

The Signs of the Times.

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

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The Signs of the Times

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The New Year.

Why hail we thus each new-born year,
With voice of joy and scenes of mirth?
What room for gay and festive cheer,
While woe and darkness span the earth?
While sin and suffering, pain and death, still throw
Their baleful shadows over all below?

Earth trembles at the cannon's roar,
War's murderous visage scours the plain,
Its fairest spots are drenched with gore,
Its fruitful fields are pilled with slain.
And what are all these slow revolving years,
But funeral pageants of distress and tears?

Contagious spread their wings of pall,
Fierce tempests rage with blasting breath,
And earthquake throes, engulfing all,
Make short and sure the way to death
No peace, no safety, no enduring cheer,
To him who builds his hopes and treasures here.

Yet glad we hail each New Year's morn;
For from the great high throne of heaven
A royal fiat forth has gone,
A glorious word to earth is given:
Behold, says he who looks creation through,
Where sin has marred my works, I make anew.

New earth to smile before his face,
New heaven in crystal beauty dressed,
New years to run a guiltless race,
New joys for each immortal breast,
New flowers upspringing from the sinless sod,
New waters sparkling from the throne of God.

New bodies for these feeble forms,
New life from e'en the mouldering tomb,
New skies unrent by raging storms,
New beauty, new unfading bloom,
New scenes the eternal era to begin,
Of peace for war, of righteousness for sin.

Speed then away O tardy years!
Fly quickly hours that intervene!
Groaning we wait the time when tears
Shall be but things that once have been.
Dawn, thou blest morn, so long in promise given,
The glorious glad New Year of God and heaven.

U. S.

General Articles.

NOAH'S TIME AND OURS.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

THE character of the people before the flood as given by the unerring pen of inspiration is explicit. And God said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man for that he also is flesh. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." Here the faithful historian with an inspired pen draws the portrait of Noah's day, when we are told that the heart of man was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

The nature of man unrenewed by grace is not changed in our day from what it was in Noah's time. Christ has said a similar state of things would be prior to his second coming as existed before the flood. In the days of Noah men followed the imagination of their own hearts, and the result was unrestrained crime and wickedness. The same state of things will exist in this age of the world. But will not some of the learned, the honored of the world, accept the message of warning in these last days? Will the world

as a majority perish in the general impending ruin? How was it in Noah's day? as it was then Christ has said it should be. Of that vast population there was only eight persons who believed the message of Noah and obeyed God's word. In the world to-day the majority choose the broad road to death because the way of life is too narrow for them to walk in with their dishonesty, avarice, pride and iniquity. Now, as in the days of Noah, the overwhelming majority are opposed to the saving truth and are fascinated with lying fables.

Many now are convicted, and God's Spirit is striving with them, but they will not heed the invitations of mercy. Men who make high profession of wisdom and of godliness transgress the law of God without compunctions of conscience. One marked feature in Noah's day was the intense worldliness of the inhabitants. They were eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, not that these things were of themselves sins, but they were, although lawful in themselves, carried to a high degree of intemperance. The appetite was indulged at the expense of health and reason. This constant indulgence of their sinful desires corrupted them and defiled the earth under them. The same evils intensified exist in our world to-day. Men are blind to reason and the result of indulging perverted appetite. The world is the god of nine-tenths of professed Christians. The indulgence of appetite is carried to the greatest excess. Tobacco, wine, liquor and opium are added to the list of a feverish stimulating diet.

Professed followers of Christ are to-day eating and drinking with the drunken while their names stand in honored church records. The gratification of perverted appetite leads directly to the indulgence of unholy passions. Many feel under no moral obligation to curb the appetite or the base passions. They are slaves to perverted appetite. They are not living for the future life. They are rushing on as did the inhabitants of the world in Noah's day, living for this present existing world regardless that their deeds of the present every day life casts its shadow forward in the future, and the retribution will be in accordance with their works. They are as disobedient to-day in reference to God's laws as they were in Noah's time. While in the world they will not keep separate from its pollutions but will be of the world, notwithstanding God has expressly forbidden this union with the world.

As in Noah's day, philosophers and men of science see nature's laws but cannot carry their wisdom higher and see beyond these laws nature's Lawgiver. Wise worldly men seek to practically reason out or theorize in regard to nature without taking the God of nature into the account. Many will resist God's warnings and array themselves against his law because their sinful life cannot harmonize with the pure principles of God's moral government. They consider it too hard work to reform their lives, therefore they endeavor to make the law of God meet their low standard of morals. It was God's purpose in sending Noah to warn the world that the people should see their sins and awaken to a sense of their crimes and great wickedness and be alarmed and fear and repent that God might pardon and save them.

As the time of Christ's second appearing draws near, the Lord sends his servants with a warning message to the world to prepare for that great event. As the world have been living in transgression of the law of God, in mercy he sends a message of warning to arouse their attention and hold before them the law of God as a mirror into which they can look and discover the defects in their moral character. If they will at once make earnest efforts to remedy these defects, by repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, they will be pardoned through the merits of his blood, for this is the only hope of the transgressor of the law of God. But as in the days of Noah, there is with the majority a total disbelief

of the testimony God has in mercy sent to warn the world of her coming destruction.

When Noah proclaimed the solemn message, yet an hundred and twenty years the judgments of God in a flood of water should destroy the world and its inhabitants, men would not receive it, so it is at the present time. Those who warn the transgressors of law to repent and turn to their allegiance for the Lawgiver is coming to punish the disobedient, will plead and entreat and warn the majority in vain. Peter describes the attitude of the world in reference to the last message: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

The men of Noah's time, in their philosophy and worldly wisdom, thought God could not destroy the world with a flood, for the waters of the ocean could not be sufficient for this. But God made the philosophy, and science of men foolishness when the time had fully come to execute his word. The inspired pen describes the earth as standing out of the water and in the water. God had his weapons concealed in the bowels of the earth to compass her destruction. And when the great men and the wise men had reasoned before the world of the impossibility of its destruction by water, and the fears of the people were quieted, and all regarded Noah's prophecy as the veriest delusion, and looked upon Noah as a crazy fanatic, God's time had come. He hid Noah and his family in the ark, and the rain began to descend, slowly at first; the jeers and scoffings did not cease for a time, but soon the waters from heaven united with the waters of the great deep; the waters under the earth burst through the earth's surface, and the windows of heaven were opened, and man with all his philosophy and so-called science, finds that he had not been able in his worldly wisdom to comprehend God. He found too late that his wisdom was foolishness; that the Lawgiver is greater than the laws of nature. The hand of omnipotence is at no loss for ways and means to accomplish his purposes. He could reach into the bowels of the earth and call forth his weapons, waters there concealed, to aid in the destruction of the corrupt inhabitants of the old world. But let us all bear in mind that those who perished in that awful judgment had an offer of escape.

The faithful Noah had spoken to them the words of God, assuring them if they would repent of their sins and believe the testimony of warning they might find a shelter in the ark and be saved from the destructive storm that was soon coming. As it was in the days of Noah so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. Water will never destroy the earth again, but the weapons of God are concealed in the bowels of the earth which he will draw forth to unite with the fire from heaven to accomplish his purpose in the destruction of all those who would not receive the message of warning and purify their souls in obeying the truth and being obedient to the laws of God. The voice of warning is now being heard inviting the people to escape and find refuge, not in the ark but in Jesus Christ. How will the

warning be treated? Christ tells us just as it was received in the days of Noah. Thousands will deride the message of mercy and salvation, and turn aside, one to his merchandise, another to his farm, and give little or no attention to these things. They will be occupied with eating, drinking, and dressing, planting and building as in the days of Noah, as though no sound of alarm had ever saluted their ears.

The same reasoning will be heard to-day from worldly-wise men, from the unfaithful watchmen in the pulpits, "My Lord delayeth his coming, all things remain as they were from the beginning. You have no need to be alarmed, there is to be a thousand years of temporal millennium before Christ will come. All the world will be converted. Peace, peace; you should pay no regard to these fanatics, who are only alarmists." The world generally will despise prophecy and abuse those who speak to them the words of God, rebuking their sins and calling them to repentance. Timothy writes: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. What a picture is here drawn by the apostle in regard to the days, just prior to the coming of the Son of man." The millennial glory that is predicted by the false shepherds of to-day does not harmonize with the words of the inspired apostle. The question is asked, When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?

The deceived shepherds, deceiving their flocks in their turn, are the ones whose voices are heard prophesying the conversion of the world crying peace, and safety. The inspired apostle assures us we may look for wickedness to be continually increasing as the end approaches. The description given by Timothy of the sins to be found among those who have a form of godliness is sufficient to place the students of the Bible on their guard that they be not deceived in regard to the true state of things in our world by the syren songs of the sleepy shepherds crying peace and safety when destruction is just ready to burst upon the world. While Satan is working to quiet the fears and consciences of men, he is making his last master stroke to retain his power over a world which he sees is about to pass from his grasp—He has come down in great power working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. His lying wonders will deceive many.

Philosophers and men of science will endeavor by their reasoning to show that the world cannot be destroyed by fire. They will plead that it is inconsistent with the laws of nature. But the God of nature, the maker and controller of nature, can use the works of his own hands to serve his purpose. Those who would be loyal to the God of heaven will not allow that interpretation of prophecy which will do away the force of the lesson God designed the prophecy should convey. As the cotemporaries of Noah laughed to scorn that which they termed fear and superstition in the preacher of righteousness, so will the solemn messages of warning be ridiculed in our day.

Success.—Every man must patiently abide his time. He must wait, not in idleness, not in useless pastime, not in querulous dejection, but in constantly, steadily filling and accomplishing his task, that when the occasion comes he may be equal to it. The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well, without a thought of fame. If it comes at all, it will come because it is deserved, not because it is sought after. It is a very indiscreet and troublesome ambition which cares so much about what the world says of us; to be always anxious about the effect of what we do or say; to be always shouting to hear the echo of our own voices.

LIFE SKETCHES.

CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY, EARLY LIFE AND CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

I WAS born in Palmyra, Somerset county, Maine, August 4, 1821. Bloomfield, Maine, which now forms a part of Skowhegan, was the birthplace of my father, Deacon John White. At the age of twenty-one he commenced life in the new township of Palmyra. At that time there were but twenty acres of trees felled on his land. The old farm is situated on the west side of a body of water which is called, as seen upon the large map of Somerset county, "White's Pond." On this farm my father lived and labored fifty-one years. He spent one year and a half in Ohio, and twelve years at Battle Creek, Michigan, where he died July 5, 1871.

My father descended from one of the Pilgrims who came to America in the ship *May Flower*, and landed upon Plymouth Rock, December, 1620. On board that ship was the father of Perigrine White, who wore a pair of silver knee-buckles, such as may be seen in the picture of the venerable signers of the Declaration of Independence.

The knee-buckles worn by this man were afterward given to his son, Perigrine White, who was born on the passage to this country, with the request that they should be handed down in this line of the White family to the eldest son of each successive generation, whose name should be called John. My father had those buckles thirty years. They were as familiar to me in my boyhood days as the buttons upon my coat. He gave them to my brother John, a Methodist minister in Ohio, who has passed them down to his son, Prof. John White of Harvard College. When visiting the Centennial Exhibition I had the pleasure of seeing in the New England Log Cabin what was said to be the veritable cradle in which the infant Perigrine was rocked. Also in the Gallery of Art there was a painting representing the landing of the pilgrims, and the infant Perigrine is sleeping in his mother's arms.

My father possessed from his youth great physical strength, and activity of body and mind. With his own hands he cleared the heavy timber from his land. This revealed stones in the soil, which his own hands removed, and placed into stone fence, to prepare the way for the plow. He toiled on for more than half a century, till the rock-bound soil was literally worn out, and much of the old farm lost its power to produce crops. At the age of seventy-four he left it and sought rest in the more congenial climate of the West.

His religious experience, of more than sixty years, was marked with firmness and zeal, and yet with freedom from that bigotry which prevents investigation and advancement, and shuts out love for all who seek to worship God in spirit and in truth.

At the age of twenty-one he was sprinkled, and joined the Congregational church, but never felt satisfied that in being sprinkled he had received Christian baptism. Several years later, a Baptist minister came into that new part of the State and taught immersion. My father was immersed and was a Baptist deacon ten years. Still later he embraced the views held by the Christian denomination, which were more liberal and scriptural than those of the Calvinistic Baptists of those days, and communed with that people. The Baptists called a special meeting. The minister and many of the church members were present. The minister invited several to open the meeting with prayer, but each in his turn wished to be excused. He waited. Finally, my father opened the meeting. They then excluded him for communing with the Christians. The minister made an effort to have some one close the meeting. No one moved. My father closed their meeting with prayer, and left them with feelings of love and tenderness. He soon joined the Christian church, and served them as deacon nearly forty years. During this entire period he was present at every conference meeting held by the church, excepting one, which, according to their custom, was held on Saturday afternoon of every fourth week.

As early as 1842 my father read with deep interest the lectures of William Miller upon the second coming of Christ. He cherished faith in the doctrine of the soon personal appearing of Christ to the time of his decease. He embraced the Sabbath of the Bible in 1860, and observed it while he lived.

My mother was a granddaughter of Dr. Samuel Shepard, one of the first and most eminent Baptist ministers of New England. She possessed great firmness of constitution, a good mind, and a most amiable disposition. Her entire religious experience, for more than sixty years, has been marked with a meek and quiet spirit, devotion to the cause of Christ, and a consistent walk and godly conversation.

My venerable parents reached the good old age of more than fourscore years, and kept house alone when father was eighty-five years of age and mother was eighty-one. At Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek, Michigan, are two graves at which are erected

two marble slabs. On one is chiseled "Dea. John White, was born April 12, 1785, Died July 5, 1871, aged 86 years." On the other, "Mrs. Dea. John White, was born February 14, 1788, Died January 1, 1871, aged 82 years." Also that remarkable passage of Paul to the church at Thessalonica is divided, the first part is engraved at my venerable father's head, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." At my beloved mother's head the concluding portion is given, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

In my father's family I stood in the center of nine children, four above me and four below me. But this family chain is now much worn, and nearly half its links are broken. The four above me in years, all live. All below me sleep. Time, toil and care have made their unmistakable impress on the remaining five.

My remaining brothers are both ministers, one of the M. E. Church, of Ohio, the other of the regular Baptist, of Vermont. Two sisters live in Maine. One brother is supposed to have lost his life by the Indians, in returning from California. Another sleeps beside a sister in Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, N. Y., while another brother, who died at the age of three years, rests in the old burying-ground in Palmyra, Maine.

My parents say I was an extremely feeble child. And, what added greatly to my difficulties, and cut off their hopes of my life, when less than three years old, I had what the doctors called worm fever, resulting in fits, which turned my eyes and nearly destroyed my sight. I am reported to have been extremely cross-eyed—not naturally, but from affection of the nerves—a feeble, nervous, partially-blind boy. These are sufficient reasons why I could not enjoy the common advantages of school. And not until I was sixteen years old, when my health and strength greatly improved, and my eyes became quite natural, could I read a single verse in the Testament without resting my eyes. I felt keenly the fact that I was behind my school-mates in education. And with the poor advantages of those times I could do but little toward making up the almost total loss of ten years. I grew rapidly, and at eighteen was ahead of my years in size and strength. This added to my embarrassment as I entered the Academy at St. Albans, Me., at the age of nineteen. I could not then work a simple problem in singlerule of three, and I could not tell a verb from an adverb or an adjective, and was deficient in the other common branches. My friends advised me to turn my attention to farming, and not think of seeking for an education. But I could not take their advice.

At the close of the term of twelve weeks, I received from the preceptor, C. F. Allen, a certificate of my qualifications to teach the common branches, and the winter following taught school. This required close study eighteen hours of each twenty-four. A victory was gained. Much of my time previous to this I had viewed myself as nearly worthless in the world, and regretted my existence. But now I was beginning to hope that I had powers to become a man. No privation nor hardship formed an obstacle in my way. My father gave me my time at nineteen, and a suit of clothes. All I asked of my parents in addition to this was three dollars to pay my tuition, and six days' rations of bread to take with me each Monday morning for three months as I should walk five miles to the school.

At the close of my first term of school-teaching I again attended school at St. Albans five weeks, then shouldered my pack and walked to the Penobscot river, forty miles, to offer myself as a raw hand in a saw mill. In the mill I cut my ankle, which resulted in permanent weakness and occasional painful lameness in my left foot. For twenty-six years I was unable to bear my weight upon my left heel.

At the end of four months I returned home. I had lost much time in consequence of the severe wound in my ankle joint, and after paying my board during the time lost, I had but thirty dollars and a scanty amount of worn clothing. In order to be qualified to teach a school where I could get first-class wages, it was necessary for me to attend school. I therefore immediately packed up my books and humble apparel for the school at Reedfield, Me., then favorably known as being under the control and support of the Episcopal Methodists. During that term my object was to thoroughly qualify myself to teach the common branches. Besides these, I took up Natural Philosophy, Algebra, and Latin. At the close of that term I had conquered all the Arithmetics within my reach, was regarded as a good grammarian, was prepared to teach penmanship, and was told by my preceptor that I could fit for college in one year.

My thirst for education increased, and my plans were laid to take a college course and pay my way, if labor, economy, and study would accomplish it. I had but little else to thank but God and my own energies for what advancement I had made. At Reedfield I wore old clothes, while my class-mates wore new, and lived three months on corn-meal pud-

ding prepared by myself, and a few raw apples, while they enjoyed the conveniences and luxuries of the boarding house.

With the close of this term, also closed my school studies. I have attended high school, in all, twenty-nine weeks, and the entire cost of tuition, books, and board, has not exceeded fifty dollars. My apology for being so definite in this part of my narrative, is a desire to help those young men who wish to obtain an education while suffering under the unfriendly influences of poverty and pride. A poor boy may obtain an education by calling to his aid industry, economy, and application to his books. Such an one will prize his education, and be likely to make a good use of it. While the young man who looks to his father's purse, puts on fine clothes, spends much of his time in fashionable calls, and acts the part of the spendthrift, will not get a thorough education, and will probably make a poor use of what he does obtain.

The following winter, covering a part of 1840 and 1841, I taught a large school, and also gave lessons in penmanship in two districts. And with my winter's earnings in my pocket, I returned home with a firm purpose to pursue my studies.

At the age of fifteen I was baptized, and united with the Christian church. But at the age of twenty I had buried myself in the spirit of study and school-teaching, and had lain down the cross. I had never descended to the common sin of profanity, and had not used tobacco, tea and coffee, nor had I ever raised a glass of spirituous liquor to my lips. Yet I loved this world more than I loved Christ and the next, and was worshipping education instead of the God of Heaven. In this state of mind I returned home from my second and last school, when my mother said to me: "James, Bro. Oakes of Boston has been lecturing at our meeting-house on the second coming of Christ about the year 1843, and many believe the doctrine, and there has followed these lectures a good reformation in which most of your mates have experienced religion."

I had regarded what was commonly called Millerism as wild fanaticism, and this impression was confirmed by hearing one James Hall of Maine speak upon the subject at the house of worship at Palmyra. But now that my mother, in whose judgment and piety I had reason to confide, spoke to me upon the subject in words of earnestness, candor and solemnity, I was shocked and distressed. In spite of me, conviction would fasten upon my mind that these things might be so. But, then, how could I have it so? I was unprepared, and my plans for this life were made. The conversation continued:—

"But, mother, this preacher Oakes, of whom you speak, professes to know more than the Lord and his angels, in teaching the time of the second advent. Christ himself has said, 'But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven; neither the Son, but the Father.' He is certainly wise above that which is written."

My good mother replied, "'As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.' God gave the time to Noah. The Bible says, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.' Gen. 6: 3. Noah had this time given him in which to build the ark and warn the world. And his message, based upon the word of the Lord that a flood of water would destroy man and beast from off the face of the earth at the close of the one hundred and twenty years, condemned the world."

"Jesus also says in this connection, that there shall be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and adds, 'When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door.'"

I then appealed to Paul. "The apostle has said, 'For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.' I Thess. 5: 2. This language is very plain, and shows that as the thief in the stillness of the night quietly seeks his plunder, without giving notice, so Christ will come when least expected, hence this idea of warning the world of his soon coming is a mistake."

"But, James, of whom is the apostle in this verse speaking? Not of Christians, but of the ungodly. They will not receive the warning. They will not be looking for Christ. They will be buried up in the spirit of this world. They will be saying, Peace and safety, and they will be suddenly and unexpectedly destroyed. Not so with those who love Jesus and his appearing. They will receive the warning. They will be looking for, waiting for, and loving the appearance of the dear Saviour, and that day will not come upon them as a thief. Notice with care the two classes mentioned. One is the ungodly. The other is the brethren. The day of the Lord will come on one class as a thief; but not so with the other. 'For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.'"

My good mother was ready to calmly and pleasantly meet all my objections, and I was now dis-

posed to view the subject as worthy of my attention. And when in the house of God I heard my school-mates speak of the love of Christ, and the glory of his appearing, I was deeply impressed that the hand of God was in the Advent doctrine.

As I returned to the Lord, it was with strong convictions that I should renounce my worldly plans and give myself to the work of warning the people to prepare for the day of God. I had loved books generally; but in my backslidden state had neither time nor taste for the study of the sacred Scriptures, hence was ignorant of the prophecies. I had, however, some knowledge of the Bible history of man, and had the idea that the race in six thousand years had depreciated physically, and, consequently, mentally. The subject came before my mind in this form: Man once lived nearly one thousand years. In length of days he has dwindled to seventy. In a few centuries, should time continue, with the same results upon the lifetime of man, the race would cease to exist. I had renounced the doctrine of the conversion of the world, and the temporal millennium, in which the soil and man were to be gradually restored to their Eden state, as taught me by my father. I therefore saw the necessity, in the very nature of things, for some great change, and the second coming of Christ seemed to be the event which would most probably bring about the change in man, and in the earth, to remove the curse and its results, and restore all to its Eden perfection and glory.

My mind turned to the young people of the school I had just left. In that school of fifty scholars, twenty were near my own age, several were older. My school was a happy one. I loved my scholars, and this love was mutual. As we parted, at the close of the last day of school, I said to them, "I am engaged to teach this school next winter, and should I fulfill this engagement, I will not ask one of you to obey my orders better than you have this term." As I found comfort in prayer, I began to pray for my scholars, and would sometimes wake myself in the night praying vocally for them. A strong impression came upon me, as if a voice said, Visit your scholars from house to house and pray with them. I could not conceive of a heavier cross than this. I prayed to be excused, that I might pursue my studies; but no relief came. I prayed for clearer evidence, and the same impression seemed to say, Visit your scholars.

In this state of mind I went into my father's field, hoping that I could work off the feelings under which I suffered. But they followed me, and increased. I went to the grove to pray for relief. None came. But the impression, Visit your scholars, was still more distinct. My spirit rose in rebellion against God, and I recklessly said, I will not go. These words were accompanied with a firm stamp of the foot upon the ground, and in five minutes I was at the house, packing my books and clothes for Newport Academy. That afternoon I rode to the place with Elder Bridges, who talked to me all the way upon the subject of preaching, greatly to my discomfort.

The next morning I secured a boarding place, and took my position in several classes in the school, and commenced study with a will to drive off my convictions. But in this I did not succeed. I became distressed and agitated. After spending several hours over my books, I tried to call to mind what I had been studying. This I could not do. My mental confusion was complete. The Spirit of God had followed me into the school-room in mercy, notwithstanding my rebellion, and I could find no rest there. Finally I resolved that I would do my duty, and immediately went directly from the door of that school-room, on foot, to the town of Troy, the place of my last school. I had gone but a few rods on my way, when sweet peace from God flowed into my mind, and Heaven seemed to shine around me. I raised my hands and praised God with the voice of triumph.

With a light heart and cheerful step I walked on till sundown, when I came to a humble cottage which attracted my especial attention. I was strongly impressed to call, but had no reason for so doing, as it was but a few miles to the school district where I should find a hearty welcome. I decided to go past this house, as I did not wish to find myself in the awkward position of calling upon strangers without some good reason. But the impression to call increased, and the excuse to ask for a drink of water occurred to me, and I stepped to the door and called for water. A man in the noon of life waited upon me, then kindly said, "walk in." I saw that he had been weeping. In one hand he held the Bible. When I had taken the chair he offered me, this sad stranger addressed me in a most mournful manner, as follows: "I am in trouble. I am in deep affliction. To-day I have buried my dear son, and I have not the grace of God to sustain me. I am not a Christian, and my burden seems greater than I can bear. Will you please stop all night with me?"

He wept bitterly. Why he should so directly open his afflicted mind to a young stranger, has ever been to me a mystery. I could not refuse his invi-

tation, and concluded to stop for the night. I told him my brief experience, and pointed him to Christ, who says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." We bowed in prayer, and my new friend seemed relieved. Then we sought rest in sleep. In the morning I assisted him in erecting the family altar, and went on my way. I have neither seen nor heard from him since.

J. W.

(To be continued.)

THE BIBLICAL INSTITUTE.

HELD IN OAKLAND, CAL., APRIL 1-17, 1877.

LESSON NINETEEN.

THE SEVEN SEALS.

THE seals are introduced to our notice in the 4th, 5th, and 6th chapters of Revelation. The scenes presented under these seals are brought to view in Rev. 6, and the first verse of Rev. 8. They evidently cover events with which the church is connected from the opening of this dispensation to the coming of Christ.

While the seven churches present the internal history of the church, the seven seals bring to view the great events of its external history.

The first seal, presenting a white horse as described in the second verse of chapter 6, with a rider who went forth with a bow and a crown conquering and to conquer, represents the gospel in its first introduction. The whiteness of the horse denoting the purity of the church; and the success of the rider, the marvelous conquests of the gospel.

The second seal introduces a red horse; and under this seal peace is taken from the earth and events of strife and confusion are introduced, represented by a great sword in the hands of him who sat on this horse. This seal is supposed to cover the time from the days of the apostles, at about the close of the first century, to the days of Constantine the Great. In his day the church had so far apostatized that peace was taken from the earth and religious strife became so intense, that, as Mosheim says, there was continual war.

The third seal brings to view a black horse and he that sat upon him had a pair of balances in his hand. Then a voice was heard saying, "A measure of wheat for a penny and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." The color of this horse, just the opposite of that of the first horse, denotes the terrible apostasy both in doctrine and practice which had taken place in the church. The reference to the balances, the wheat and the barley, sets forth the worldly spirit which had taken full possession of the professed church. The period covered by this seal was from the time of Constantine A. D. 323 to the setting up of the papacy A. D. 538. This was a period of superstition, of darkness and error, during which the principles of the great papal apostasy were rapidly developed.

The fourth seal introduces a scene stranger still. It was a pale horse and the name of his rider was death, and hell (*hades*, the grave) followed with him. "And they had power to kill with sword and with hunger and with death and beasts of the earth." The preceding seal having brought us to the commencement of the papal supremacy, this seal naturally covers that period of its history during which it had in its hands the power of persecution. This was restrained by the Great Reformation of the 16th century, as we shall see under the following seal.

The fifth seal brings to view a scene which we will present in the language of the scripture itself: "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

This passage is supposed to furnish strong proof in behalf of the conscious existence of disembodied souls. But a little thought will show some insuperable objections to this view. These souls are under the altar; and the altar is the altar of sacrifice; for it is where they were slain; but there is no such altar in Heaven. They cried that their blood might be avenged; but the disembodied immortal soul has no blood. If they were in Heaven according to the popular view, they could look over into the vault of hell and behold their persecutors writhing in its inextinguishable flames; for such is their view of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Luke 16:19-31. How then could they cry for vengeance upon those who had slain

them? Was it not enough to behold them in the flames of hell there to be punished through all eternity?

In view of these difficulties both Adam Clarke and Dr. Barnes give up the idea that this is a literal representation. Clarke says: "The altar was upon the earth," and Barnes says that we are not to suppose that such a scene literally occurred, but that justice cried to God for vengeance upon those who had slain the martyrs as really as if they cried themselves.

But how could they cry, if they were not conscious? We answer, By a figure of speech, just as Abel's blood cried, Gen. 4:10, and just as the stone cried out of the wall and the beam out of the timber answered it, Hab. 2:11. The persons here brought to view are those who had fallen under the papal persecutions of the preceding seal. The expression, The souls of them that were slain, being simply a strong expression to denote the persons, with all their capabilities of being, who had been sacrificed by papal fury. Just as Dr. Clarke says that the expressions, "spirits of just men made perfect," Heb. 12:23, and "Father of spirits," Heb. 12:9, and "God of the spirits of all flesh," Num. 16:22; 27:16, "means men not in a disembodied state." Note on 1 Pet. 3:19. And the fact that they had been slain cried like Abel's blood to God for vengeance.

The white robes that were given unto them were robes of character. They had gone down into the grave covered with obloquy and reproach. But the Reformation vindicated them in the eyes of all Christendom. It was seen that they were not the vile heretics that they had been represented to be, but the precious of the earth. They were to rest a little season. A few more were to be slain before the day for the final vindication of the people of God.

This seal covers the period from the beginning of the Reformation in the early part of the sixteenth century to the opening of the sixth seal about one hundred and thirty years later.

Under the sixth seal we have brought to view a great earthquake, the darkening of the sun, the turning of the moon to blood, the falling of the stars, the departing of the heavens as a scroll, and events immediately connected with the second coming of Christ.

The earthquake was the great earthquake of Lisbon which occurred Nov. 1, 1755, which affected at least four million square miles of the earth's surface. The sun was darkened May 19, 1780. The moon refused to give her light the following night; and when it did appear, it bore the appearance of blood as described in this prophecy. The stars of heaven fell Nov. 13, 1833. Other star showers or meteoric displays have been witnessed at different times, but this was the most remarkable and extensive.

Mark speaks of the same signs and locates them at the same time. He says, "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light and the stars of heaven shall fall." "In those days," before the 1260 years of papal triumph ended, but "after that tribulation," after the persecuting power of the papacy was restrained, between that point and 1798 where the 1260 years ended, these scenes were to appear; and right here history locates the most remarkable of these phenomena that have ever been seen.

It will be noticed that in the fulfillment of this prophecy we stand between the 13th and 14th verses of chapter 6. The next thing here before us is the departing of the heavens as a scroll and the scenes of the great day.

The seventh seal is introduced in Rev. 8:1. The only event mentioned is silence in Heaven about the space of half an hour; and the only time brought to view in the Bible when this could be fulfilled, is that described in Matt. 25:31, when Christ appears and "all the holy angels" come with him. Then there can be silence in Heaven; and this event we understand to be the one to which the sixth seal is devoted.

It will be noticed that the language of the first five seals is symbolical, that of the sixth and seventh literal. We can account for this change in the language only by supposing that the events of these seals being located at the time when the prophecy was to be understood and the doctrine of the second coming of Christ proclaimed is for this reason given in literal and not symbolic language.

Taken as a whole we may say that these seals represent the great apostasy in the church. The first seal represents the apostolic church in its purity. The succeeding seals, the church in its apostasy. But the true church occasionally appears this side the first seal. It is the oil and the wine of the third seal, the martyrs of the fourth and fifth seals; and those who will be saved at the coming of Christ to which the last seal brings us. While the apostate church will be among those who will call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from his presence in the day of His wrath.

The Signs of the Times

"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, JAN. 3, 1878.

JAMES WHITE,
J. N. ANDREWS,
URIAH SMITH, } . . . EDITORS.

God Is Love.

THE unqualified declaration of the beloved disciple is that God is love. The apostle in his epistle dwells much upon the subject of love. He was mild in spirit and kind in nature. He was a special companion of Christ, who was the embodiment of love. He leaned upon the bosom of Christ at the supper table. In his life and ministry he set forth the high and holy principle of love; and it is said of him when too aged to labor in the ministry, that he would be carried to the assemblies of the saints where his voice would be heard uttering those sweet words, "Little children; love one another."

The third chapter of his first epistle opens with these words: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God!" 1 John 3:1. Here he speaks of the love of his Father in the gift of his Son. In love God gave us existence. Life is a great gift. If it is not why do we cling so tenaciously to it with all its present woes? Ask the most wretched specimen of humanity what he would take for a year of his life, and he would respond, Let me live. Offer him mountains of gold for one year of his miserable life, and from him you would receive the same response, Let me live. Suppose the heavenly bodies all of purest gold, and that they were at your command. Offer all these, and you receive the same reply, Let me live.

The love of the Father is seen in the gift of his Son, that we also may become the sons of God. When all was lost by reason of sin God in love gave his Son to die, the just for the unjust. God in love has given his holy word and his Holy Spirit as a guide from a life of sin to a life of happiness, and heaven as the priceless reward. In these inestimable gifts is seen the great love of God.

But if the sinner will not accept the gift of eternal life, what will our loving God do for them? Will he send them to an old fashioned orthodox hell, to burn in fire whose heat shall be intensified with sulphur to all eternity? No, no, there is no love in this. What then will the God of love do with the sinner? Will he take him up to heaven with all the blackness of sin upon him? This would be the veriest hell for him. God in love will put an end to his miserable existence, and let him be as though he had not been.

The apostle not only speaks of love in a general sense, but of the manner of love that moved the bosom of the loving Father to give his only Son for a race of rebels. The earth knows no such love, only as it is revealed from heaven through the Son. Here is seen the love of the Father and the Son. Here is disinterested benevolence. Not one selfish act marked the mission and ministry of Christ. This matchless manner of love may be illustrated by the case of a Russian nobleman. He with his family were traveling in his carriage drawn by four horses, one cold winter's evening. They were startled on hearing the wolves approaching.

The nobleman buttoned his coat tighter and his timid wife nervously drew her shawl closer. As the wolves came near the carriage the serf inquires, "What shall I do?" "Tear the horse blankets in strips, and make a rope of them to drag behind the carriage to intimidate the cowardly creatures," was the reply. But this held them back but for a moment, when they surrounded the carriage and were ready to spring upon the horses.

The driver seeing that the lives of not only the horses but of the entire party were in great danger, again inquires, "My lord, what shall I do next?" "Cut off one of the horses," was the reply. The traces were soon severed, and the poor creature stumbled into the ditch to be devoured. And as the poor creature was being devoured his groans were heard by the party, and the driver was ordered to make all possible haste to an inn which was at a short distance. But before they reached this place of safety the wolves came upon them again, and the serf inquired, "What shall I do next?" "Cut off the other leader," was the anxious reply. The wolves having gotten a taste of fresh blood were inspired with still greater fury, and again surrounded the carriage. The driver saw that there was but one thing more that could be done, and

turning to his master, inquired, "Will you take care of my wife and children?" "Yes," was the nervous reply, and in an instant he flung himself into the jaws of the hungry wolves and was devoured of them. The Russian lord put whip to the remaining horses and reached the place of safety.

What must have been the gratitude of that Russian lord and his family, and their love for the widow and her orphan children language cannot describe. Here was manifested a manner or kind of love seldom witnessed in this world.

Paul, in speaking of the love manifested in the death of Christ has said, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:7, 8. In the case of sinful men it is the superior giving his priceless life for the worthless sinner. Eternity will be none too long to sing of the matchless depths of the Saviour's love. "Behold, what manner of love," is the language of the apostle. He would call especial attention to this marvelous love. This is the burden of the gospel of Christ, and the work of every minister of Christ. Satan and the world are calling the attention of dying men to other objects. Some men love money. Others love popularity. Men love power. There is a power in money and in fame, and men left to themselves, without the gospel of Christ, will become buried up in their wealth and pride. They become deaf by these things, and need the gospel to call their attention to the wealth of heaven. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world is the key-note of the gospel.

The object to which the attention of sinners is called is worthy of notice. It is no less than to become the sons of God. We do not have to wait for immortality in order to become the adopted sons of God. The adoption as a member of the heavenly family is here. Here we become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Glorious relationship indeed! Here to us is given the Spirit of adoption by which we know that God is our Father, Christ our elder brother, the angels our ministering spirits, and heaven our long and happy home.

The apostle continues, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Verse 2. There is nothing in fallen man or in the earth that shows what will be the state and condition of immortal saints. This however will appear over on the immortal shores. Should Abraham in all his immortal future greatness appear on the earth he would be in the greatest possible contrast with the dying men of to-day. It doth not appear yet what we shall be. This is a matter of faith. But when faith shall be lost in sight, and hope be swallowed up in fruition, then that which is veiled to our senses now will appear in all its glory. When Christ shall appear in glory, those who sleep be raised, and the living righteous be changed, and immortal beings have bodies like Christ's glorious body, then will appear that which now is a matter of faith.

Yes, Christ will appear. He who walked a man among men, was taken up from the midst of the brethren of Olivet, and ascended, a living, tangible Christ to his Father's throne, will appear again on earth, and all his people will be like their adorable Lord. They will see him as he is. What a thought! See the world's Redeemer. Shake hands with him. Receive and return the kiss of love. Walk the gold-paved streets of the city of God, arm in arm with the loving Lamb of God.

But notice here that John speaks of the love of the Father. Some teach that the Father is a being of stern justice, and that love exists with the Son alone. The revivalist Hammond, in a sermon in Oakland, represented the relation of the Father and the Son to the sinner in these words "Mary had a little lamb which she dearly loved. This lamb grew to be a fat sheep desired by the butcher, and Mary's father sold the lamb to him. This grieved Mary, and she appealed to a benevolent neighbor who purchased the lamb and saved it from the knife of the cruel butcher." Mr. Hammond applied the figure as follows: The lamb is the sinner. The cruel butcher is the Father. And the benevolent gentleman who purchased the lamb, is Jesus Christ. As though the Father was trying to slay the sinner, and the Son was giving his life to save the sinner. This is a terrible perversion of the facts in the case. The love of the Father is the great scheme to save sinners.

Again we repeat the golden phrase, "God is love." "I and my Father are one," says the Son of God. Behold, dear reader in the plan of salvation, the love of both the Father and the Son.

"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:3. Notice the expression, "this hope in him," and the result that follows. Such an one "purifieth himself, even as he is pure." The blessed hope is set forth by Paul as an incentive to purity. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:13, 14. Peter speaks also to the point. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." 2 Peter 3:11, 12.

A Baptist minister once gravely chided us for dwelling so much on the second advent. "Why don't you preach practical sermons, such as Christ's on the mount. We affirmed that the second advent, set forth in almost every page of the Bible, especially of the New Testament is practical, or at least, is set forth as an incentive to holiness of life." J. W.

The Order of Events in the Judgment.

NUMBER ONE.

ECCLES. 3:17. "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

The judgment of the great day is an event certain to transpire. "He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." Acts 17:31. What God hath appointed is sure to arrive in due time. The resurrection of Christ is an assurance to all men of the final judgment. It is not the fact of the judgment, however, but the order of its work that, at this time, engages our attention. The work to be accomplished is of immense magnitude. The judgment relates, 1. To all the righteous. 2. To all the wicked. 3. To all the evil angels. The number of cases, therefore, to be acted upon at this grand tribunal exceeds our powers of conception. We must not, however suppose that there will be any difficulty on the part of the Judge in acting upon every case individually. Far from this, "There is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

The judgment, indeed, pertains to an immense number of beings; yet every one of them shall give account of himself to God. Rom. 14:12. It will not relate to so vast a number as to make it otherwise than a strictly personal matter. Nor will there be aught of confusion or disorder in that final reckoning. God has plenty of time for the work, and he has no lack of agents to do his bidding. That he has order in this work, the Scriptures clearly teach.

1. The righteous are to judge the wicked; yet the righteous are themselves to pass the test of the judgment. Whence it follows that the judgment must pass upon the righteous before they can sit in judgment upon the wicked.

This is a very important proposition. That it is truthful, we know from the express testimony of the Scriptures.

1 Cor. 6:2, 3: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"

Rev. 20:4: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Dan. 7:21, 22: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."

Here is the exalted work of the saints in the judgment. They are to take part in the examination of the cases of all wicked men and fallen angels. But this is not to be till they have been changed to immortality, and exalted to thrones of glory. They do not, therefore,

have their cases decided at the same time with the wicked. We believe the reader will acknowledge the justice of this reasoning. Let us state another proposition:—

2. The trump of God sounds as the Saviour descends from heaven. When that trump is heard, all the righteous are, in the twinkling of an eye, changed to immortality. There can be no examination after this to determine whether they shall be counted worthy of eternal life, for they have already laid hold upon it. From this it follows that the examination and decision of the cases of the righteous takes place before the advent of Christ. The resurrection of the righteous to immortality is decisive proof that they have already passed the test of the judgment, and have been accepted of the Judge. That they are thus raised to immortality, the following texts plainly teach:—

1 Cor. 15:42: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption."

Verse 43: "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."

Verse 44: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

Verses 51, 52: "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

These passages are perfectly convincing. The resurrection of the saints is to immortal life, and they are made immortal in the very act of the resurrection. The decision of their cases is, therefore, passed before their resurrection, for the nature of their resurrection is declarative of their eternal salvation. But the fact, that the decision of the judgment in the case of the righteous, precedes the advent, is proved by another proposition, as follows:—

3. The righteous are raised before the wicked have their resurrection. This shows that the examination of their cases takes place before they are raised, for the final discrimination is made in the very act of raising the just and leaving the unjust to the resurrection of damnation.

Rev. 20:5, 6: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Luke 20:35, 36: "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal to the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Phil. 3:11: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Literally "the resurrection out from the dead ones.")

1 Cor. 15:22, 23: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming."

There is a resurrection which bears the inspired designation of the "first resurrection." All who have part in this resurrection are pronounced "blessed and holy." On them "the second death hath no power." This resurrection is out from among the dead. Paul earnestly labored to attain unto it. It is to be at the coming of Christ. Only those who are Christ's shall have part in it. All that have part in it are the children of God, because they are the children of the resurrection to life. These facts clearly prove that the examination of the cases of the righteous precedes their resurrection at the advent of Christ; that event being really declarative of their innocence in the sight of God, and of their eternal salvation. Such as are accepted of God are resurrected; the others sleep till the resurrection to damnation. These facts are decisive proof that the righteous are judged before they are resurrected.

But we have a still more explicit statement yet to notice. Says our Lord: "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead," etc. Then it is certain that the act of accounting worthy to obtain the resurrection from among the dead, and a part in the world to come, does precede the resurrection of the righteous. But this act of accounting men worthy of a part in

the kingdom of God is the very act of acquitting them in the judgment. The investigative judgment in the cases of the righteous is, therefore, past when they are resurrected. As the resurrection of the just is at the advent of Christ, it follows that they pass their examination, and are counted worthy of a place in the kingdom of God before the Saviour returns to the earth to gather them to himself. J. N. A.

Sabbath Investigation.

THE *Evangelical Messenger*, published at Cleveland, Ohio, in October last, published an article entitled, "The Law of the Christian Sabbath." It is too lengthy to be republished entire; but I give the first division of it as a perfect refutation of all that follows in favor of the change to the first day of the week, by making the Sabbath over into a largely Jewish institution, and then abolishing the Jewish part, and quoting the usual texts which are claimed to prove, that the apostles kept the first day instead of the seventh. My reply sent to the *Messenger*, as here given, will give the reader a general idea of what was contained in the subsequent divisions of the article.

THE LAW OF THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

"Opinions in regard to the nature and obligation of the Christian Sabbath have become, at the present day, so various and discordant, that a careful review of the subject seems to be a public need. Very many of these opinions have been adopted without much reflection, and are clearly erroneous; and their influence upon the public conscience is bearing most pernicious fruit. The first day of the week is treated by many professed disciples as a day for indolent enjoyment, or for a few and occasional acts of ceremonial worship, rather than as a day for religious culture. Without further preface the attention of the reader is invited to the following considerations:—

"I. A Sabbath was instituted by God in Paradise—was made for man—for the race—and as a law it became binding upon all men.

"1. 'And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because in it he had rested from all his works which God created and made.' Gen. 2:23. The import of this language is not obscure. Day, considered as a fraction of time could not enjoy either a blessing or even a sanctification. It was to be a blessing to man and a means for his sanctification. It was specially set apart for his benefit as a moral and accountable being; and the requirement was that he should 'keep it holy.'

"2. Prior to the giving of the law of the ten commandments on Mount Sinai, it was written, 'This is that which the Lord hath said. Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.' Ex. 16:23. This language clearly recognizes an existing institution prior to the promulgation of the decalogue, and the decalogue recognizes the same fact. Its language is: 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' Ex. 20:8. A man cannot remember that of which he has no previous knowledge. The people of Israel must have had knowledge of an existing institution, else they would not have been called upon to remember it.

"3. The Sabbath was evidently made a memorial day, which has caused a weekly division of time through all nations from the very beginning of the world. We have both in the Bible and in the traditions of the ancient heathen world, very distinct traces of such a division, as well as of the peculiar eminence attributed to the seventh day. In Genesis 4:3, 4, we read that Cain and Abel 'in the process of time,' or, literally, 'at the end or cutting off of days,' offered sacrifices to God. It is not therefore a violent presumption that it was upon a Sabbath or seventh day. It was an act of religious worship. So we read that Noah entered into the ark seven days before the commencement of the deluge. Gen. 7:4, 10. Seven days also intervened between the two occasions when the dove was sent forth from the ark. Gen. 8:10, 12. Homer calls the seventh day "The day in which all things were framed." Another of the ancient heathen called it 'The birth-day of all things.' Several of them speak of the seventh day as 'holy.' The Sabbath was therefore a well-known and positive institution from the very beginning; and it was made—not for the Jews only—but 'for man.'—*Theta.*"

To the Editor of the *Evangelical Messenger*:—In your paper of October 1, 1877, I find an article by "Theta" under the heading "The Law of the Christian Sabbath," concerning which I

ask the privilege of making a few remarks and inquiries.

To all that is said under the first general division of the subject, of the institution and universal obligation of the Sabbath "upon all men," I have not a word to object, but can heartily endorse it all. I think indeed there can be no reasonable objection raised against it. But how the Sabbath became "in many respects, a Jewish institution," merely because God re-affirmed it to Israel at Sinai, and they were the only people who continued its faithful observance, I cannot see so clearly. I cannot see how the fourth commandment of the ten should become Jewish from this fact any more than those against murder, theft, false witness, or any other one of the whole decalogue. The "special prohibitions and penalties" of their municipal code could be enacted and abolished without affecting in the least degree any one commandment of the universal moral code, as expressed in the ten commandments, and distinguished from all other laws by being given by God's own voice and written in his own handwriting in tables of stone.

But, waiving this objection, I can agree most heartily with the third proposition, that, "So much of the Sabbath as was peculiar to the Jews has been abolished; but the original law given to Adam is still in full force." The Sabbath therefore neither gained nor lost anything by being for awhile a "Jewish institution."

I fail to find a word concerning the weekly Sabbath in Rom. 14, but I agree with the writer that the expressions of this chapter "clearly refer to the ceremonial law," and consequently they have no bearing upon any commandment of the moral, or "original law." Neither were the sabbaths (plural) belonging to the "hand-writing of ordinances," of Col. 2:14-17, which were blotted out, being only a shadow of things to come, ever any part of the original law. These were festivals and sabbaths "beside the Sabbaths of the Lord," mentioned in Lev. 23. "The types of the Jewish ceremonial law were clearly fulfilled in Christ."

How does the writer learn from John 20:26, Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16:2, and Rev. 1:10, that "the apostles and early Christians were in the habit of observing the first day of the week?" I cannot find it in these texts. The first does not mention the first day, and it cannot be proved that it was the first day when Jesus made this visit to the common abode of the twelve and found Thomas at home; the second speaks of the only recorded meeting for religious worship upon the first day of the week, an all-night meeting at Troas; the third makes no allusion to Christian assemblies, but gives direction what each one was to do by himself, at home; and the fourth cannot be shown to refer to the first day of the week at all. The beloved disciple was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. To assume that this was the first day of the week, is to assume the very thing to be proved. Where is the first day of the week called the Lord's day? Not in the Bible; but "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord." He calls it "my holy day;" Isa. 58:13; and the Lord Jesus "is Lord also of the Sabbath."

The meeting at Troas was a night meeting. It took place either on what we now call Saturday night or Sunday night. The Bible uniformly begins the day at the going down of the sun; therefore for a night meeting to be held on the first day of the week, it must be held on the evening before the first day. If this meeting was held on what is now called Sunday evening, the whole transaction took place on the second, and not on the first day of the week; but if it truly was held on the eve of the first day, the fact that Paul started on a long journey at break of day proves that he did not regard it as the Sabbath.

Rom. 14 says nothing about the Sabbath, neither does it mention the seventh or the first day of the week. Yet "Theta" says: "In our judgment the apostle is here speaking of the controversy about which of the two days was to be observed." Where is the history of this controversy in the apostolic church? Is it in this chapter? Read it and see. My friend must have a very fertile imagination to paraphrase the text thus: "One man esteemeth one of these two days above the other; another esteemeth them alike sacred. He that regardeth, or observeth the seventh, regardeth it to the Lord, and he that observeth it not, does it conscientiously, worshipping God on the first." Now if this was really what the apostle meant, could he not have come a little nearer to saying so?

But I am happy to agree with the writer in such utterances as the following: "The original Sabbath given to Adam was as a memorial of the past, while [all] that which was instituted

in the ritual law for the Jewish nation alone, was typical of something in the future." "No one of these passages countenances the idea that the Sabbath which was made for man, and instituted in Paradise nearly three thousand years before the promulgation of the Jewish law, was intended only as a part of the Jewish economy. Nor does either of them furnish the slightest evidence that the original appointment has been recalled. It was therefore designed to be perpetual." R. F. COTTRELL.

Ridgeway, N. Y.

Questions and Answers.

1. "PLEASE give an explanation of the first four verses of 1 Tim. 4, and also of Matt. 10:28. CHAS. ALLEN."

(1.) The first text reads, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

I suppose the text has received at least a partial fulfillment already in modern Spiritualism. They follow the teachings of spirits. They attempt to disannul the Bible marriage regulation and substitute therefor an association of sexes to continue only at the will of contracting parties. Then again in "developing mediums," as they call it, the spirits have actually forbidden the use of such food as the Bible says in so many words was made for man's use. One of our brethren in Napa, Cal., who was once a spirit medium, was by the spirits forbidden to use fruits and many other things that God's word says were made for man's food. Let it be borne in mind that the word "meat" in the Bible is used in the sense of food. The expression in verse 4, "For every creature of God is good," should be qualified by the expressions in verses 3 and 5 "commanding to abstain from meats (food) which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving" (see Gen. 1:29) and "it is sanctified by the word of the Lord and prayer." He created herbs for man's food and by his word he "sanctified," set apart, the kinds of food which were good for man's use. So the sense of the text would be that "every creature" which God created to be received with thanksgiving, and which he has pointed out by his word, is to be received with thanksgiving, while the text shows that in the development of the class of spirit followers, among other things, they will directly forbid the use of some of the very foods which God created to be received.

(2.) The second text, Matt. 10:28, reads: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." If we compare this with the parallel passage in Luke 12:4, 5, we read, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." In this text we see that the present and future life are contrasted. The word "soul" is used in the sense of life, and in Matt. 10:28 refers to the future immortal life which may be received by those who obey the Lord. We would paraphrase the text on this wise. Do not be afraid of them who may take away your present life but cannot touch the future, but fear him who can cut short your present life, and after that, in the resurrection state, can, and will, unless we obey him, deprive us of eternal life.

For a more full explanation of this text we refer you to a work entitled "Nature and Destiny of Man," for sale at the SIGNS OF THE TIMES Office.

2. "Please answer the following questions based on 1 Tim. 4:1-5: (1.) The "latter times," are they past, present or future? (2.) Is it wrong to eat meat at all? (3.) Is not pork included in the word "meats," and how is this part of holy writ to be reconciled with common sense which teaches that it is injurious to eat pork?"

A SUBSCRIBER FOR THE SIGNS.

(1.) The "latter times" as used by Paul we understand refers to the last part of the gospel dispensation, commencing at the point where there should be a special work of consulting spirits and covering a space to the very last day of the dispensation. So we may say, as far as the designation of this text is concerned, we have been in the latter times since the development of

modern Spiritualism commenced, are in it now, and will be in the last days until the very last day of the dispensation comes.

(2.) We would not take the position that it is wrong to eat any kind of flesh meat. God's words to the Israelites designated what animals might be eaten and what not, because one class was clean and another class was unclean. Mankind should discard the use of fatty meats, and in this time when the animal creation is becoming more and more diseased every year those are safest who steadily bring themselves to a diet composed almost entirely from the products of the vegetable world. In other words adopting a fruit, grain and vegetable diet.

(3.) To the third question we answer emphatically, No! pork is not included in the word "meats" which God commanded to be received with thanksgiving, for God never commanded any man to receive it, but commanded them on the contrary to not eat of it nor touch it. So this part of holy writ is in exact harmony "with common sense." J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH.

Reports from the Field.

(Condensed from *Review and Herald*.)

New England.

WEST NEWBURY.—A good interest has been awakened in this place by the labors of Brethren Robinson and Stone. They have held meetings ten days and have had large audiences. Elder Canright was with them December 10. He writes: "Last night I had an audience of three hundred, though it was Monday night. The interest is growing deeper, and we confidently expect that a good work will be done here. This place is half-way between Newburyport and Haverhill, six miles from each, where we have churches. During the last five months, five new churches have been raised up in the New England Conference; and now there are more good openings waiting than we can possibly fill for months to come. The people seem eager to hear, and many of them are ready to embrace the truth. If New England has been a hard field in the past, it certainly is not now. Things are changed; and I believe the day is near when this will be one of the richest fields in all the harvest."

Michigan.

IONIA AND MONTCALM COUNTIES.—Brethren A. O. Burrill and F. Howe report interesting meetings with the churches in these counties. At Lyons three were added to the church by baptism. Nearly all took hold of the tithing plan. In the meeting at Carson City, at the close of the second sermon on Sabbath, nearly all in the house came forward to seek the Lord, some of them for the first time. Two were added to the church by baptism. These two counties have, including children, five hundred and eighty-five Sabbath-keepers, and their entire pledges amount to \$2,640.

TUSCOLA COUNTY.—Brother Lamson reports profitable meetings with the churches. At Vassar the meeting was well attended. They take twenty-four copies of the SIGNS. At Watrousville Brother L. found an excellent interest to hear, many were disappointed that he could not remain longer. Some came long distances over bad roads to attend this meeting. The best of interest was taken in the word spoken, and the business sessions were harmonious. They take sixteen copies of the SIGNS.

BENOA AND WHITEHALL.—Brother G. A. Carlstedt writes: "My meetings have closed in Benoa for the present. A Swedish lady commenced to keep the Sabbath while I was there. Her son seemed very much interested in the truth. Some thought we were right in regard to the state of the dead and the immortality of the soul, but wanted more time to think of the Sabbath. I came to Whitehall last week, and have held four meetings with the brethren up to this time. Some outsiders have been present, and enjoyed the meetings. I visited at their homes, and explained to them about the Sabbath and its change, and invite them to come and hear more at our meeting which they said they would do. These were Americans. The Scandinavians here are hard to reach, being so under the control of priests

Kansas.

ZION.—Brother Lamont writes: "I have just closed an interesting series of meetings here. On Sunday evening we enjoyed an excellent season in the celebration of the ordinances. The brethren manifested commendable zeal in attending these meetings, the bad roads and dark nights keeping none away. The outside attendance was good. Four united with the church."

How We Learn.

GREAT truths are greatly won. Not found by chance,
Nor wafted on the breath of summer dream;
Nor grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream.

Not in the general mart, 'mid corn and wine;
Not in the merchandise of gold and gems;
Not in the world's gay hall of midnight mirth;
Not 'mid the blaze of regal diadems;

But in the day of conflict, fear and grief,
When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,
Plows up the subsoil of the stagnant heart,
And brings the imprisoned truth-seed to the light.

Wrung from the troubled spirit, in hard hours
Of weakness, solitude, perchance of pain,
Truth springs, like harvest, from the well-plowed field,
And the soul feels it has not wept in vain.

—Bonar.

During the War.

DEAR SIGNS:—It is more than a quarter of a century since I enlisted in the work of the last message, the message which you are effectually bearing to mankind. I enlisted for the whole duration of the war, whether long or short, unless sooner honorably discharged and bid to rest from labor. In the ardor of fresh hope I did not look forward to more than about five years for the war to be ended and the final victory won; but though more than five times five have already elapsed, I am not dissatisfied at all; my courage is still good, and my determination to serve out the time of my enlistment firm as at the first. And though somewhat advanced in age, I have no reason to give up the hope that I may live to the close of the war. The advancement in the work which I have witnessed so far, gives me reason to hope that the conflict will soon, very soon, be over. I witnessed the falling of the stars in 1833, the last of the signs in the heavens given as merciful warnings of the approach of the great day of the Lord, and I claim to belong to "this generation," which the Saviour affirmed should not pass away till he should come and his people be gathered to himself. Therefore, with increasing health, resulting from the observance of the excellent sanitary regulations which have been introduced among us, I press on with buoyant hope to the final triumph.

The Lord is truly doing a great work in world. The earth has never seen a more important period than the present. The earth is fast becoming enlightened with the glory of the final warning, and the grand and final test upon the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will soon decide the destiny of all living. Then it will be found that a great reward is awaiting the overcomer.

The way is opened for all to serve the cause of God, and labor for perishing men. Benighted humanity is to be enlightened with the light which God has graciously given to us. We are debtors to those in every place who are willing to hear the closing message of the gospel. And we should do all in our power to discharge the debt. We may scatter papers and tracts and in that way give the light to those in darkness. And if we do what we can, it is accepted of God. He requires of us according to the means and ability which he gives. The two mites, being all that we have, is acceptable. But let none talk of giving the widow's mites, unless it is all that they have. To consecrate all is our reasonable service. God help us to be faithful.

R. F. COTTRELL.

Knowledge.

It has been said that,

"Knowledge is the wing
Whereby we fly to Heaven."

Although man can never regain his former estate by obtaining knowledge, yet he can, by the proper use of the right kind of knowledge, fit himself for the society of God, Christ and angels.

The knowledge of sin is obtained by the law. The knowledge of salvation is obtained through Jesus Christ and "in everything we are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge." We are counseled by "holy men of old" to "lay up knowledge," and our

enjoyment in this life may be greatly heightened, by a wise cultivation of our intellectual powers. The vast wealth of literature and thought is for us. We may possess a true appreciation of the beautiful in nature, roam the fields of science with keen and eager research and stand at the very "portals of all knowledge." All this need not unfit us for religious worship. Indeed, the study of the works of God, as manifested in the myriad forms of animal and vegetable life, the laws which govern the universe and the wonders of the sky, cannot fail to impress us with an overwhelming sense of the omnipotence of our God and to bow us in "dust and ashes" before his throne.

Although there is "no knowledge in the grave," yet we know not how our future life may be effected by our progress in knowledge here. There is a day coming when "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," and in that day the truly wise "will shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

ELIZA H. MORTON.

Allen's Corner, Me.

The Old Year and the New.

THE pale patriarch, surrounded by his immense host of descendents—seasons, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes and seconds—summons us to his immediate presence.

"I have called you hither to commit to you my last and most solemn message. I am only one of the six thousand princes of time. Time is the son of eternity. From eternity down to the youngest second, all ages and years, and seasons, and months, and weeks and days, and hours, and minutes, are God's messengers; entrusted with his richest benefits, and commissioned to bear them to man. My mission, like that of my predecessors, is ended. Before my departure, I remind you of the same. My office has been one of ceaseless love. If you marvel that I am encompassed by such a host, I have only to inform you, that they have been my faithful assistants as well as my affectionate children; and that the reason of their multitude is the multitude of God's benefits to man. A smaller number would fail to distribute his abounding mercies. There is not one, in all this array, who has not been thus employed. And ere I die I will question them in your presence, and you must report their testimony in the sanctuary:—

"Seasons—What have you given to man?" And the four seasons answered—"God's benefits."

"Months—What have you given to man?" And the twelve months answered—"God's benefits."

"Weeks—What have you given to man?" And the fifty-two weeks answered—"God's benefits."

"Days—What have you given to man?" And the three hundred and sixty-five days answered—"God's benefits."

"Hours—What have you given to man?" And the nearly nine thousand hours answered—"God's benefits."

"Minutes—What have you given to man?" And the half million minutes answered—"God's benefits."

"Seconds—What have you given to man?" And the thirty millions of seconds answered—"God's benefits."

"Servants of God, ministers of Christ," said he, "you have heard their uniform answers. With my own fast failing breath I confirm their truth. I have superintended their toil. I know that our whole mission has been occupied in the distribution of God's benefits. You have seen the dying year, repeat to your hearers that you yourselves must die, that they must die. Tell them that the garden of pleasure will then be as desolate as are now the fields of nature to me. There is but the one hope, the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. God's

benefits begin with life but do not end with death; they commence on earth only to multiply in heaven; and while they enrich in time, they will endure throughout eternity!"

So saying, the dying year arose and stood by the side of the new, acknowledged him as his successor, and resigned the scepter to him, and bowing to his attendants, beckoned to his own and ascended with them, vanishing among the welcoming stars. The New Year glanced at the happy transit and then dispersed on errands of mercy through all the earth; to meet again when another New Year shall hang out his signal through the sky, and come to enter on his reign.

But lo! the New Year stands in the aisle. The seasons, months, weeks, days, and minutes are waiting without.

"Why art thou here? thou youthful prince of time."

"I am here," he answered, "to strengthen your appeal. I am here to promise a continuance of God's benefits to those who shall honor his cause. I am here to say to the people, If during all my term you would have every month, week, day, hour, minute, and even every second bless you, attend to the interests of personal salvation. Pay your vows unto the Lord in the presence of his people.

"It is not mine to say whether you shall live or die; whether the family shall remain united, or be separated; or whether chastenings shall be many or few. But this I do aver, that he who remembers God's benefits toward him, during the term of my predecessor, with the most grateful devotion has the greatest reason to hope for their renewal and increase throughout my own."—*Self.*

THE HOME CIRCLE.

After the Holidays.

THEY were over at last; and Paul, Dora, and I, were settled back into the old life again; into the studying in the mornings, and the sleigh rides in the afternoons, cutting through the white flannels of winter snows which clothed the earth—the naked, desolate, uncomely earth, which had waited for the snow so long.

The holidays were over, and yet their memories clung to us all, and we loved to go back in the long winter evenings and talk them over together. We would see the old church lighted again, and the great Christmas tree before the pulpit, and the crowd of small, shining heads in the front seats, all turned eager and breathless toward it.

There it stood, the small tapers burning like stars, thick among the dark green branches, the great oranges glowing like crimson globes among the boughs, and festoons of red swan and cranberries blazing like coral and carbuncles amid all. There stood the great tree in whose branches the young birds had built their nests, and the sweet summer winds had sung, and which had gathered the snows of so many winter nights and held them up in the mornings on its many boughs like heaps of wide-blossomed lilies. Now, every branch was burdened with its Christmas gifts for many children; gifts, beautiful, and rare, and varied, to make the eyes leap, and the hearts beat for joy, as the little children's hands closed over them.

As I said, Paul and Dora, and I, loved to talk all this over as we sat together in the long winter evenings which followed the holidays, and played with our new games, which were among the gifts that the Christmas tree had held for us.

But whenever we talked of the eager crowd of faces which thronged the church and bent down from the galleries, as one after another the gifts were taken down from the branches, and the names of the recipients thereof read out, loud and clear, and the little, eager hands stretched out, the memory of something I had seen and overheard in the old church came like a little shadow, creeping through

all the brightness of that Christmas evening.

There sat in the seat before me a small boy and girl; the girl the smaller of the two. They were pretty children, dressed very plainly, perhaps I had better say poorly. They looked with faces brimful of interest and eagerness on the Christmas tree, and their young voices mingled sweetly with the other young voices which sang that night their hymns of thanksgiving and jubilee. But after the little, strange children had watched for a long time, as one after another the happy children went up to receive the gift of the Christmas tree, the little girl put up her lips to her brother's ear, and I heard her soft whisper:—

"Don't you believe, Philip, somebody will call our names? I want us to have a present too."

"We can't, Mary. You see nobody knows us in all the great church."

I saw the little face falter and fall, and, as I held my pretty presents in my hands, my heart ached for the little boy and girl sitting there all unknown and uncared for in the seat before me. I thought how sad and desolate they must feel, just as I should in their places. Ah, me! what a strange, sad, lonely day Christmas must seem without these things!

At last the gifts were all distributed; the last name was called; the children were bending glad faces over their new, pretty toys; and the little girl drew up hers to her brother, but amid the general joy hers was sorrowful, and whispered:—

"Oh, Philip, they've all got something pretty but us!"

"But, Mary, we do n't know anybody here, you see," said he trying to comfort the little grieved child, though he was not more than two or three years her senior, and his face was sad too. "We couldn't expect that they'd give us anything."

The great tears ran over the little face.

"But they've all got something pretty—all, but us. I want a Christmas gift too, Philip."

I told Paul and Dora about it. They both listened intently, and though Paul is two years older than I, the tears were in his great brown eyes, as they were on Dora's cheeks when I concluded.

"They must live somewhere in Woodleaf, I'm certain," said Dora, "or they wouldn't have been at the church on Christmas night."

"There's a family moved into the little white cottage just beyond the turnpike," said Paul. "I heard Mr. Ramsdell asking the doctor to call there, for the mother was ill, and the father had gone away. He said that they had two children too young to help themselves—a boy and a girl."

"I wish that we could do something for them," said Dora, and her bright face was thoughtful.

"We could carry them some of our toys. They are younger than we, and we could spare them well enough," added Paul.

"Oh, Paul, it would do my heart good to make that little girl's face glad," I cried.

We told the story to mother, and obtained her full consent to give just what we liked. Dora offered her last year's doll and wicker cradle, as good as new, Paul his regiment of soldiers, and I my pretty set of china. Mother added to these a handsome tippet for the boy and a scarf for the girl. After our lessons and dinner were over, we started, Paul, and Dora, and I, for the little white house near the turnpike.

The little girl came to the door, and her blue eyes opened wide with wonder and pleasure when she saw us. She asked us into the little plain, but pleasant, parlor, saying that her mother was able to sit up now, and we could go to her room in a minute.

"We haven't come to see her, but you and your brother Philip," said Paul.

The child's eyes grew wider for wonder as she ran and summoned her brother.

When Philip Hughes entered the room with his little sister's hand in his, my brother stated briefly that we had learned of the sad

omission that had taken place on Christmas night, and that we had come now, late as it was, to do all in our power to mend the matter, and had brought our Christmas gifts. He then laid the bundle on the table, cut the string, and the pretty things were before the wondering eyes of the children.

What they said, I cannot well remember. Perhaps it was not so very much after all; but oh! if you could have seen their faces—if you could have looked upon little Mary Hughes as she bowed her head over the pretty gifts, and sobbed for joy—if you could have seen her lift up her face to her brother, and heard her words: "Oh, Philip, we've got our Christmas gifts after all!" it would have melted your heart, if it is not as hard as a stone. And when the pale, gentle mother learned all, and feebly made her way into the room, and laid her thin hand on our heads, and blessed us, we—Paul, Dora, and I—wondered if we had any joy deeper and sweeter than that which came "after the holidays."—*Sel.*

"I Don't Mean Him."

THE following anecdote of Rev. James Axley, a renowned preacher of East Tennessee, was related by Hugh L. White, for many years a distinguished judge in that State, and afterwards a member of the Senate:—

It was noised through the town of Jonesborough that Mr. Axley would hold forth on the ensuing Sabbath. The famous divine was a great favorite—with none more so than with Judge White. At the appointed hour, the judge in company with a large congregation, was in attendance at the house of prayer. All was hushed in expectation. Mr. Axley entered, and with him a clerical brother, who he invited to preach. The congregation was disappointed.—This was not the man they had come to hear; consequently there was a good deal of misbehavior. The discourse was ended and Mr. Axley rose.

It is a custom in the new country where two or more preachers are present, for each of them to have something to say.

Mr. Axley stood silently surveying the congregation, until every eye was riveted. He then began:—

"It may be a very painful duty, but it is a solemn one, for a minister of the gospel to report vice, misconduct and sin, whenever and wherever he sees it. But especially is this his duty at church. That is a duty I am now about to attend to.

"And now," continued the reverend speaker, pointing with his long finger in the direction indicated, "that man sitting out yonder, behind the door, who got up and went out while the brother was preaching, stayed out as long as he wanted to, got his boots full of mud, came back and stamped the mud off at the door, making all the noise he could, on purpose to disturb the attention of the congregation, and then took his seat; that man thinks I mean him. No wonder he does. It doesn't look as if he had been raised in the white settlements, does it, to behave that way at meeting! Now, my friend, I'd advise you to learn better manners before you come to church next time. But I don't mean him.

"And now," again pointing at his mark, "that little girl sitting there, about half way of the house—I should judge her to be about sixteen years old—that's her with the artificial flowers on the outside of her bonnet, and the inside of her bonnet; she has a breastpin on too (they were very severe on any superfluities of dress,) she that was giggling and chattering all the time the brother was preaching, so that even the old sisters in the neighborhood couldn't hear what he was saying, though they tried. She thinks I mean her. I'm sorry from the bottom of my heart for any parents who have raised a girl to her time of day and haven't taught her how to behave when she comes to church. Little girl, you have disgraced your parents as well as yourself. Behave better next time, won't you? But I don't mean her."

Directing his finger to another aim, he said: "That man sitting there, that looks as bright and pert as if he never was asleep in his life, and never expected to be but that just as soon as the brother took his text, laid his head down on the back of the seat in front of him, went sound asleep, and slept the whole time and snored; that man thinks I mean him. My friend, don't you know the church isn't the place to sleep? If you needed rest, why didn't you stay at home, take off your clothes and go to bed? That's the place to sleep, not at church. The next time you have a chance to hear a sermon, I advise you to keep awake."

Thus did he proceed, pointing out every man, woman and child, who had in the slightest deviated from a befitting line of conduct,

characterizing the misdemeanor, and reading sharp lessons of rebuke.

Judge White was all this time sitting at the end of the front seat, just under the speaker, enjoying the old gentleman's disquisition to the last degree; twisting his neck around to see if the audience relished the "down comings" as much as he did; rubbing his hands' smiling, chuckling inwardly. Between his teeth and cheek was a monstrous quid of tobacco, which the better he was pleased, the more he chewed; and the more he chewed the more he spit, and behold, the floor bore witness to the results. At length the old gentleman, straightening himself up to his full height, continued with great gravity:—

"And now, I reckon, you want to know who I do mean. I mean that dirty, nasty, filthy tobacco chewer, sitting on the end of that front seat," his finger, meanwhile, pointing, true as the needle to the pole—"see what he has been about!—Look at those puddles on the floor; a frog would n't get into them. Think of the sisters' dresses being dragged through that muck!" The crestfallen judge averred that he never chewed any more tobacco in church.—*Rev. W. H. Milburn.*

Principles of Health Reform.

(Concluded.)

8. *Personal cleanliness must be maintained by frequent bathing.*

Far too little importance is generally paid to bathing. Many people seek to hide their dirt by the use of perfumes. Many diseases have their origin in a dirty, torpid skin. Health reform indorses the ancient regulations of the Mosaic law, and enjoins so frequent bathing that the person shall never acquire an offensive odor, even in the sweltering months of summer, when a daily ablution is necessary.

9. *Mental and social influences and surroundings must be such as to encourage cheerfulness and contentment.*

Health reform recognizes to the fullest extent the wonderfully intimate relation which exists between the mind and the body, and often discovers to the poor victim of despair that his difficulty is wholly in his liver. It not only recommends cheerfulness and contentment, but encourages it in the most effectual way, by promoting health.

10. *Proper bodily positions and correct attitudes should be cultivated and preserved.*

Another of the objects of health reform is to call attention to the evil results of allowing the body to habitually assume unnatural and constrained attitudes and positions. Deformity is the inevitable result.

RESTORATION OF HEALTH, OR TREATMENT OF DISEASE.

For centuries it has been the prevailing belief that disease was some sort of malignant entity, something to be attacked, fought and destroyed. With this theory of the nature of disease, it is easily comprehended why the practice of physicians has been such as it has. Supposing it to be something to be destroyed, it would seem very appropriate that poisons, the most destructive agents, should be employed for the purpose. But the world is rapidly becoming enlightened upon this subject through the influence of this movement, which advocates the following principles relating to disease:—

1. *Disease is remedial effort.* In other words, it is an effort of nature to remove obstructions or correct abnormal conditions.

2. *All curative power exists in the living system.* Men may supply conditions, and thus facilitate recovery; but nature does all the healing work.

3. *Drugs and medicines never cure.* They may change the seat of disease, may create new diseases, but they never cure the patient.

4. The agencies which nature can use in her healing work are those known as hygienic, the chief of which are *pure air, proper food, pure soft water, proper clothing, sunlight, exercise, rest, mental influence, and electricity.* Disease originates in an abuse or non-use of these agents; health is only to be obtained by their proper employment.

We say that the world is becoming enlightened upon this subject; this is the case with the more intelligent classes, and especially does the medical profession seem to be awakening to a recognition of the truth of the principles above stated. It may be said that drugs are still largely employed by allopathic, homeopathic, and eclectic physicians; this is true, notwithstanding the fact that many of the most eminent men of these different schools have unhesitatingly declared their unbelief in the efficacy of drugs as remedies

for disease. Here is the chief ground of complaint which health reform finds against the medical profession. Their college professors and learned doctors admit and even declare the truth, but in their practice persist in perpetuating methods of treatment which are only consistent with old and exploded theories. Listen to the following admissions of some of the most eminent of the doctors of allopathic medication, and then attempt to harmonize such confessions with the nearly universal practice of drugging and dosing every ailment:—

"Modern medicine inclines to regard diseases no longer as distinct entities, but, rather, as perverted life processes."—*N. A. Review* for July, 1873.

Says Reynolds, in his compendious work on practice, "No specific remedy will cure." Again, "Energetic antiphlogistic treatment is energetic mischief."

Says Prof. Alonzo Clarke, M. D., "All our curative agents are poisonous; and, as a consequence, every dose diminishes the patient's vitality."

Says Prof. St. John, M. D., "All medicines are poisonous."

Says Prof. Martyn Paine, M. D., LL. D., "Drug medicines do but cure one disease by producing another."

Said Prof. Jos. M. Smith, M. D., "Drugs do not cure disease."

John Mason Good, M. D., F. R. S., said of medicines, "They have destroyed more lives than war, pestilence, and famine combined."

Said Dr. Bostwick, "Every dose of medicine given, is a blind experiment on the vitality of the patient."

The above are but a very few of the testimonies which might be presented against the use of drugs; but are not the eminent authorities quoted, and the cogent sentences uttered by them, sufficient to convince any candid man of the truth of the propositions for the support of which they are presented? We think this is the case; but if further evidence is required, we have only to point to the thousands of chronic invalids who have been made such by the use of powerful drugs—the unnumbered throng of miserable dyspeptics who have ruined their digestion by making apothecary shops of their stomachs—the hundreds of cripples whose prospects for life have been ruined by mercury and like poisons.

Health reform offers to replace this wretched and dangerous system of medical practice by one which is wholly safe, wonderfully simple, and eminently efficient. This system, known as the **HYGIENIC SYSTEM**, has saved the lives of thousands of individuals whose friends and physicians had given them up to die. All we ask is careful and candid investigation of the principles advocated.

RELIGIOUS NEWS.

—There are 300,000 Sunday-school teachers and 5,000,000 scholars in England.

—The American Bible Society has added to its library the book of Acts in Japanese.

—It is stated that the Wesleyan Foreign Missionary Society of Great Britain is \$100,000 in debt.

—One-third of the contributions to missions last year was given by the Sunday-schools of this country.

—Fifty members of a colored church, in Lexington, Ky., have been excommunicated because they would go to the circus.

—The receipts of the American Bible Society for November were \$32,737. The number of copies of the Scriptures issued were 54,194.

—Prussia has one hundred and forty Roman Catholic papers; Austria, seventy-seven; Bavaria, seventy-seven; Switzerland, fifty-three; Saxony, three; Baden, twelve.

—During the past year a thousand children have been taught in the schools of the Methodist Ladies' Five Points Mission, and 300 families have been assisted with food and clothing.

—The province of Honan, China, has a population of twenty-three millions, among whom the Roman Catholics are working with nine missionaries and three native priests. They have already made 5,000 converts among them.

—The *Catholic Mirror* says that there have been two hundred and fifty-seven popes. One hundred and ninety-nine of them have been Italians. Fifteen were Frenchmen, thirteen Greeks, eight Syrians, six Germans, five Spaniards, two Africans, two Savoisians, two Dalmatians. England, Portugal, Holland, Switzerland and Canada have each, furnished one chief pontiff.

—The seventy-fourth session of the Revisers of the Authorized Version of the New Testament, recently held in the Jerusalem Chamber, lasted seven hours, and the second revision was carried to the close of the first chapter of the First Epistle of St. Peter.

—It will be part of the business of the International Sunday-school Convention, which meets in Atlanta, Ga., next April, to furnish statistics of all the Sunday-schools in the United States. The last totals were reported in 1875. They show 69,871 Sunday-schools, 753,060 officers and teachers, and 5,790,683 scholars. This will give a total of 6,543,708 persons in the Sunday-schools of our country.

—St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal church of New York, Dr. O. H. Tiffany, pastor, is the strongest and most wealthy church in the New York Conference. The membership numbers 630, and the Sunday-school 321 scholars and teachers. The church property is valued at \$300,000, and the benevolent contributions of the society last year amounted to \$11,787.70.

SECULAR NEWS.

—Egypt has forty-two obelisks left.

—The diphtheria is prevailing in San Jose and Santa Clara.

—Eleven saloon-keepers are members of the Boston city council.

—Prince Leopold, Queen Victoria's youngest son, is dangerously ill.

—Some of the new Representatives in Washington are liquor dealers.

—The Cuban revolution has cost Spain two hundred millions of dollars.

—Oregon's exports for the last six months amounted to over six million dollars.

—The recent violent rain on the Colorado desert broke up fifty miles of the railroad track.

—Holland has a population of 4,000,000 persons, and has not had a bank failure in forty years.

—In India last year 19,273 persons and 54,830 cattle were destroyed by wild animals and poisonous snakes.

—Great Britain now cultivates nearly on million less number of acres of wheat than she did twenty years ago.

—There are 150,000 idle people in Philadelphia. In consequence crime and pauperism has increased at a fearful rate.

—The Jubilee singers have recently gone to Germany to continue the work they have for six years been doing in the United States, Great Britain, and Holland, in the interest of the education of their race: Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

—It is estimated that 20,000 oil wells have thus far been dug in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, at an aggregate cost \$192,000,000. They have yielded about 88,000,000 barrels of oil, valued at the well at \$300,000,000, or \$400,000,000 at the seaboard.

—An exchange says: "There is much concern on the part of medical men in Great Britain concerning the evident increase of lunacy. In 1850 there was a mean of one lunatic in every 534 persons, and it is estimated that the proportion is now one 369."

—The total assets of the city of Boston actual and nominal, are placed at \$54,67 633.06, and the total debt amounts \$43,590,497. The amount of property voted to religious and charitable purposes exempt from taxation, located within municipal limits, amounts to \$19,943,200.

—Electricity has been applied to a no use in the East Indies. A platinum wire connected with the poles of a battery stretched around a tree, and becoming hot, is gently sawed, until it burns way through. It is thought that a tree be cut down without any waste of timber about fifteen minutes, that would require two hours to fell the ordinary way.

—Quite an excitement has been made in Springfield, Mass., by the refusal of a couple of fourteen Congregationalist ministers install Rev. James F. Merriam as pastor of his believing that, if the punishment of the wicked is eternal, it is eternal death though he promised not to preach upon that point. As Mr. Merriam is highly esteemed by the society unanimously voted to accept as their pastor despite the disapprobation of the council.

The Signs of the Times

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, JAN. 3, 1878.

Volume Four.

WITH this number commences the fourth volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We print 10,000 copies of the first number in faith that the friends of the SIGNS will exert themselves to swell the list to these figures. We design to make the fourth volume exceed in interest either of the three that has gone before it. Our friends will not be disappointed.

J. W.

Report of Meetings.

DECEMBER 22, we passed a blessed Sabbath with the church in Healdsburg. In the morning we spoke on baptism. We gave the same brief view of the subject which we have usually given at camp-meetings and on other occasions where many have followed their Lord in baptism. Mrs. W. followed with forcible remarks for about thirty minutes, and the Sabbath service closed with an excellent social meeting.

On first-day Brother Augustus W. Collins received the ordinance of baptism at our hands in the purest running water that it has ever been our pleasure "to go down into" with a candidate. As we raised him up out of the water he shouted to the praise of God. It was a good season. Elder I. D. Van Horn and the friends in Oregon who feel an interest in this dear brother who received his first impressions of duty at a tent-meeting in Portland, will be glad to learn that Brother Collins has been baptized, is a member of the Healdsburg church, and is for the time being, a member of our family.

Sabbath, December 29, we spoke again to the brethren at Healdsburg on the love of God, which is given in substance in this week's issue, under the caption God is Love. Mrs. W. was not with us. Duty called her to Vacaville. We hear good news from the discussion there being conducted by Elder Healey, S. D. Adventist, and Mr. Johnson, Disciple. The Disciples had secured a number of good speakers for evenings and first-day, and it was desired that Mrs. W. should be on the ground to speak Sabbath and first-day. We did design to attend the discussion and speak to the people, but had roads and home duties seemed to forbid. We hope to see these brethren before long, and speak to them the word of God.

J. W.

The Cause at Vacaville.

NOTWITHSTANDING the most obstinate opposition, the cause of present truth at Vacaville is in a prosperous condition. September 25, at the commencement of lectures by Brother Stephens there were about twenty Sabbath-keepers in the vicinity of Vacaville. On our arrival, December 26, to attend the discussion elsewhere noticed, we found that twelve had been added to their number and had signed the covenant. Many others seemed waiting the result of the discussion before making a final decision. Before the Sabbath question was concluded others had taken their stand, and at the time of leaving, December 31, the number was increased to at least twenty, and others deeply interested. What added much to the interest of the meetings was the presence of Mrs. White, who arrived Friday noon, and spoke four times in the large Baptist college hall, thus occupying the time omitted in the discussion between Friday evening and Monday morning. This removed much prejudice.

Sabbath afternoon we organized one of the most interesting Sabbath-schools we have met in California. The membership of this school reaches over sixty, and will probably reach seventy or eighty. All seemed anxious to take hold of this work according to the plan adopted by the State Sabbath-school Society.

Brother Healey will remain after the discussion to follow up the good work begun. We look for good results from the work at Vacaville.

J. E. WHITE.

Life Sketches.

THE readers of the SIGNS will find a feast of information in the series of articles, entitled, "Life Sketches," by Elder James White, the first of which is presented in this week's issue. They will contain the leading incidents in the lives of Elder and Mrs. White, and consequently the more prominent features in the history of the Advent movement. We are printing a supply of extra copies of the SIGNS, in order to furnish back numbers to new subscribers and others desiring them.

Discussion at Vacaville.

THE discussion announced for the 26th opened at 10 o'clock A. M., we affirming the following proposition:—

"That the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is binding upon man, and not the first day of the week which we find Christians generally observing as a day of rest."

We showed that the decalogue was given by God as a guide, and is the only test of moral character, and its principles are binding everywhere that God has intelligent creatures. That it represents God's will, and is a transcript of his character, and every one of its precepts grow out of God's inherent attributes. That the fourth commandment is the only one that points out the true God, by showing that he is the one that created the heavens and the earth; and therefore had a right to command us to have "no other gods" or "worship images." He being our creator it is our duty to acknowledge it, which is done by keeping the fourth commandment. Having an hour's speech in the opening, we spent the time in thus showing the morality of all the ten commandments, their universal application and eternal duration.

Mr. Johnson followed, claiming the ten commandments to be a part of the old covenant, and that, with it, were all abolished, reading from Gal. 3, and Col. 2, to show that the law was abolished at the cross.

On the second day we showed that the ten commandments were a covenant commanded but not a covenant made; that the old covenant was made concerning the ten commandments, and was an agreement on the part of the people to do them. Ex. 19, 20, and 24. That the old covenant was ratified before God wrote the ten commandments. Ex. 24.

We also showed that the law done away was the ceremonial, which pointed forward to the cross, being simply a law regulating the typical system, which was a shadow of good things to come and the body (casting the shadow) was of Christ.

We managed upon the first day of the debate to draw out about all the argument that our opponent had to present from the Bible, and as we did not press him very hard upon any point he was perfectly reckless in his statements.

The following is a sample of the statements he made: "The ten commandments were all given over in the New Testament except the fourth one. Tell us why that was left out?"

We asked him where we could find them given. He said in Christ's sermon on the mount. Matt. 5. Of course we showed that they were not half there, and besides this was a sermon preached three years and a half before the crucifixion, and while they all admitted the old law to be binding. We then urged him to give us a commandment in the New Testament against image worship. We urged him upon this and many other equally presumptuous positions, and soon drove him from the Bible, when to fill up his time, he began to read from history to show that we ought to keep the first day of the week, making quotations from the "Epistle of Barnabas," and others, and misquoting other authors. We charged him with bringing forgeries for history, which he did not dare deny. Our opponent had indulged in slang and sarcasm which all reacted upon himself. We claimed three days upon this proposition, but Johnson said at the end of the second day he would not go on another day. I told him and his friends that if they had got enough they could back down, and putting it to vote nearly all his members voted to stop. There were many good points that were made against them which we have not time to notice in this report. Our people here are all well pleased with the result thus far, which cannot be said of the other side. God is giving us a victory. The Disciples claim that they have put forward the best man they have on this coast. There has been some fifteen ministers of different denominations in attendance, and from three to four hundred persons, many of whom are convinced that we have the truth.

December 30, 1877. W. M. HEALEY.

Sabbath-Schools.

PLEASE REPORT. Simply voting to join the California Sabbath-school Society of Seventh-day Adventists does not bring your school into membership. After voting to adopt the constitution as given in SIGNS No. 41, of Vol. 3, a report of such must be sent to the State secretary. See Art. VII of the constitution.

But four schools have reported, and they indirectly. All the schools which have voted to join the society should report immediately to Miss A. R. Canfield, Oakland, Cal.

J. E. WHITE, State Supt.

APPOINTMENTS.

PROVIDENCE permitting I will hold meetings with the churches in California as follows:—

MIDDLETOWN, Lake Co., January 5 and 6.

ST. HELENA, Tuesday, January 8. Business meeting 1 P. M. Preaching in the evening.

NAPA, Wednesday, January 9. Business meeting 1 P. M. Preaching in the evening.

VALLEJO, January 10. At 2 P. M. and in the evening.

WOODLAND, District Quarterly Meeting, January 12 and 13.

VACAVILLE, January 15 and 16.

OAKLAND, State Quarterly Meeting, January 19 and 20.

SACRAMENTO, Wednesday evening, January 23.

TEHAMA Co., where Brother Brorsen may appoint, January 26 and 27.

ST. CLAIR, Nevada, February 2 and 3, and as long as the interest may demand.

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH.

District Quarterly Meetings.

THE quarterly meetings of the eight districts of California will all be held Sabbath and first-day, January 12 and 13, as follows:—

DISTRICT No. 1, at Santa Rosa.

DISTRICT No. 2, at Fairview, Fresno Co.

DISTRICT No. 3, at St. Helena, Napa Co.

DISTRICT No. 4, at San Pasqual, San Diego Co.

DISTRICT No. 5, at Woodland, Yolo Co.

DISTRICT No. 6, near Brother Hinmstreets, Tehama Co.

DISTRICT No. 7, at Oakland.

DISTRICT No. 8, at San Francisco.

J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH, President.

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