"Let's go now," added Sidney. "We have time."

"We sha'n't get burned, shall we ?" asked Violet, rather fearful of seeing any more flames like those of the morning.

"Of course not ; don't be silly," replied Richard. "The fire was out long ago."

So the five turned their steps down a side street which would make a short cut to the scene of the conflagration. Fifteen minutes brought them to the place, but there was not much to be seen. Only a portion of the building had been gutted, the firemen having succeeded in extinguishing the blaze before more damage had been done. There was certainly no danger of Violet being "burned," as the place looked soaked with water.

They stood chatting together awhile, discussing what might have happened "if—" when one of the teachers strolled up.

"When shall we be able to come back, sir ?" asked Ronald.

"A week to-day, most likely," replied the teacher.

"Didn't someone say Monday ?"

"May have ; but the Board have since decided on Wednesday."

"Has much damage been done inside ?" inquired Richard.

"Not so very much ; the main building is almost intact."

"Who got hurt when the bricks fell, please sir ?" asked Violet.

"Oh, there were seven or eight altogether, I believe."

"Were they badly hurt ?" questioned Mary.

"Not very ; just a few scratches and bruises. Of course all of them being so young they thought more of it than older children would have done."

"Were they all boys ?" asked Mary again.

"No, five boys and three girls."

Meanwhile Ronald was thinking. Presently he said : "Please sir, could you give us their names ?"

"Well, if you particularly want them, I believe I have a list in my pocket somewhere."

The teacher felt in his pockets and after a short search produced the desired paper. He handed it to Ronald and then, noticing the time, hurried away.

The children also turned and made for home once more. On the way Ronald was plied with questions as to why he wanted the list of names and what he was going to do with it. But he wouldn't say anything more than that he was "just thinking about something."

After supper the other children noticed Ronald go off with Mary and talk for a long time in undertones. Then together the two went to see mother ; finally they disclosed their idea, or part of it, to the other three.

The next morning the five youthful "missionaries" went out on a new errand of mercy. They took a few flowers with them that they still had over. Ronald led the way and his first stop was at a fruiterer's, where he purchased out of "the fund" two pounds of apples, sixteen oranges and a few nuts. The next stop was at a confectioner's, where eight pretty little cakes were bought. The third stop was at a plain-looking house down a side street. Here lived one of the wounded children. This particular one was suffering more from shock than anything, though she had a nasty cut on her hand, but when she saw her two oranges, the apple and the little cake, the look on her face changed remarkably. Two strange things happened. Her eyes opened,



and then her mouth opened too! Had not her mother restrained her there would soon have been no little cake to be seen, and doubtless the other "goodies" would have disappeared with like rapidity.

The Denver children stayed awhile and chatted pleasantly to the tiny patient and then took their leave and passed on. The next one visited proved to be rather more seriously injured, but her mother hoped she would be all right in a few days. This one was much cheered at sight of the luxuries and, like the first, wanted to eat them all at once.

Next came two young brothers, who had been standing together when the bricks fell. How their eyes and mouths opened when the children disclosed their love-gifts! Their mother afterwards declared that their improvement dated from the Denvers' visit. One of the children, a little girl, lived right on the outskirts of the town, in a funny, old-fashioned house. When the Denver children arrived she was sitting out in the back garden propped up with pillows in a big armchair, talking to her pet

retriever. Violet was rather frightened at the big black dog, but when he wagged his tail in welcome she knew it was all right. Sunshine was left at this house also, the flowers and other nice things being greatly appreciated.

So the five children went the round of the eight injured ones, carrying happiness and good cheer into every home they visited. Why, one of the little boys who had been crying on and off almost all the time since he was struck by the piece of brick suddenly

stopped in the middle of a big "weep" at sight of the two oranges and, on his mother's own word, "never cried again." I suppose she meant during that week.

At every house visited, Ronald stayed behind a moment or two and said a few words to the mother, making her still more beaming than she had been before. Towards the end of the journey Richard noticed this and wondered what

"Ask Ronald."

UNCLE ARTHUR.

(To be continued.)

## A Little Girl with Two Faces.

I HEARD a strange thing the other day. It was of a little girl who had two faces. When she is dressed up in her best clothes, when some friends are expected to come to tea, or when she is going out with her mother to call on some neighbours, she looks so bright and sweet and good that you would like to kiss her. With a nice white dress on and perhaps a blue sash, and pretty little shoes, she expects her mother's friends will say, "What a little darling!" or, "What a sweet face! Let me kiss it!" And so she always has a nice smile on her face; and when she is spoken to, she says, "Yes, ma'am," "No, ma'am," when she ought, and "Thank you," very sweetly when anything is given her.

But, do you know, when she is alone with her mother, and no company is expected, she does not look at all like the same little

girl! If she cannot have what she would like, or do just what she wishes, she will pout, and scream, and cry, and no one would ever think of kissing her then.

So, you see, this little girl has two faces. One she uses in company, and puts it on just like her best dress: and the other she wears when she is at home alone with her mother.

I think I need scarcely ask you which of these faces you like best, or which of them you would like to have.—*Selected.*



"SUNSHINE WAS LEFT AT THIS HOUSE ALSO."

it could be that Ronald told them all. He determined to find out.

"Say, Ronald, what did you tell Mrs. Tomkins just now?" he said,

"Oh, just something."

"Tell us; you might as well."

"Ask Mary."

"Mary, then, what did Ronald tell Mrs. Tomkins just now?"

"How should I know? Ask Ronald."

"What was it Ronny!"

"Ask Mary."

"Mary!"



# The Home Circle.

## To-Day's Duty To-Day.

To self be true:

Fulfil the varied duties of to-day  
With zealous spirit and with keen intent  
Ere moments flee away.

Our hopes are bright

When we behold the sun in glory rise.  
Leave not thy task unfinished—work undone—  
Till sunset decks the skies.

Life's highest aim

To live and learn—to duty give the best,  
And in the knowledge that His will is done  
Thy soul shall find her rest.

—J. W. Stone.

## I Don't Want to be First.

**W**HENEVER I open my Bible to the first five chapters of Matthew, there comes to my mind a vision of my little golden-haired girlie of four, and how she learned her first real lesson in overcoming self.

It was when the Sabbath-school lessons were beginning the book of Matthew. My husband was away from home most of the time except week ends, and my "Little Two" (daughter aged four, and Sonny Boy aged two) and I were alone much of the time at home. By way of trying to keep cheerful, I had formed the habit of repeating verses of poetry or Scripture aloud as I went about my daily work, or sat sewing or mending. In my daily study of the Sabbath-school lesson it was a simple matter to memorize the verses in the lesson, and repeat them as if I were relating the Bible story in the rôle of an eyewitness.

One day as I began to say in a conversational tone of voice, "Now, the birth of Jesus was on this wise," daughter looked up from her well-cared-for family of dollies, and said, "Now, mother, let me say it."

"Very well," I answered, "let me see if my girlie can." To my surprise she repeated not only that verse, but, with very little help, the remainder of the chapter.

And so it came about that, day after

day, at work or play, if I so much as repeated a word or two from a chapter, she would complete the verse, and sometimes quote several of the following verses. Often at table she would say, "Mother, let us say the chapter about the wise men." Or, again, "Let us say the one about John the Baptist." And always when I repeated the beginning of the verses, she would finish them.

It came to mean to her one of the most interesting of games, as well as a never-ending fountain for thought while at her play. Dozens of times she gave me her childish version of things as they appeared to her in the Bible stories, or asked me for an explanation of puzzling points.

In my own childhood, visions of never-ending punishment for small offences had produced a very warped mental picture of the Father above. My small world was often peopled with imaginary evil agencies that delighted to cause fear and wrong, and mental or physical torment. A knowledge of the advent message and its wonderful story of deathless love and divine protection revolutionized my entire life. So when I received the crown of motherhood my first thought was to shield my little daughter from any knowledge of the evil one as long as it was possible, and to keep ever before her the story of Jesus, and His tender love for children, and the ministry of heavenly angels in their behalf.

We had memorized, and several times repeated, the verses about Jesus' birth, the wise men, the flight into Egypt, the sad story of the Bethlehem babies (just Sonny Boy's age), John the Baptist, and the baptism, when, in its natural order, the temptation followed. I think we had repeated portions of chapter four for nearly a week when suddenly one day (she had been busily preparing her dollies for a long train journey) she came to me and said, "Mother, who is the devil?" I had rather expected the question, and was not wholly unprepared to answer.

Now, my first-born was quite a self-

willed, want-to-have-first-place-in-everything, little body, and I had several times been obliged to chasten her for her imperious, wilful ways with little brother. So, taking her on my lap, I said: "It is a sad story, daughter, and mother is sorry to have to tell it. But, once upon a time the devil, or Satan, was a beautiful angel up in heaven, whose name was Day-star. You know papa calls you his Starbeam because he loves you so much.

"Well, Lucifer, or Day-star, was the name his heavenly Father gave this beautiful angel. He could sing wondrous hymns of praise, and make heavenly music on a golden harp. Really, he was one of the Lord's well-loved helpers, but—and this is the sad part—he wanted to have his own way and be first in everything. He even wanted to have a higher place than Jesus. The heavenly Father tried to help him see that he would be happier if he were unselfish, and would not always want to be first. But he would not take heed to this wise counsel. He kept on in his evil, selfish ways until he could no longer be permitted to live in that beautiful home. The heavenly Father sent him away, and he could never live there again."

I got no farther; for, looking up into my face with wide, earnest eyes, she said, "I'm not going to be first any more, mother. I'm not going to be like Lucifer."

"Well, darling," I said, "of course we do not want to encourage Sonny Boy to be first all the time, but you may be first some of the time, and Sonny Boy may be first some of the time."

Ever afterward she fought her little battle with self; and while she often failed or forgot, temporarily, the moment she remembered she would say, "I don't want to be first, mother," and would generously try to give place to others.

MRS. J. C. BROWER.

AND, as the path of duty is made plain,  
May grace be given that I may walk therein  
Not like the hireling, for his selfish gain,  
With backward glances and reluctant tread,  
Making a merit of his coward dread,  
But, cheerful in the light around me thrown,  
Walking as one to pleasant service led;  
Doing God's will as if it were my own,  
Yet trusting not in mine but in His strength  
alone.  
—J. G. Whittier.

THE tree will not only lie as it falls,  
but it will fall as it leans. What is the  
inclination of my soul?—J. J. Gurney.



## A Missionary Adventure.



*"They went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."*

THE Rev. Jacob Chamberlain, an American missionary for thirty-seven years among the Telugus of India, gives an exciting story of an encounter he had with one of India's immense serpents. The account is taken from Mr. Chamberlain's book, "In the Tiger Jungle":—

"We were in the great teakwood forest, with trees towering one hundred and fifty feet above the woodman's path, up which we were wending our way to the great Godaveri River. Learning from our guide that about a mile ahead was a large village or town, I rode on in advance to find a place in which to pitch our tent.

"As I came near, I saw the elders of the city coming out of the city gates—to meet me. Passing the salutations of the day, I asked them where there was a shady place where I could pitch my tent for the day and night.

"'You need not pitch your tent,' they replied; 'here is a new thatched building just erected for a shelter for our cattle. That will be fully as comfortable as your tent, and will save you the trouble of pitching; please accept the use of that.'

"I accepted their hospitality, and as soon as my cart came up I took out my camp cot, put it in the middle of the hut, and threw myself down to rest while my servant was preparing my breakfast.

"I was lying on my back on my cot, reading my Greek Testament, which had been my daily companion from a boy. At length the passage I was reading was finished, and I let the arm that was holding the book fall.

"Then, and not until then, did I become aware that a huge serpent was coiled around one of the bamboo rafters, with some four feet of his body hanging down directly over my head,

with his eyes flashing and his tongue darting out, just above where my book had been and had concealed him. He had evidently been asleep in the roof; the putting in of my cot had awakened him. While I was reading he had let down one third of his body or more, and was looking to see what this leprous-looking white man was about, for he had probably never seen a white man before.

"His darting tongue was almost within arm's length of my face when I caught sight of him. Running to the door, I seized an iron spit some five or six feet long, with a sharp point used for roasting purposes in the jungle, and which was in the cart. Coming back and using that as a spear, I was successful at the first thrust in piercing the body of the serpent where it coiled around the rafter.

"But then I found myself in another difficulty. I caught hold of the spear to keep it from falling out and releasing the serpent; but the serpent would draw back, and with a tremendous hiss, strike at my hand that held the spear, and come suspiciously near hitting it with his tremendous extended fangs. If I should let go, the spit would fall out and the serpent would get away, and he and I could not sleep in that hut together that night, especially after he had been wounded by me. If I held on, his body might slide down the spit until he could reach my hand which might be fatal to me instead of to him.

"However, in answer to my lusty calls, my servant soon appeared with a bamboo club. Holding the spit with my left hand and taking the club in my right I administered to the serpent a headache, from which he died. As I took him down and held him up by the middle, on the spit, to the level of my shoulder, both head and tail touched the floor, showing that he was about ten feet long.

"Just as I was holding him in this position, one of the village watchmen passed the door of the hut, going into

the village, and saw what I had done. It occurred to me at once that now I should find myself in a 'bad box,' for the people revere serpents as demi-gods. They dare not kill them or harm them, and will always beg for the life of a serpent if they see anyone else killing one. They think that if you harm one of these deadly serpents, it or its kin will wage war on you and your kin and descendants until your kin are exterminated. I, a missionary, had come there to preach; how would they hear me when I had killed one of their gods?

"Knowing that the news had gone into the town to the elders, I began to prepare my line of defence, for I thought that they would soon come out to call me to account. I remembered a verse of one of their Telugu poets commending the killing of venomous reptiles, and having a copy of that poet with me, I opened my book box and took it out, but had not found the verse when I saw the chief men of the place coming out toward the hut.

"To my astonishment, they had native brass trays in their hands, with sweetmeats, coconuts, limes, and burning incense sticks on them; and as they came to the door of the hut, they prostrated themselves before me, and then presented these offerings; for they said I had rid them of their most dangerous enemy, that that serpent had been the bane of that village for several years. It had bitten and killed some of their kine, and, I think, also a child. They had made every effort to drive it away from the village by burning straw closer and closer to it to make it go farther and farther away, but it would always return. They had tried to coax it away by putting little cups, each holding half a teaspoonful of milk, every two yards or so out into the jungle; but as soon as it had drunk all the milk it wanted, it would turn round and crawl back into the village and into some house, and then the people of that house would have to vacate until it chose to leave. It had become the terror of the village.

"But now I, a stranger and foreigner, had killed it without their knowledge or consent. That was their safety; for if they had seen me doing it they would have begged for its life, lest they be taken as accomplices. Now it was dead, and they were guiltless, and it could harm them no more. Would I please accept these sweets? They had sent to the flock in the fields to have a

(Continued on page 15.)





[In this department of the paper we hope to deal, in a practical, helpful way with some of the problems that perplex the housewife to-day. Suggestions, inquiries, and useful contributions from our readers will be welcomed.]

## Hay Box Cookery.

IT is from the thrifty housewives of Norway that we get the idea of hay box cookery. In many parts of America, too, perhaps because of the difficulty in obtaining domestic help, the method is quite commonly adopted.

The scientific explanation of the utility of the hay box as a cooker is that hay is a non-conductor of heat. It is, in fact, one of the best, and when the food is put into the hay at boiling point and closely covered, the heat is retained to such an extent that it goes on cooking gently and slowly for a long time.

To make a "fireless cooker," a strong wooden box is required; a Tate's sugar box or a Quaker Oats box is good for the purpose. It should first be lined neatly with several thicknesses of newspaper, and these covered with brown paper or some old, clean, woollen material.

If a Tate's sugar case is used it is large enough to make two receptacles by placing a thin board down the middle. The division should be made at this stage. Now pack in the hay very tightly, almost filling the box, and form, when getting near the top, a nest in which the cooking utensil used will fit closely. *It is most important that the hay be packed in tightly.* Make cushions, one for each division, and stuff them with hay, to cover the food when cooking. A lid fastened to the box by hinges and a hasp and staple in front will complete the "cooker." If no lid is available, place a heavy weight of some kind on the cushion while the food is cooking. This will help in pressing the vessel closely into the hay and prevent the heat escaping as quickly as it otherwise would.

The cost of such a cooker as the one described, at present day prices, will be somewhat as follows:—

Tate's sugar case.....	1s.	0d.
½ cwt. hay.....	2s.	0d.
	3s.	0d.

Should hay be difficult to obtain, paper, which is also a non-conductor of heat, will prove a good substitute. Roll sheets of newspaper into tight balls, and pack very closely into the box, forming the nest for the saucepan as described above for the hay, and stuff the pillows with paper balls.

Any kind of saucepan or pot with a close fitting lid can be used in hay box cookery, but the best is the brown earthenware casserole, which can be bought almost anywhere at small cost.

The hay box will *not* bake or fry. It will *not* cook a suet pudding or anything that needs to be kept constantly at boiling point. But it *will* cook to perfection porridges of all kinds, rice, sago, tapioca, macaroni, lentils, dried peas, haricot beans, potatoes, fresh vegetables, dried and fresh fruits, soups and stews, and milk puddings.

The method of cooking is very simple. The food must be brought to the boil in the ordinary way, over the stove, in the vessel which is to be used in the box. A little practice soon teaches how long to cook the various kinds of food, but a safe rule for beginners to follow is to cook them for half the time they ordinarily require; then lift the pot from the stove, wrap a piece of newspaper quickly round, and while boiling plunge into the hay nest, cover with the cushion, shut down and fasten the lid, and leave till required. It cannot spoil by overcooking. A stew started in the morning, left in all day, will be good for the evening meal. Porridge cooked in the evening and left all night will be ready for breakfast. A little warming up is all that is needed. Always remember that hay box cooking is slow cooking, and allow at least twice as long for each dish as is ordinarily required. Longer is better as a rule.

The advantages of this method of cooking certainly make the hay box worthy of a trial. They are:—

1. Economy of gas. Half the gas bill at least can be saved.
2. Economy of labour, no watching or stirring being required.
3. Economy of food, as nothing burns or spoils through not being attended to.
4. Nothing can be overcooked, a great boon when a meal is unavoidably delayed.
5. No smell of cooking.
6. A person out all day can have a hot meal quickly on returning at night.
7. The children of mothers who go out to work can easily be supplied with a hot stew or soup or pudding on their return from school with no danger from fire.

The two following recipes are taken from Mrs. Annie Hawkins' little booklet "The Hay Box and Its Uses":—

### VEGETARIAN OR WARTIME STEW.

Soak overnight one cupful of lentils. In the morning slightly brown in a little nutter two or three onions, some carrot and turnip. To this add the lentils and the water in which they were soaked. Bring to the boil, add about three ounces vermicelli, a tablespoonful of soaked tapioca, two tablespoonfuls of Quaker Oats, and salt to taste. Boil for half an hour, put into box and cook about four hours.

### BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING.

Grease a mould or basin, then line it with thin slices of bread and butter or sponge cakes. Then put bread and butter alternately with currants and sugar (or if sponge cakes with jam) until the mould is full—bread and butter being at the top. Beat up an egg with a pint of milk and pour over the pudding. Cover with plate and greased paper. Let stand an hour. Plunge into boiling water, and when boiling place in box for two hours.

The following recipes have been sent us by a friend from Canada:—

### MAIZEMEAL MUFFINS.

1 pint of maizemeal, 1 pint of flour, 1 teaspoonful of salt, 2 teaspoonfuls of baking powder, 1 tablespoonful of butter, 2 eggs, 1 pint of milk. Sift together the maize semolina, flour, sugar, salt, and powder. Rub in the shortening, add eggs well beaten and milk. Muffin pans to be cold and well greased. Fill two-thirds full, and bake in hot oven for fifteen minutes.

### MAIZE GRIDDLE CAKES.

2 cups of maize semolina, 1 cup of flour, ½ teaspoonful of salt, 1 tablespoonful of treacle, 2 teaspoonfuls of baking powder, milk or milk and water enough to make a thin batter. Bake as directed for above.

### SWEET JOHNNY CAKE.

1 cup of coarse chopped suet (Nutter), 1 cup of sour milk, 1 cup of sugar, 1 teaspoonful of baking soda, pinch of salt, maize semolina enough to make a thin batter. Bake in a long pan for half an hour.

"THE lonely people of the world are usually those who, instead of going out and winning love and friendship, are standing still and waiting for love and friendship to come to them."



# The Book of Mankind.

THE heavens declare Thy glory, Lord;  
In every star Thy wisdom shines;  
But when our eyes behold Thy Word,  
We read Thy name in fairer lines.

The rolling sun, the changing light,  
And nights and days Thy power confess;  
But the blest volume Thou didst write,  
Reveals Thy justice and Thy grace.

—Isaac Watts.

OTHER books may belong to a people, an age, a stage of human development; this Book belongs to all peoples, all ages, and all stages of growth, whether of the individual or of the race—unifying them all and welding them into one vitalized and vitalizing whole. The Bible is, by way of eminence, the Book of humanity. . . .

"The world has never known a book so distinctively a people's book as the Bible has been since its origin. In this sense Christians have been from the first, above all other people who have lived in the world, the people of a Book. The Book and the people have been bound so closely together that we hardly know whether it were juster to say that where Christianity has gone, there the Bible has gone; or that where the Bible has gone, there Christianity has gone. In the first age of the church, pre-eminently, the Christian and his Book were inseparable. The Bible was not so much the Book of the church as the Book of the Christian; and from the cradle to the grave every Christian was expected to keep it in his hand and in his heart, to live in and by it.

"The writings of the Fathers are crowded with exhortations, both formal and incidental, to diligent Bible reading on the part of all. The reason given is most significant. Those who were taught by others were taught of men; those who took the Bible for their teacher were taught of God. They were 'theodidactoi,' God-taught, listening immediately to Him speaking in His Word. 'The deepest and ultimate reason why every Christian should read the Bible'—so Harnack expounds the sentiment of the first Christian ages—'lies in this—that just as every one should speak to God as often as possible, so also every one should listen to God as often as possible.' As Cyprian wrote to Donatus, 'Be assiduous in both prayer and reading; in the one you speak to God, in the other God speaks to you.'

"No doubt, as it was possible then so it is now to honour the Bible in appearance rather than in fact. As we may find to-day great 'family Bibles' encumbering the 'parlour tables' of households little interested in their contents, so we read of sumptuous Bibles then, written in gold letters on purple vellum, and glittering with gems, which were kept for show rather than for use. But this very practice among the wealthy is a speaking evidence of the value universally placed upon the Book. It was the family Book above every other. Husbands and wives read it daily together, and Tertullian knows no stronger

argument against mixed marriages than that in their case this cherished pleasure must be foregone."—Warfield.

## A Missionary Adventure.

(Continued from page 13.)

fat sheep brought me as an offering and would I please accept the sheep? Now whatever I had to say they would listen to me gladly, for was not I their deliverer? . . . The serpent was not a cobra—cobras never grow so large—but it was said to be equally venomous.

"When the heat of the day was over, we all went into the town to preach. At the gate was the village crier with his tom-tom, or small drum; and as soon as we appeared, he went through all the streets beating the tom-tom and crying, 'Come, all ye people; come and hear what the serpent destroyer has to say to us.' A royal audience we had, while we spoke to them of the 'old serpent' and his deeds, and Christ, Who bruised the serpent's head. The killing of the serpent, instead of proving a bar, had opened a door of access to the Gospel."

## Would You Understand the Principles of The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan

as revealed in the history of the  
church during the past 2,000 years?

Would you know how long the struggle will continue and what will be the end of this earth with all its evil forces?

Would you know how to settle for ever the conflict between good and evil in your own heart and rejoice in the glorious victory over sin and darkness and ultimate death?

"The Great Controversy" will tell you these things and many others which vitally concern EVERYONE to-day, for there are no neutrals in this conflict. Whole chapters in this valuable book are devoted to warnings of present-day deceptions and calamities which if heeded will bring blessing and light and deliverance.

Ask your PRESENT TRUTH agent for further particulars of this book or write to  
**INTERNATIONAL TRACT SOCIETY, LTD.,**  
Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts.



## The Present Truth.

Price two-pence. Published fortnightly on Thursday, by the International Tract Society, Ltd., at Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts.

EDITOR: W. T. BARTLETT.  
ASS'T EDITOR: H. F. DE'ATH.

Agents deliver the paper fortnightly in most districts. Where we have no representative, the paper is sent post free for 4s. 4d. per annum. Make orders and cheques payable to The International Tract Society, Ltd., Stanborough Park, Watford, Herts. Orders for less than six months not received.

THE last struggle between the forces of light and darkness will be fought over the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Rev. xii. 17; xiv. 12 When that final phase of the long warfare is reached, only a remnant will be found still standing firmly on the side of truth.

Early in the Christian era a developing apostasy set aside an important precept in the Divine law, and put in its place a command of the Church; the Sabbath of the Lord was displaced in favour of the first day of the week. For many centuries the Jewish people stood almost alone as witnesses to the fact that the seventh day was still the Sabbath of God's appointment, the day on which He rested, and which He for ever blessed and hallowed. Gen. ii. 1-3. There were always a few Christians who honoured the Bible Sabbath, but it was not until the last century that a vigorous effort began to be put forth to recall Christians to the one Sabbath that had divine authority behind it.

As this issue comes more and more to the front, appealing to the conscience of all Christians, the Jews are more and more ceasing to bear their witness to the Bible Sabbath, and are even contemplating its definite abandonment. Especially in the United States do they feel the difficulty of keeping their people loyal to the law of God in view of the many and strong temptations to put the pursuit of earthly profit foremost. One of their periodicals, the "Reform Advocate," writes:

"We observe the decline of the Sabbath with a sharp pain in our hearts. How can Judaism live and thrive if the Sabbath is dead? How can we keep inviolate the sanctity of the home without the sanctifying spirit of that day? And, finally, how can we hope to evolve an effective system of Jewish education before having solved the problem of a Sabbath observance? And herein is found the real tragedy of our spiritual existence."

What the Jewish people really need if they are to keep the commandments of God is the faith of Jesus. Lacking this, they lack strength to stand against the allurements of the world.

Therefore the "Reform Advocate"

counsels the weaker course of surrender to the influences that are too strong for Judaism. It says:—

"What shall be done? As we see it, there is but one way of solving the problem. Sunday is the solution. To effect the change is a tremendous task. It cannot be achieved in one decade, not even in a generation. But if we are to have once more a day of rest, it must come through a Sunday Sabbath. Of course, there will be a storm of opposition. A million voices will cry out against such a change. It will be denounced as heartless and godless. But intrenched in the conviction that it is imperative to destroy a law of the Torah when it serves a higher divine purpose, we must work and work to that end. We must begin to sow the seed of the new Sabbath to-day so that coming generations will enjoy the spiritual fruits thereof.

"Instead of a children's service on Saturday morning, we should have for them impressive divine services on Sunday morning. We should stress in the Sunday-school the importance, not of the Sabbath, but of a day of rest, making plain to them the need of the change from Saturday to Sunday. By all possible means we must seek to instil in their pliant and receptive hearts a sentiment of reverence for the day, weaving around it by degrees the halo that surrounded the Sabbath, until, in the course of time, it shall have for them all the beauty and majesty of holiness.

"Unless we honestly face the facts and bravely pursue this wiser policy, we may as well resign ourselves to the inevitable sad fate that awaits the ancient faith. Our Sabbathless Judaism necessarily breeds apathy and encourages desertion from its fold."

But even though a Judaism that has forsaken its own standards should unite with an unfaithful Christian Church in an endeavour to enforce the observance of Sunday, that confederation will not for one moment weaken the authority of the fourth commandment, as God Himself spoke and wrote it. The Bible Sabbath derives nothing from the fact that it is the Sabbath of the Jewish people; its claims upon the true Christian who belongs to the primitive apostolic school, lie in the fact that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." And though the whole world should agree to ignore the commandment of God, and to set up the Sunday as a sacred day, the doom of every such attempt was pronounced by the Saviour when He said: "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Matt. xv. 13.

THE Free Churches, notwithstanding the labours of a numerous and well-trained ministry, are not holding their own in point of membership. For several years their numerical strength has been declining. Last year in the Wesleyan Methodist Church there was a fall of 3,870 in the full members, and

a drop of 20,396 in Sunday School scholars.

There is a lack of power somewhere and the real trouble is probably indicated in an appeal for more Bible reading which the Rev. E. H. Titchmarsh, M.A., of Sheffield, lately made. It is his duty to examine candidates for the Congregational ministry, and speaking of a recent batch he remarked that there was nothing striking about the candidates, except their ignorance of the Bible; that was colossal.

WHEN the clearest thinkers express their convictions as to how the world has got into its present difficulty, and how only it can get out, they always put the situation in practically the same terms as the Gospel does. General Smuts recently said: "What we had to create was not merely agreements between nations, but a change in the hearts of men, without which all those agreements and institutions would be 'mere scraps of paper.'"

THE Hostel for blinded Soldiers and Sailors, carried on at St. Dunstan's, Regent's Park, reports 354 inmates, and 224 men who have passed out trained in one or more occupations. These include massage, shorthand-writing, boot-repairing, joinery, poultry-farming and market-gardening. Every man who passes the writing test is given a typewriter as his own. "Massage," says the Report, "is the one occupation in which, if properly instructed, the blind man can more than hold his own with the sighted. Men acquire a knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and pathology at St. Dunstan's itself, and then pass on to the Massage School of The National Institute for the Blind, a thoroughly up-to-date and well-equipped establishment. The men have to pass the examinations of the Incorporated Society of Trained Masseurs, and so far not one man has failed. After passing the stiff examinations necessary, the Blinded Soldier masseurs have been placed at Military Hospitals and Command Depôts. The satisfaction which they have given is evinced by the fact that from every establishment at which one of these men is engaged has come the demand for more."

WE acknowledge with thanks the receipt of £1 from H.M.B.C. and 10/- from "Birmingham," both the Lord's tithe.