

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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BE THOU WITH ME.

Be thou with me; the way is dark and drear.
Vouchsafe, O God, to make the pathway clear.
Doubtful and devious still my way must be
If thou dost guide me not,—be thou with me.

Life's bitter chalice to its dregs I sip,
Its fair fruits turn to ashes on my lip;
O thou who wept in dark Gethsemane,
I too have suffered—oh, be thou with me!

Lonely, adrift upon a troubled sea,
The cold waves, pitiless, break over me;
O thou who stilled the waves at Galilee,
Still thou my troubled soul,—be thou with me!

O Cross to which I cling, illumine the night;
O Lamp unto my feet, shed forth the light;
O Love divine that brightened Calvary,
Descend upon my heart,—be thou with me.

—Advance.

General Articles.

ISRAEL DEPART FROM GOD.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

WHILE Balak and his counselors were plotting to entice God's people into sin and thus secure their overthrow, the Israelites, all unconscious of their danger, were enjoying ease and quiet in their tents among the acacia groves in the vale of Shittim. They had little to occupy their minds or their time, and they felt little anxiety for the future. They had prevailed against the warlike inhabitants of the surrounding country, and they felt that they had only to cross the Jordan and the goodly land would be all their own. Their condition of ease and inactivity was unfavorable to moral and physical vigor, as well as to purity of thought and life, while a knowledge of the licentious character of the surrounding nations had to some extent familiarized their minds with thoughts of vice and lessened their abhorrence of crime.

At this time, Midianitish women were seen stealing into the camp, singly and in little companies. Their appearance excited no alarm, and so quietly were their plans conducted, that the attention of Moses was not called to the matter. It was the object of these women in their association with the Hebrews to first draw their attention from the God of Israel to heathen traditions, rites, and customs, and then to allure them into transgression of the divine law. These motives were studiously concealed under the garb of friendship, so that they were not suspected, even by the great leader. These heathen women feared to excite the indignation of Moses, but they did not consider that no evil work could be concealed from the all-seeing eye of God.

Their hellish plans were all too successful. It was not long before the poison of licentiousness and idolatry had spread like a deadly infection through the congregation of Israel. The people seemed to be infatuated. The rulers and leading men were among the first to step over the line; and so general was the defection, that it is recorded in the Sacred Word, that "Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor." Alas that the people who had been so signally protected from Satan's power, should now deliberately walk into the net which he had laid for them!

Suddenly Moses was aroused to perceive the mighty evil in the camp, and he was horrified as he discovered its nature and extent. So successful had been the plots of these vile, artful women, that his own people were participating in the

abominable scenes enacted at the worship of Baal, and the sacrifice and sacrilegious feasts were becoming established among the Israelites. The aged leader was filled with indignation, and the wrath of God was kindled against the people. By divine authority, Moses addressed to the rulers of Israel the command: "Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor."

This order was promptly obeyed. The people had already been awakened to the enormity of their sin, by the swift judgments of God. A terrible pestilence had broken out in the camp, and twenty-four thousand of the congregation fell a prey to its ravages. None knew where this visitation would end, yet they felt that their punishment was just. Overwhelmed with terror, they hastened to the tabernacle, and with tears and deep humiliation, confessed their sin.

While the people were thus weeping before God, at the door of the tabernacle, while the plague was still doing its work of death, and the magistrates executing their terrible commission, one of the nobles of Israel came boldly into the camp, accompanied by a Midianitish princess, whom he gallantly escorted to his tent. This daring outrage stirred the indignation of all Israel, and swift retribution followed the offenders. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the high priest, rose up from among the congregation, and slew them both. This prompt and determined act evinced a just abhorrence of the sins which had brought so great calamities upon Israel. God approved the course of Phinehas, and the plague was stayed; while the priest who had so zealously executed the divine judgment was honored before all Israel, and the priesthood was confirmed to him and to his house forever.

As we read this history, it seems almost incredible that a man could be so blinded by the bewitching power of woman as to indulge such stubborn and Heaven-daring rebellion, in face of the most terrible visitations of divine wrath. But human nature is the same in every age. The temptations of Satan are no less strong to-day than in the days of ancient Israel.

Satan has ever achieved his greatest successes through the neglect of God's people to maintain their separation from the world,—its customs, its practices, and principles. There are but two great parties among men,—the servants of Christ, and the servants of Satan. Their leaders are opposites in every particular. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to conquer the prince of darkness, says, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Here Christ makes a marked distinction between his followers and the world. Those who are of the world are in direct opposition to those who love God and keep his commandments. The heart must be kept with all diligence, that the human be not exalted above the divine. If those who profess to love and serve God, follow blind impulse, rather than reason and conscience, they will fall by the artifice of Satan. The affections should be guarded and controlled, lest they be placed upon unworthy objects, that are forbidden in the word of God.

Samson, that mighty man of valor, was under a solemn vow to be a Nazarite during the period of his life; but, becoming infatuated by the charms of a low woman, he rashly broke that sacred pledge. Satan worked through his agents to destroy this ruler of Israel, that the mysterious power which he possessed might no longer intimidate the enemies of God's people. It was the influence of this bold woman that separated him from God, her artifices that proved his ruin. The love and service which God claims, Samson gave to this woman. This was idolatry. He lost all sense of the sacred character and work

of God, and sacrificed honor, conscience, and every valuable interest, to base passion.

The life of Solomon should prove a beacon of warning to God's people in every age. The Lord had erected a barrier between Israel and other nations. He had made that people the depositaries of his law, and their safety lay in preserving their peculiar, holy character. But as King Solomon's heart was lifted up in pride, he became eager for still greater wealth and power. To secure these, political alliances were formed with idolatrous nations.

Honor and riches flowed in to him as the result; but these temporal advantages were dearly purchased at the sacrifice of principle. His kingdom was enriched with the gold of Farshish, but the fine gold of character was tarnished by the corrupting influence of paganism. Once over the wise barrier which God had erected, the king took, one after another, the fatal steps that led him away from hope, and happiness, and Heaven. From the wisest of the rulers, Solomon became a despot. Satan triumphed as this man, who had thrice been called the beloved of his God, became a slave of passion, and sacrificed his integrity to the bewitching power of woman.

The cases mentioned are sufficient to show the danger of corrupting the soul by mingling with God's enemies. These examples are placed on record for the benefit of those who live amid the perils of the last days. The devices of Satan are no less now than in ancient times. Indeed, as we near the period of Christ's second coming, Satan redoubles his efforts to work with all deceitfulness of unrighteousness. The youth especially are in constant and fearful danger of being overcome by his temptations.

In the judgments that followed Israel's sin, we may see with what abhorrence God looks upon worldliness, idolatry, and licentiousness. The same dangers exist to-day that threatened the prosperity, and even the existence, of his ancient people. Temptations to licentiousness have been steadily increasing from that time to the present, and similar scenes are constantly enacted, with similar efforts at concealment. A bewitching power is brought to bear on every soul not fortified by firm principle. Warnings of fathers and mothers and of God's ambassadors are all unheeded. The affections which should be centered upon God are given to the idolatry of unworthy objects.

Watchfulness and vigilance are needed now. The lustful eye must be turned off from beholding vanity. Boldness and immodesty must be met with a decided rebuke. Let none yield to a spirit of self-confidence, and feel that they are in no danger. As long as Satan lives, his efforts will be constant and untiring to make the world as wicked as before the flood, and as licentious as were the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The prayer may well be offered daily by all who have the fear of God before them, that he will preserve their hearts from evil desires, and strengthen their souls to resist temptation. Those who, in their self-confidence, feel no need of watchfulness and unceasing prayer, are near some humiliating fall. All who do not feel the importance of resolutely guarding their affections will be captivated by those who practice their arts to ensnare and lead astray the unwary.

Satan exulted to see Samson, a man whom God could have used to his glory, so infatuated that he could betray his strength into the hands of Delilah. Satan knew that he had taken Samson captive. Few who go thus far, again see clearly the aggravated character of sin. Reputation, strength, and usefulness are sacrificed for sinful indulgence. Blind infatuation leads men on in the way to destruction. The power of Satan, his arts and machinations—who can know them? Those who, in defiance of all the warn-

ings and entreaties of God's word, venture to indulge in sin, are sleeping on the very brink of eternal ruin. Because God bears long with transgressors of his law, because he sends them warnings and entreaties, because punishment does not immediately follow their evil deeds, they abuse his mercy and forbearance, and blindly rush on in a course of crime.

If those who now depart from the straight line of virtue and integrity were as promptly rebuked by the swift judgments of God as were the offenders in Israel's day, crime of this character would be less prevalent. When assailed by temptation, many have not moral strength to say, as did Joseph, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" They do not give a decided refusal to the first invitation to transgress the law of God; and soon unlawful indulgence becomes habitual, and they are ready to deny that it is a sin.

Unwise marriages are the curse of this age. Such an alliance can but be disastrous to both parties. That love which has no better foundation than mere sensual gratification will be headstrong, blind, and uncontrollable. Honor, truth, and every noble, elevated power of the mind, is brought under the slavery of passions. The man who is bound in the chains of this infatuation is too often deaf to the voice of reason and conscience; neither argument nor entreaty can lead him to see the folly of his course.

Men and women professing godliness should tremble at the thought of entering into a marriage covenant with those who do not respect and obey the commandments of God. It was this that opened the flood-gates of sin to the antediluvians. Such a connection with the world is a direct departure from God's express requirements.—"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

In these alliances the creature receives the love which should be given to the Creator. There is danger in entering into any intimate relation with those who have no connection with Heaven. This is the friendship which Inspiration calls enmity with God. We cannot be too jealous of ourselves, lest by associating with worldlings we fall into the same habits. It was for this reason that the Israelites were commanded to dwell alone, as a people separate from all other nations. The friendship of the Lord's enemies is more to be dreaded than their enmity; for Satan is constantly working through pleasing, intelligent unbelievers, to tempt the people of God to sin.

When one commandment of the decalogue is broken, the downward steps are almost certain. When once the barriers of female modesty are removed, the basest licentiousness does not appear exceeding sinful. Alas, what terrible results of woman's influence for evil may be witnessed in the world to-day! Through the allurements of "strange women," thousands are incarcerated in prison cells, many take their own lives, and many cut short the lives of others. How true the words of Inspiration, "Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell."

Beacons of warning are placed on every side in the pathway of life, to prevent men from approaching the dangerous, forbidden ground; but notwithstanding this, multitudes choose the fatal path, contrary to the dictates of reason, regardless of God's law, and in defiance of his vengeance.

Those who would preserve physical health, a vigorous intellect, and sound morals must "flee youthful lusts." Those who will put forth zealous and decided efforts to check the wickedness that lifts its bold, presumptuous head in our midst, are hated and maligned by all wrongdoers, but they will be honored and recompensed of God.

The judgments visited upon Israel for their sin at Shittim, destroyed the survivors of that vast company, who, nearly forty years before, had provoked the Lord to swear in his wrath that they should not enter Canaan. When, at the command of God, the people were numbered just prior to the death of Moses, it was found that "there was not left a man of them, save Caleb, the son of Nun, the son of Jephunneh." Thus had the word of God been strictly fulfilled.

EXPERIENCE is the Lord's school; and they who are taught by him usually learn by the mistakes they make that they have no wisdom, and by the slips and falls they meet with, that they have no strength.—*John Newton.*

REPENTANCE.

BY ELD. CHAS. B. REYNOLDS.

HOWEVER quaint or eccentric the creed or faith, all claiming to be Christians declare repentance necessary; but many mistake shadow for substance. They talk of being founded on the Rock, while they are really tottering on the sand.

It is of vital import to know wherein true repentance consists. The repentance of the Bible will be found to include the four Cs—

CONVICTION, CONTRITION, CONFESSION, CONVERSION.

The very first thing is *conviction of sin*—a clear sight, knowledge, a realizing sense of sinfulness. Without these there can be no repentance; for none but sinners can repent. Of what are we to repent? *SIN!* What is sin? "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

No man can sin unless the law is binding on him. All men have sinned! Rom. 3:9, 23; Gal. 3:22. Therefore, the law is binding on all! Rom. 3:19. Again, sinners, and not the righteous, can repent. Matt. 9:13. None are sinners but those under the law. Rom. 3:19. All are commanded to repent. Acts 17:30. Therefore, all are under the law—all can repent!

Repentance signifies change of mind. As we meditate upon the pure, holy, and perfect law of God, we realize that it demands constant obedience all the life long—not alone doing ALL, but ALWAYS. By gazing into the law, we see our deformity, and are convicted as transgressors. James 1:22, 25. The law is spiritual. It reaches to the most secret thoughts, desires and purposes of the mind. Heb. 4:12. It forbids and condemns sins of the heart. Ps. 19:7, 12.

A convicted sinner is sensible of heart sins. He sees his best duties and services tainted by sin—that all his life he has lived without God; that he has loved self far more than God; and that he has done these things contrary to light and knowledge, and notwithstanding all the mercies and judgments which God has sent to reclaim him.

When there is conviction of sin there will be contrition for sin. Contrition for sin is a sincere, godly sorrow for violation of the holy, just, and perfect law of God—real sorrow—an actual pain at heart. This is removing the heart of stone and getting a heart of flesh. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Ps. 51:17. Men despise broken things; the Pharisee despised the broken-hearted publican; God does not! He accounts the sorrow and shame of the penitent far more valuable than costly sacrifice of rams and bullocks. 1 Sam. 5:22. He values a heart that trembles at the word of God—a heart, breaking, not in despair, but in humiliation—a heart breaking within itself and breaking away from sin, even as Peter "went out and wept bitterly."

There is indeed a false sorrow which many mistake for the true. The sick fear death, express sorrow for sins, declare that if God will spare life they will amend; but they are only sorry that God is holy, that his law is so strict, that the wages of sin is death. They are not grieved because they have offended God, their friend and benefactor, who has followed them with mercy and goodness all the days of their life. The rottenness of such repentance is shown on recovery. So the criminal on the gallows repents, is truly sorry, not for the sin, but that punishment overtook him. So each winter under preaching of everlasting hell fire, many are terrified and claim to repent. It is not contrition for violation of the pure and holy law of love, but fear, and they draw near with their mouth, and with their lips do honor God, while their hearts are far removed from him, and their fear toward him is taught by the precepts of men. Isa. 29:13.

Contrition, or the sorrow of the true penitent, is for sin committed against the holy and good God. Ps. 51:4. The goodness and forbearance of God to sinners may well excite godly sorrow, much more considerations of his redeeming love. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Oh! love beyond degree! beyond expression! Let the penitent remember that Jesus, the innocent, the loving, the gentle Jesus, left the throne above. The infinite one became an infant, was born in a manger, became a home-

less wanderer, suffered at Gethsemane, died at Calvary, "poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bear the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isa. 53:12. Now, in the sanctuary of Heaven he pleads for sinners. Oh! that we may look unto him and be lightened.

Conviction and contrition will prompt *confession*.

By nature we are disposed to conceal, deny and excuse our sins, to say we are no worse than others, or not so bad as they, we could not help committing sin, etc., etc. To hide or deny our own sin is to mock and dishonor God; but to confess our sins is to honor his holy law, his power which beholds, his justice which might take vengeance, his forbearance which has so long spared us.

A frank, full, free confession of sin is the best way to find peace. Ps. 32:5. Secret sins require secret confession to God, but open violation of his law demands reparation and confession. Conviction, contrition, and confession, to complete genuine repentance, must be followed by conversion, a word much used, yet it occurs but once in the whole Bible, Acts 15:3, *epistrophe*, to turn about, to turn back from.

Conversion is turning from disobedience to obedience of God's holy law. Without conversion, conviction, contrition and confession are utterly in vain. Floods of penitential tears are all as naught. Cain's terror, Pharaoh's promises, Ahab's humiliation, Herod's gladly hearing John, Judah's confession—though all were combined in one man—would not prove him a real penitent so long as love of one sin remained in his heart.

True repentance is not content with loss of branches, but applies the ax to the root. The devil will suggest that your sin is only a very little one and may be indulged; but one small leak sinks a ship—one indulged sin will keep from Heaven. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven." Matt. 5:19. However dear, therefore, a lust may be, however hard to forsake, it must be forsaken; for "whosoever offends in one point he is guilty of all." If we do not die to sin, we shall die for sin. If do not slay our sins, our sins will slay us. As surely as we live, we cannot harbor any sin and gain eternal life.

We find, then, that the Bible teaches there can be no true repentance without law, if the law was changed in even one jot or tittle, we could not repent, for we could not tell what sin is; "for where no law is there is no transgression." If part, if one precept, is altered, all may be.

May God help us to be freed from every error, to love his perfect, just and holy law, to truly repent of our every sin, and find peace and pardon through the mediation of our great High Priest, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

WRITTEN IN THE HEART.

BY ELD. D. T. BOURDEAU.

"I WILL put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts," or minds. Jer. 31:33; Heb. 8:8-12.

This is one of the better promises of the new covenant. It relates to a law that was in existence in Jeremiah's time. This cannot be the typical law; for that law ceased at the cross. The law in question must therefore be the law of right and wrong as embodied in the ten commandments, which remains unaffected by the change of dispensations. See Matt. 5:17-19; Rom. 3:31, etc.

The Spirit of God was to be the great agent that was to accomplish this work; but that Spirit was to work through principles and motives; and there is no motive which the Holy Spirit has used more mightily in writing the law of God in the hearts of men under this dispensation than that growing out of the fact that Christ died for our sins, or transgressions of the law, John 3:4, receiving the very blows that our sins deserved, because the law could not be changed or abolished. The agonizing prayers of Jesus in the garden, the drops of sweat that there fell from his sacred person as the sins of the whole world rested upon him, the abuses that he received from his enemies in the trial that followed, and his sufferings upon the cross while his precious blood flowed freely from his head, his hands, and his feet, speak a thousand times more distinctly to the quickened conscience in favor of the law of God, than the voice that spoke from Sinai, telling us that Christ

resisted unto blood, yea, unto death in striving, not against the law, but against sin, the transgression of the law. And remember, dear reader, that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is a part of this law. Hence it is, that even at the close of this dispensation it is to be put or written in the foreheads or minds of the servants of God, as the seal or sign of the living God. Rev. 7:1-3; 6:12-17; 14:1; Eze. 20:12, 20; Ex. 31:17, etc. On the term seal in Rev. 7:2, see different versions, some of which render the original word seal, others sign, and others mark—seal, sign, and mark being convertible terms.

Since, then, our sins have cost the Son of God such cruel sufferings, how careful we ought to be to avoid sinning, by keeping the law of God through gratitude and love for him who died for us.

THE FLOOD OF YEARS.

A MIGHTY hand, from an exhaustless urn,
Pours forth the never ending Flood of Years
Among the nations. How the rushing waves
Bear all before them! On their foremost edge,
And there alone, is Life; the Present there
Tosses and foams and fills the air with roar
Of mingled noises. There are they who toil,
And they who strive, and they who feast, and they
Who hurry to and fro. The sturdy hind—
Woodman and delver with the spade—are there,
And busy artisan beside his bench,
And pallid student with his written roll.
A moment on the mounting billow seen—
The flood sweeps over them and they are gone.
There groups of revelers, whose brows are twined
With roses, ride the topmost swell awhile,
And as they raise their flowing cups to touch
The clinking brim to brim, are whirled beneath
The waves and disappear. I hear the jar
Of beaten drums, and thunders that break forth
From cannon, where the advancing billow sends
Up to the sight long files of armed men
That hurry to the charge through flame and smoke.
The torrent bears them under, whelmed and hid,
Slayer and slain, in heaps of bloody foam.
Down go the steed and rider; the plumed chief
Sinks with his followers; the head that wears
The imperial diadem goes down beside
The felon's with cropped ears and branded cheek.
A funeral train—the torrent sweeps away
Bearers and bier and mourners. By the bed
Of one who dies men gather sorrowing,
And women weep aloud; the flood rolls on;
The wail is stifled, and the sobbing group
Borne under. Hark to that shrill, sudden shout—
The cry of an applauding multitude
Swayed by some loud-tongued orator who wields
The living mass as if he were its soul.
The waters choke the shout and all is still.
Lo, next, a kneeling crowd and one who spreads
The hands in prayer: the engulfing wave o'ertakes
And swallows them and him. A sculptor wields
The chisel, and the stricken marble grows
To beauty; at his easel, eager-eyed,
A painter stands, and sunshine, at his touch,
Gathers upon the canvas, and life glows;
A poet, as he paces to and fro,
Murmurs his sounding lines. Awhile they ride
The advancing billow, till its tossing crest
Strikes them and flings them under while their tasks
Are yet unfinished. See a mother smile
On her young babe that smiles to her again—
The torrent wrests it from her arms; she shrieks
And weeps, and midst her tears is carried down.
A beam like that of moonlight turns the spray
To glistening pearls; two lovers, hand in hand,
Rise on the billowy swell and fondly look
Into each other's eyes. The rushing flood
Flings them apart; the youth goes down; the maid
With hands outstretched in vain and streaming eyes,
Waits for the next high wave to follow him.
An aged man succeeds; his bending form
Sinks slowly; mingling with the sullen stream
Gleam the white locks and then are seen no more.

Lo, wider grows the stream; a sea-like flood
Saps earth's walled cities; massive palaces
Crumble before it; fortresses and towers
Dissolve in the swift waters; populous realms
Swept by the torrent, see their ancient tribes
Engulfed and lost, their very languages
Stifled and never to be uttered more.

I pause and turn my eyes, and, looking back,
Where that tumultuous flood has passed, I see
The silent Ocean of the Past, a waste
Of waters weltering over graves, its shores
Strewn with the wreck of fleets, where mast and hull
Drop away piecemeal; battlemented walls
Frown idly, green with moss, and temples stand
Unroofed, forsaken by the worshippers.

Sadly I turn and look before, where yet
The flood must pass, and I behold a mist
Where swarm dissolving forms, the brood of Hope,
Divinely fair, that rest on banks of flowers
Or wander among rainbows, fading soon
And reappearing, haply giving place
To shapes of grisly aspect, such as Fear
Moulds from the idle air; where serpents lift
The head to strike, and skeletons stretch forth
The bony arm in menace. Farther on
A belt of darkness seems to bar the way,
Long, low and distant, where the Life that Is
Touches the Life to Come. The Flood of Years
Rolls toward it near and nearer. It must pass

That dismal barrier. What is there beyond?
Hear what the wise and good have said. Beyond
That belt of darkness still the years roll on,
More gently, but with not less mighty sweep.
They gather up again and softly bear
All the sweet lives that late were overwhelmed
And lost to sight—all that in them was good,
Noble, and truly great and worthy of love—
The lives of infants and ingenious youths,
Sages and saintly women who have made
Their households happy—all are raised and borne
By that great current in its onward sweep,
Wandering and rippling with caressing waves
Around green islands, fragrant with the breath
Of flowers that never wither. So they pass,
From stage to stage, along the shining course
Of that fair river broadening like a sea.
As its smooth eddies curl along their way,
They bring old friends together; hands are clasped
In joy unspeakable; the mother's arms
Again are folded round the child she loved
And lost. Old sorrows are forgotten now,
Or but remembered to make sweet the hour
That overpays them; wounded hearts that bled
Or broke are healed forever. In the room
Of this grief shadowed Present there shall be
A Present in whose reign no grief shall gnaw
The heart, and never shall a tender tie
Be broken—in whose reign the eternal Change
That waits on growth and action shall proceed
With everlasting Concord hand in hand.

—William Cullen Bryant, in *Scribner's Monthly*.

OUT OF THE BACK DOOR.

THERE are two doors in our churches. At the front door new members are received. In revival seasons, this door is thronged with incomers. Some come in hastily, and without good evidence of conversion. And these are the ones who commonly disappear soonest through the postern door.

For our churches have a rear door also. People do not go out through it in crowds; they slip out stealthily, one by one. I never knew of a concerted backsliding from Jesus Christ. Persons often urge the unconverted to repent and come in to Christ; but no one ever urges his fellow-member to steal out of the back door, and become a backslider. The very proposal would shock and alarm. People backslide without urging—and often before they are fairly aware of it themselves. That church which during the last year has had more travel through the door at the rear, than through the door of ingress, has gained a loss. They had better begin the New Year with a day of humiliation and prayer.

Backsliding is usually a gradual process. It is not a bold, sudden leap, but a series of slow and almost imperceptible slips. "Christian" and "Hopeful" first grew discontented with the strait road to Heaven, and found the footing rather rough. Then they looked over the stile into the soft, velvety "By-path Meadow." It promised easier walking. They flattered themselves that the meadow ran close alongside of the King's highway of holiness. So, after looking over wistfully, they concluded just to step over for a little while. But that crossing of the stile cost them a kidnapping by Giant Despair, and a wretched imprisonment in his dungeons, by which they were only delivered by deep repentance and the key of prayer. That wise man, Bunyan, describes only one door of admission into the Christian life, but the gateways of egress are very numerous. So our churches have only a single door of admission, but there are a great many posterns through which deserters slip out.

One professor begins to neglect secret prayer. If he keeps up the form, he loses the spirit of devotion. Presently he drops off from the social prayer-meeting. A slight excuse suffices to quiet his conscience. "The meetings are growing dull," he whispers to himself. "A sociable," a concert, a sleighing party, the opera or almost anything that promises a lively evening, draws him away. He drops quietly out of the back door, and gets fairly over into the ranks of the pleasure-seekers before he is aware. The number of professing Christians who owe their spiritual declension to sensual temptations is larger than is supposed. When a young man begins to desert from his post of duty, I soon suspect that the dance or drinking-cup, or secret licentiousness is at the bottom of it. The besetting sin soon becomes an overmatch for him; and if he does not quit his sinning, he will very soon quit his praying. The backslider who slips out the door to gratify fleshly lusts, always intends to go "just this once" and then return again. But a person rarely commits one deliberate sin, and stops with that single transgression. When the devil fairly gets hold of a church member, he does not let go his grip so easily.

But back of all outward backsliding lies the decay of religion *in the heart*. Our heart must be in our religion, and our religion in our heart, or else it becomes an uphill drudgery, or a sheer hypocrisy. Here lies the secret cause of many a church member's desertion. He has not heart for his religious duties. They are a downright penance. He tugs at them awhile as a galley-slave pulls at the oar. He goes to his closet, or to the prayer-circle, or to the Sabbath-school, because he *must*, and not because he wants to. If the church bell rings him to the sanctuary, he hunts an excuse in the weather, or his health, and if none avails him, he goes reluctantly to keep up appearances. Money given to the Lord's treasury becomes a *tax*, and he submits to it with secret protest. It is not a free gift, but an *assessment*, like the tax on his house or his income; he pays it grudgingly. In fact, the whole routine of external service is gone through slavishly and reluctantly, and he skirts everything that he possibly can. As soon as the service of Jesus Christ ceases to be a cheerful, voluntary *labor of love*, backsliding has begun. It is a mere question of time as to when he shall become an open deserter. His heart is outside the door, and he soon goes with it.

This paragraph will probably reach hundreds of church members who have been stealing away from their duties during the year just closed. Perhaps some of them will lay down this paper, and say, sadly, "Well, this means *me*. Oh! that I were as in months past!" The man or woman who honestly feels thus, I have some hope for. When there is conscience enough left to feel "pricked" and penitent on account of guilty wanderings from Christ, there is a possibility of recovery. And this is a good time to begin a new life.

Upon every backslider's ear the bell that strikes the incoming of a new year, ought to sound as a most solemn warning from Heaven. This is the right time to repent and do the first works again. This is a good time to give up false hopes and rotten foundations, and to seek a new conversion. Multitudes of church members are living on the mere memory of an out-worn experience, or on a faint hope that they were converted long years ago. They are really *out* of Christ's fold. "I am the door," saith the Shepherd's voice to these wandering sheep. The first step of these wanderers must be to Jesus. By him alone can they re-enter the deserted fold. Backsliding professor! what thou doest, do quickly! Even to thee very soon that door may be shut!—T. L. Cuyler.

HABIT.—Habit is a cable. We weave the thread of it every day, and at length we cannot break it. The chains of habit are generally too small to be felt, until they are too strong to be broken. To one who murmured because he rebuked him for a small matter, Plato replied: "Custom is no small matter. A custom or habit of life does frequently alter the natural inclination for good or evil." After a series of years winding up a watch at a certain hour, it becomes so much of a routine as to be done in utter unconsciousness; meanwhile the mind and body are engaged in something different.

CAPITAL.—Mr. Spurgeon was annoyed by three young men persisting in wearing their hats in church. He appeared for the time not to notice them, but by and by told his audience of a visit he had made to a Jewish synagogue. "When I entered," he said, "I took off my hat, but was informed that the mark of respect was to keep it on. I did so, though I felt very strange wearing my hat in a place of worship. And now, as I paid this mark of respect to the synagogue, may I ask those three Jews in the gallery to conform equally to our rules, and kindly uncover their heads?" The young "Jews" obeyed.

THERE is one field where educated women are in demand. That is the home. The educated woman is the best wife, the best mother, the best housekeeper, the best economist. The "coming men" could afford to pay all the expenses of a full training for their future wives merely for the greater good they would receive from them. Six years of hard study are well invested, if for nothing more than to be able to answer a thousand questions which curious youngsters will be asking in a few years.

HONESTY is a strong staff to lean upon.

HISTORY AND TRINE IMMERSION.

TESTIMONY OF MR. REEVES, APOSTOLICAL CANONS
AND MUNNULUS.

THE first name given by Bingham among those who held that trine immersion came from the appointment of the Saviour, is that of Chrysostom; but Chrysostom lived two centuries this side of Tertullian, in a day when traditions were more firmly established as authority in the church. In a review of the whole ground we shall refer to both Tertullian and Chrysostom again. We will briefly notice

MR. REEVES.

This is a witness of great importance to trine immersionists. It is his *opinion* which makes the "fair argument" that Justin Martyr believed in trine immersion! We think, however, that injustice is done to Mr. Reeves by Mr. Moore. He might speak in truth of "the confession of those early times," which is quite indefinite, and of trine immersion in early times, without ascribing that idea to Justin. Mr. Reeves has stated the strong argument, in his own mind, for that practice, in the following words:—

"The ancients carefully observed trine immersion, inasmuch that, by the 'Canons Apostolical,' either Bishop or Presbyter who baptized without it was deposed from the ministry."

That *somebody* believed in and practiced trine immersion at an early age in the Christian church, we do not deny. But we wish the reader to bear in mind that we are now searching for the *authority* for the practice. Mr. Reeves has been quoted with great confidence, and he refers to *his* authority. This same authority is elsewhere given by Eld. Moore, so we will now notice

"THE APOSTOLICAL CANONS."

Of these Eld. Moore says: "These 'Canons,' which consist of eighty-five ecclesiastical laws, contain a view of the church government among the Greek and Oriental Christians in the early centuries of the Christian religion" (*Mosheim*, vol. 4, p. 44), and can be relied upon in tracing Christian baptism back to a very early date. Some learned men, who have made profound researches respecting the origin of these Canons, have assigned to some of them a date much earlier than A. D. 200.

"The fiftieth of the Apostolical Canons reads as follows: 'If any Bishop or Presbyter do not perform three immersions of one initiation, but one immersion which is given into the death of Christ, let him be deposed; for the Lord did not say, "Baptize into my death," but "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Do ye, therefore, O Bishops, immerse thrice—into one Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the will of Christ by the Spirit.'—*Quinter and McConnell's Debate*, p. 114."

This is that to which Mr. Reeves refers; but he does not say one word as to its date, origin, and authenticity. It was of course written by *somebody*, and that *somebody* believed in three immersions. But *who* it was, and *when* he wrote, nobody knows. It was a very common practice in those days of *pious forgeries* to label their writings *apostolical*, or to ascribe them to some worthy Christian, to give them weight among those who did not stop to discriminate between the true and the false.

These Canons are from unknown sources. They did not all come into notice at one time. Notice that Mr. Moore says: "Some learned men . . . have assigned to *some of them* a date much earlier than A. D. 200." But of the *one in question*, the fiftieth, he says nothing. He must have known some of the facts respecting it, and to endeavor to give authority to this by speaking a good word for "some of them," savors much of the same spirit which originated them. Of the Canons, Dr. Schaff says:—

"They are evidently of gradual growth, and were collected either after the middle of the fourth century, or not till the latter part of the fifth, by some unknown hand, probably also in Syria."

These Canons are found, with notes, in a "History of Christian Councils," by Bishop Hefele, of Germany. Appended to Canon 50, the one quoted above, is this remark:—

"This Canon is among the most recent of the collection. It is not known from what source it is derived."

For the present we dismiss the Canons *Apostolical*, willingly according to the trine immersion-

ists all the honor they acquire by the use which they make of them.

Preceding these Canons, in point of chronology, comes the testimony of

MUNNULUS, BISHOP OF GIRBA.

His words, claimed in favor of three immersions, were spoken in the seventh Council of Carthage, held under Cyprian, A. D. 256. There were eighty-five bishops present. The sole object of this council was to settle the question of the validity of baptism administered by heretics; and the unanimous testimony was that those who had been baptized by heretics must be baptized again, if they would enter the Catholic or orthodox church. Not one word was spoken against their mode or form of administering it; only that it was invalid, or no baptism at all, because it was by the hands of a heretic. Cyprian preserved on record the decision of each member of the council. We give specimens, that the *animus* of the council may appear. Januarius of Muzzuli said:—

"I am surprised, since all confess there is one baptism, that all do not perceive the unity of the same baptism. For the church and heresy are two things, and different things. If heretics have baptism, we have it not; but if we have it, heretics cannot have it. But there is no doubt that the church alone possesses the baptism of Christ, since she alone possesses both the grace and the truth of Christ."

Athanasius of Ausvaga said: "We have received one baptism, and that same we maintain and practice. But he who says that heretics also may lawfully baptize, makes two baptisms."

The following we copy from Eld. Moore's book:—

"A. D. 256, while at the famous Council of Carthage, Munnulus made use of the following language in one of his speeches, preserved by Cyprian: 'The true doctrine of our holy mother, the Catholic Church, hath always, my brethren, been with us, and doth yet abide with us, especially in the article of baptism, and the trine immersion wherewith it is celebrated; our Lord having said, "Go ye, and baptize the Gentiles, in the name of the father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."—*Works of Cyprian*, part 1, p. 240."

The following, as the words of Munnulus, we copy from Cyprian's records of this council, in his *Works*, vol. 2, p. 204:—

"The truth of our mother, the Catholic Church, brethren, hath always remained and still remains with us, and even especially in the Trinity of baptism, as our Lord says, 'Go ye and baptize the nations in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.' Since, then, we manifestly know that heretics have not either Father or Son or Holy Spirit, they ought, when they come to the church our Mother, truly to be born again, and to be baptized; that the cancer which they had, and the anger of damnation, and the witchery of error, may be sanctified by the holy and heavenly laver."

We fear the same liberty was taken with the words of Munnulus that was taken with the history of Sozomen. That which was called by him "the Trinity of baptism," is by those who use his testimony to uphold a tradition, called "baptism, and the trine immersion," etc. The difference is material, there is a reduplication of the term baptism, or immersion, and the duplicate thus becomes a *word of explanation*, just such as we find inserted in the words of Sozomen.

But the query may arise, What did he mean by "the Trinity of baptism"? He explains this himself; we, says he, baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit, while heretics have neither Father, Son, nor Holy Spirit. Thus, instead of *three immersions* he refers to the *three persons* invoked in the act of baptism. And the same idea is still more clearly expressed by other early authors. Thus in Clement's "Recognitions," book 3, chap. 67, as follows:—

"But every one of you shall be baptized in ever-flowing water, the name of the Trine Beatitude being invoked over him."

And again twice in his "Homilies," thus:—

"Washing in a flowing river, or in a fountain, or even in the sea, with the thrice blessed invocation, you shall not only be able to drive away the spirits which lurk in you," etc.—*Hom. 9*, chap. 19.

"For there is something that is merciful from the beginning borne upon the water, and rescues from the future punishment those who are baptized with the thrice blessed invocation."—*Hom. 11*, chap. 26.

We are well aware that the "trine beatitude," or "thrice blessed invocation," drawn directly from the words of the Scriptures, was soon made the foundation of three-fold baptism, not at all based on the Scriptures, but resting on tradition only. Thus do the facts of history completely demolish the claim of *early practice* of trine immersion, or of tracing it to the days of the apostles. We admit that it was early enough to be found among the superstitions which sprung up even in the days of Tertullian. We have little care to follow the historical testimony further, because volumes of tradition have no weight with us, and this is proved to have no other origin.

The words of Dr. Miller, of Princeton College, are worthy of constant remembrance: "Even suppose you had found such declarations in some or all of the early fathers. What then? *Historic fact is not divine institution.*" J. H. W.

THE MORAL TEACHING OF THE JESUITS.

THAT the old pernicious doctrines of invincible ignorance, equivocation, mental reservation, and secret compensation are still firmly held and steadily taught by the disciples of this society, is clearly shown by a late work compiled by M. Paul Bert, the leading speaker against them, in the summer of 1879, before the Chamber of Deputies. His book is a simple translation, with notes, of one of the works of the late Father Gury, for years professor of moral science in a Jesuit college, the burden of exposing his order being thus cast upon the father himself. The works of this father are widely circulated both among the Jesuits and the common priests, and the accuracy of the translation can be easily tested by reference to the Latin original. The following extracts from the book, with comments by the *Christian Union*, will give something of an idea of the nefarious practices of this professed "Society of Jesus":—

"In regard to invincible ignorance, that we may establish our assertions, look at this example, cited by Father Gury, of the confession of Florine: 'I have told a lie, but I do not think I sinned because a weighty motive impelled me; it was to excuse my cousin and save him from a severe punishment.' What is the decision of the Jesuit? Not only that Florine should be held free from the sin of lying, on account of her invincible or innocent ignorance, but that she has done well and acted in accordance with the divine will. The immediate wrong, the falsehood, is not opposed to the will of God, he says, 'for although it may be opposed to the primary divine will, it is not opposed to the secondary divine will, by which God commands or grants us something, in supposing our invincible ignorance.' Hence we are led to infer that God himself willed the lie, and accepted it as so much virtue on the part of his invincibly ignorant child. The element of truth in this reasoning renders it all the more dangerous to those who cannot foresee the results of its application and detect the hidden snare."

"So it is, to take a more extreme case, with the confession of Adalbert. 'Wishing to kill my enemy Titus, I have killed my friend Caius.' The Jesuit not only excuses the penitent from all sin in this regard, but holds that, not having been able to foresee the death of Caius, his ignorance is a sufficient reason why he should not be bound to make restitution to the bereaved family. Thus we have numerous examples of approved acts of equivocation and mental reservation, although we should hardly expect them after the emphatic declaration of Father Gury, that 'it is never permitted to lie, not even in view of an advantage, for we must not do evil that good may come.' These are excellent words, but we soon find that there is, to the Jesuitical mind, a wide borderland between falsehood and truth, where a good Catholic may store nearly all his property in safety. The man who comes into an inheritance and hides his money, to save it from his creditors, does not offend against the truth in declaring that he has concealed nothing, because he has concealed nothing, 'in the sense according to which they have a right to ask him. So, in replying that he has concealed nothing, it is as if he had said he had committed no act of injustice toward his creditors, since it is only in this sense that the judge and the creditors can question him.' So when, in the custom-house, in answer to the official inquiry if he carries goods subject to duty, he replies, 'I have nothing,' it is evident to a Jesuit, though perhaps not to the custom-house officer, that he means, 'I have nothing that

I myself need make known. It is your business to look instead of questioning me.' Father Gury cautiously adds, however, with a touch of the inevitable policy of the order, that ecclesiastics should tell the truth, to avoid a scandal in case they should be detected in their denial, and the affair become noised abroad.

"The examples of secret compensation are yet more distinct. The righteousness of this act is not only openly taught in the Moral Philosophy, but enforced by a number of supposed cases, like that of Augustus, who, sentenced by the judge to pay to Antonius a debt which he, though lacking the legal proof, had already paid in full, obeys the judge and then secretly steals the same amount from Antonius. It is well, says the Jesuit; he only takes his own again. So Mark, a servant, breaks by accident a costly crystal vase, and his angry master deducts its value from his wages. Mark has the sympathy and approval of Father Gury in the system of petty pilfering from his master by which he quietly and safely fills up the aching void in his pocket. Further than this, we have the case of a citizen, whose donkey is stolen by night, but the beast, escaping from the thieves, breaks into neighboring fields and does damage for which the judge sentences his master to pay. The citizen accordingly pays, but regards the decision as unjust, since he could not have prevented the occurrence, and so resorts to secret compensation, by helping himself not only from the goods of his neighbor's, but also from the public treasury. The Jesuit sanctions his course.

"Such is the spirit of the whole book. The pure moral laws are upheld to those who may find it convenient to obey them; but where money or reputation or any worldly prosperity is concerned, the loop-holes of lying and theft and uncharity are sprinkled with holy water. This accommodating character of Father Gury's morality shows far more clearly in the practical cases cited than, at first sight, in the principles of the 'Compendium.' We are directly taught, indeed, that it is permitted to 'recommend a lesser wrong to one determined to commit a greater; that a promise of marriage may rightfully be broken, if one of the parties come into possession of such a fortune as to arouse reasonable hopes of securing a richer partner; that it is not contrary to the law of kindness to 'wish a temporal ill to your neighbor, or to rejoice in it, for a good end,' and other similar moral lessons; but, for the most part, the Philosophy abounds in definitions and divisions and cross-divisions, until the sense becomes bewildered in a multitude of words. Conscience, for instance, branches into the vincible or invincible conscience, the certain or doubtful, the scrupulous or relaxed, the probable or improbable, and these, in turn, have their own ramifications, until the reader grows secretly hopeful that, however much he may sin against one kind of conscience, he will have plenty of varieties left to carry him through."

WORSHIPING THE GOLDEN CALF.

THE worship of the golden calf is pretty general now. Men are esteemed according to the amount of money which they possess; indeed we say a man "is worth so much." Though the man may not be worth a pair of old shoes, yet if he has a big house, a fair estate, and a huge capital, he is said to be worth so much. Poor little creature! In many cases his worth might be written on your thumb nail. It is not the man that has worth; his house, his lands, and his gold have the worth, but not the man. There is far too much bowing down and cringing before the golden calf in all classes of society. Brother, you must sooner endure poverty than to do a wrong thing for the sake of riches; and you must learn to value men for what they are, not for what they have. It needs not Christianity to tell you that some of the worthiest, noblest and most kingly earn their bread by the sweat of their brow; when you meet them, love and honor them. On the other hand, you must know that some of the vilest of men have at times climbed to high places of wealth and power.

Do not cringe to any man, but least of all bow to a mere money-bag. Value men by their characters, and not by their positions. God grant that none of us may ever be found worshipping the golden calf. Yet to get into *society* the meanest things are done. I do not know what sort of thing *society* may be, but I have heard that it is a very wonderful achievement to get

into society; to have the privilege of enjoying the empty ceremonies and hollow shams of stupid splendor; to have the privilege of talking to those persons who spend more on their dress than on their religion. From what little I do know of this wonderful thing called "society" I have felt no ambition to partake in its felicities; and yet to get into society I have seen men fling away their principles, forsake their friends, stifle their consciences, abandon the church fellowships, and become traitors to their God. Forsooth they are successful in business, and hope to rank among the county families, and so they leave those who love them to entertain at lavish cost those who sneer at them. The Lord save those of you who are prosperous from being thus degraded.—*Spurgeon*.

The Sabbath School.

THE MARRIAGE AT CANA.

THERE WAS to be a marriage at Cana of Galilee. The parties were relatives of Joseph and Mary. Christ knew of this family gathering, and that many influential persons would be brought together there, so, in company with his newly-made disciples he made his way to Cana. As soon as it was known that Jesus had come to the place, a special invitation was sent to him and his friends. This was what he had purposed, and so he graced the feast with his presence.

The guests assembled and time passed on. At length an incident occurred that caused much perplexity and regret. It was discovered that from some cause the wine had failed. The wine used was the pure juice of the grape, and it was impossible to provide it at that late hour. It was unusual to dispense with it on these occasions; so the mother of Christ, who, in capacity of relative had a prominent part to perform at the feast, spoke to her son, saying, "They have no wine." In this communication was a hidden request, or rather, suggestion, that He to whom all things were possible would relieve their wants. But Jesus answered, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come."

His manner was respectful, yet firm; he designed to teach Mary that the time for her to control him as a mother, was ended. His mighty work now lay before him, and no one must direct concerning the exercise of his divine power. There was danger that Mary would presume upon her relationship with Christ, and feel that she had special claims upon him and special rights. As Son of the Most High, and Saviour of the world, no earthly ties must hold him from his divine mission, nor influence the course he must pursue. It was needful that he should stand free from every personal consideration, ready to do the will of his Father in Heaven.

The earthly relation of Christ to his mother was ended. He who had been her submissive son was now her divine Lord. Her only hope, in common with the rest of mankind, was to believe him to be the Redeemer of the world, and yield him implicit obedience. The fearful delusion of the Roman church exalts the mother of Christ equal with the Son of the infinite God; but he, the Saviour, places the matter in a vastly different light, and in a pointed manner indicates that the tie of relationship between them in no way raises her to his level, or insures her future. Human sympathies must no longer affect the One whose mission is to the world.

The mother of Christ understood the character of her Son, and bowed in submission to his will. She knew that he would comply with her request if it was best to do so. Her manner evidenced her perfect faith in his wisdom and power, and it was this faith to which Jesus responded in the miracle that followed. Mary believed that Jesus was able to do that which she had desired of him, and she was exceedingly anxious that everything in regard to the feast should be properly ordered, and pass off with due honor. She said to those serving at table, "Whatsoever he sayeth unto you, do it." Thus she said what she could to prepare the way.

At the entrance of the dwelling there stood six stone water-pots. Jesus directed the servants to fill these pots with water. They readily obeyed this singular order. The wine was wanted for immediate use, and Jesus commanded, "Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." The servants beheld with astonishment, that in-

stead of the crystal water with which they had just filled those vessels, there flowed forth wine. Neither the ruler of the feast nor the guests generally were aware that the supply of wine had failed; so, upon testing it, the ruler was astonished, for it was superior to any wine he had ever before drank, and vastly different from that which had been served at the commencement of the feast.

This donation of Christ to the marriage supper was a symbol of the means of salvation. The water represented baptism into his death, the wine, the shedding of his blood for the purifying of the sins of the world. The provision made for the wedding guests was ample, and not less abundant is the provision for blotting out the iniquities of men.

Jesus had just come from his long fast in the wilderness, where he had suffered in order to break the power of appetite over man, which, among other evils, had led to the free use of intoxicating liquor. Christ did not provide for the wedding guests wine that from fermentation or adulteration was of an intoxicating character, but the pure juice of the grape, clarified and refined. Its effect was to bring the taste into harmony with a healthful appetite.

The guests remarked upon the quality of the wine, and presently inquiries were made that drew from the servants an account of the wonderful work that the youthful Galilean had performed. The company listened with unbounded amazement, and exchanged words of doubt and surprise. At length they looked for Jesus, that they might pay him due respect and learn how he had accomplished this miraculous conversion of water into wine; but he was not to be found. He had, with dignified simplicity, performed the miracle, and had then quietly withdrawn.

When it was ascertained that Jesus had really departed, the attention of the company was directed to his disciples who had remained behind. For the first time they had the opportunity of acknowledging themselves to be believers in Jesus of Nazareth as Saviour of the world. John related what he had heard and seen of his teachings. He told of the wonderful manifestations at the time of the baptism of Jesus, by the prophet John, in the river Jordan; how the light and glory from Heaven had descended upon him in the form of a dove, while a voice from the cloudless heavens proclaimed him to be the Son of the Infinite Father. John narrated these facts with convincing clearness and accuracy. The curiosity of all present was aroused, and many anxious ones who were looking and longing for the Messiah, thought it was indeed possible that this might be the Promised One of Israel.

The news of this miracle wrought by Jesus spread through all that region and even reached Jerusalem. The priests and elders heard with wonder. They searched with new interest the prophecies pointing to the coming of Christ. There was the most intense anxiety to know the aim and mission of this new Teacher, who came among the people in so unassuming a manner, yet did that which no other man had ever done. Unlike the Pharisees and other dignitaries who preserved an austere seclusion, he had joined the mixed assembly of festal gathering, and, while no shadow of worldly levity marred his conduct, he had sanctioned the social gathering with his presence.

Jesus rebuked intemperance, self-indulgence, and folly; yet he was social in his nature. He accepted invitations to dine with the learned and noble, as well as the poor and afflicted. On these occasions, his conversation was elevating and instructive, holding his hearers entranced. He gave no license to scenes of dissipation and revelry, yet innocent happiness was pleasing to him. A Jewish marriage was a solemn and impressive occasion, the pleasure and joy of which were not displeasing to the Son of man. This miracle pointed directly toward breaking down the prejudices of the Jews. The disciples of Jesus learned a lesson of sympathy and humanity from it. His relatives were drawn to him with warm affection, and when he left for Capernaum, they accompanied him.—*Great Controversy, Vol. 2.*

It is not the bee's touching on the flowers that gathers the honey, but her abiding for a time upon them, and drawing out the sweet. It is not he that reads most, but he that meditates most, on divine truth, that will prove the choicest, strongest Christian.

The Signs of the Times.

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

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

EDITORS.

J. H. WAGGONER, - - - - - RESIDENT EDITOR.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, DECEMBER 30, 1880.

THE ONE HOPE.

IN our last we showed that the doctrine of the millennium, or the world's conversion, was by no means the hope of the church presented in the Scriptures. The prophets of the Old Testament have pointed to no such hope. Jesus Christ and his apostles did not hold out to the church any such hope.

But there is another hope cherished by the church, equally false; and that is, that at death the Christian enters Heaven. Hence, in all the popular sermons of the day, you are pointed to death for your reward, when your joys will commence. "Death," as the poet sings, "is the gate to endless joy."

That which the apostle has represented as man's last enemy, is made his best friend. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Death, the last enemy of the just, is destroyed by the first resurrection. How oft have we heard, on funeral occasions, or when our friends have fallen asleep in Jesus, "They have gotten the victory over death. They have finally come to the point where death, their best friend, has cut the string of mortality, and let the immortal soul free." This we regard as a false hope. The Scriptures nowhere sustain it. The Scriptures do not represent that the Christian obtains any victory at death. It is true that the Christian, having lived a life of holiness, as he comes nearer to the end of his probation, and to that period of sleep in Jesus, may triumph in hope of the glory of God. It may be for the benefit of surviving friends, and as a matter of comfort in the church, that the evidence be given that the deceased was prepared for such a change. The Spirit of God may rest down upon him, and with his last breath he may shout the praises of God.

The Christian may rejoice that death is soon to bring his sufferings to an end; but all this does not constitute proof that death lets the supposed immortal part in man free from the body to ascend to the heavenly world, while the body shall be carried to the grave. The experiences of Christians, triumphing in the last hour, does not prove that there is an immortal part in man that at death takes its flight to the glories of the heavenly world. The theology of the church being wrong, the experiences in the church have been misg taken. It is consistent with the character of God that thus our dying friends may leave evidence to show God's approval of a holy and godly life.

Instead of the dying Christian getting victory over death, this is the hour of death's triumph, according to the decree of God on account of sin and man's fallen condition. But life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel. The grave will not long hold the sleeping just. We hear Paul proclaim the victories of the Son of God over death, in these triumphant words: "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. . . . Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

At the last trump, and not at death, victory comes to the Christian. It is then that the Christian gets victory over death, being free, forever free from his power. He then exclaims, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

We hear, by way of Patmos, [Rev. 1:18, the Life-giver saying, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, amen, and have the keys of hell [the grave] and of death." Jesus Christ, crucified on Calvary, passed into the tomb, and was raised by the power of the Father, triumphing over death. As he arose, he seized the keys of death and the grave, and with triumph ascended on high. Death may hold a Luther, a Wesley, until the hour when the triumph of sin, and Satan, and death, must cease at the descent of the King of kings in glory, to unlock he tombs, open the graves, and bring forth all the

just, who have felt the last sting of death, and over whom the grave holds the victory. Hear that universal shout from the redeemed, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It is then, and not at death, that the Christian has the victory over death. But the apostle has spoken directly upon this point: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen."

There were those in Paul's day who questioned the resurrection of the dead, the same as the spiritualists and others do at the present time. "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." The apostle makes the one to depend upon the other. If Christ is raised, the dead will be raised; but if Christ is not raised, the dead will not be raised. The gospel of the resurrection of the dead is all based upon the resurrection of Christ. "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not."

The apostles took their lives in their hands and went forth to preach the gospel. That gospel was based on the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and Paul reasons that if Christ had risen, then the dead would be raised; but if the dead were not to be raised, then Christ was not risen. Then their faith and their preaching were vain. But Christ had risen from the dead. The gospel was a reality, because the dead would be raised.

The next verse contains a tremendous conclusion, to which we wish to call your attention: "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." But, says popular theology, Abraham triumphed in faith, and his immortal soul went home to Heaven. And there is Lazarus in his bosom in Heaven. And should there be no resurrection, Abraham is well enough off; Abraham is saved. The popular view teaches that Abraham, Isaac, and all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and saints of all ages are eternally safe in Heaven. Then, what does Paul mean by saying, If the dead rise not, then is your faith vain and our preaching vain, and that they who have fallen asleep in Jesus are perished? According to this testimony, if there is no second advent of Christ, Abraham, Noah, Lot, and the apostles, and the martyrs have all perished.

A certain minister in Ohio, in speaking of the second advent and the resurrection, said: "I do not see any need of a resurrection, since all the good of past ages have gone to Heaven, where there is fullness of joy." And if I believed with this Ohio minister, I would say the same. It is not worth while to have our Lord come back here after this body, if all go right to Heaven at death, where there is fullness of joy. Why trouble the old bodies which the dying saints were so glad to get rid of, when death, "the gate to endless joy" (?) freed them from those bodies and let them into Heaven? If there is fullness of joy there, you cannot make it any fuller. If there are pleasures forevermore, will it be any better to have the old bodies there? Why need the Son of God, attended by all the holy angels, descend from Heaven in matchless grandeur and glory, and the voice of the archangel shake open the grand old sepulchers of the patriarchs, and the graves of the prophets and apostles, martyrs and saints, small and great, simply to call forth old bodies they were so glad to leave behind, when, according to popular orthodoxy, they all went to Heaven at death?

The hope of the gospel, the one hope, the one grand hope to which all the light of revealed truth centers, is the second advent of Jesus Christ, and the resurrection of the dead. If there be no resurrection of the dead, they that have fallen asleep in Christ are perished. That is the last of them. Death, in the last hour of dissolving nature, seized them, took them into its embrace, bore them to the tomb, and there they sleep, and to them death will be an eternal sleep, unless the Lord himself shall descend and wake them to immortality. But the Lord will come and unlock the prison house, and will call forth the righteous dead, clothed with immortality.

This was the hope of Adam, of Abel, of Noah, and of Job, who says, "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

This was the hope of the prophet Isaiah, who says,

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust."

This was the hope of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." This is not one of our blessed hopes, as though we had others; but it is the blessed hope—the one hope, the hope of the gospel, the hope of the church of all ages. J. W.

"IT IS WRITTEN."

WHEN Jesus, our pattern, was tempted of the devil, he met the suggestions of the enemy with the words of the Scriptures. At each proposition of Satan the Saviour referred him to that which "is written." This was at once his answer and his refuge. "The Scriptures," which he always honored, and which were with him and with his apostles after him, the sole resort to settle all questions, were the sacred writings of the Hebrews—the Old Testament. Many in this degenerate age have become "wise above what is written," and depreciate the Old Testament, if they do not quite hold it in contempt. In this they are very far from following the example of our divine Master. In the notable parable of the "rich man and Lazarus," he put into the mouth of Abraham these words: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them," with the further declaration that, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

These words of Jesus afford to us an important lesson of the high esteem in which we are to hold the Scriptures and of the use we are to make of them. The words of Moses and the prophets are better evidence, and more convincing, than would be the greatest miracle. Facts bear witness to the correctness of this estimate of the Saviour. He who rejects the word of God will not be convinced by any evidence. Jesus sent word to John that "the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." And it was after all this that the Pharisees and Sadducees came together asking of him a sign! As they were not satisfied with what he had done, we cannot imagine what sign would have been satisfactory to them.

When the Sadducees questioned him concerning the resurrection of the dead, he referred them to "the Scriptures and the power of God." The Scriptures say the dead will be raised, and God is able to fulfill his word; and here he rested it. The Bible is its own best witness, and they who reject the "sure word of prophecy" will not be convinced by any amount of external evidences. Infidelity is more a matter of the heart than of the head. We have said, and we are firm in the belief, that the world is not wicked because of its ignorance of the truth, but it is ignorant because of its wickedness. "Light is sown for the upright." Thank God for a revelation which our consciousness approves; which reaches the heart as well as the mind; which guides the affections as well as the intellect.

But Satan is crafty; he was intent upon gaining his point, and he also quoted Scripture. Determined not to be discomfited, he thought to meet the Son of God upon his own ground, and with his own weapons. But the Saviour was not even thus to be driven from his stronghold. Calmly and confidently as before he still appealed to the Scriptures to rebuke the tempter.

In this dilemma the people of God often find themselves. Scripture met with Scripture! So the magicians of Egypt met miracle with miracle. And he of little faith in God often comes off second in such a contest. How shall this difficulty be met?

Here also we find an important lesson. It is not merely in the use but in the right use of Scripture that we shall find strength and security. The Saviour quoted the Scriptures to vindicate the right and to honor God. Satan quoted the Scriptures to subvert the right and to accomplish his own selfish and wicked purposes. The Scriptures may be used to aid wickedness as well as to aid righteousness. We need to have our senses exercised to discern motives as well as actions.

How may we know when the word of God is wrongly used, as in the case of Satan's quoting it? We must understand not only the words of the Scripture, but their proper application. A scripture misapplied is perverted. Read Psalm 91, from which the devil quoted, and you will find that it refers to the plagues, to the fu-

ture, and could not justly be applied to the Saviour or to his time. This is the great error of the present age. Many read the Bible; they learn its words, but they are not wise in its application. Past, present and future are all alike to them. They are as blind as were the Jews to "discern the signs of the times." As the Jews, they will not know the time of their visitation, unless they are more discriminating, and more unselfish, in their applications.

We believe that all perversions of Scripture are founded in selfishness. Of this we may not always be conscious, but that proves nothing. "Who can understand his errors?" Who knows the deceptions of the human heart? Jer. 17:9. Gerrit Smith once remarked that, according to his observation, men seldom read the Bible to learn what they ought to do, though they profess to reverence it, and to receive it as "the man of their counsel;" but they first decide what they desire to do, and then search the Bible for proof that it is right. There is little doubt that this is quite true of many who use the Bible merely as a minister to their own selfishness. No amount of direct evidence can move such professors. They have just what they want—just what their own hearts devised, and therefore it must ever be highly acceptable to themselves. They may uphold their notions by only the merest inferences, yet the plainest declarations of holy writ cannot shake them. They may be moved by still stronger appeals to their selfishness, but by nothing else.

That such conclusions seem unavoidable is to be regretted. We would that it were different; that the heart of man were not so deceitful; that man, in his fallen condition, were not so perverse. But it is so. We shall do injustice to ourselves as well as to the truth of God if we shut our eyes to the truth. In order that we may avoid the danger we must be aware of its existence. We must be convinced of our own weakness before we will seek for help and strength from above. We cannot examine ourselves too closely, nor study our motives too thoroughly, where a mistake may prove fatal. God has magnified his word above all his name; Ps. 138:2; and it is a fearful thing to pervert it. The Scriptures are a gift too precious to be lightly esteemed. If used aright they have a sanctifying and saving power; if abused they will prove a swift witness against us in the day of account. J. H. W.

FEELING VS. GOD'S WORD.

BY ELD. A. S. HUTCHINS.

MANY who would be shocked at the thought of holding in higher estimation their own feelings than the word of God do, nevertheless, in matters of religious faith and practice, often act more from the impulses of their own heart, than from the teachings of the Scriptures.

Were man left to the influence and power of his fallen nature to work out his salvation, we may easily determine, from Romans 1:21-32, as to the character he would form and the destiny he would meet.

In love to the world, and to secure the salvation of the penitent, God has revealed his will and established a public ministry to proclaim and bear it to the nations, tongues, and kings of the earth. Shall we honor and acknowledge the Author of this priceless Revelation by receiving it as the man of our counsel, and the unerring rule of our faith?

Shall not its divine instructions be heard above the voice of the people? Shall they not mould our religious sentiments and turn our feet into the "narrow" way of life, rather than trust to early education and tread the "broad" way of death? Shall not tradition with all its alluring errors bow before the word of inspiration, and by it be hewn in pieces as was Agag by the sword of Samuel?

Let the church of God awake from her slumbers and cry, The Bible, the Bible. Let her come forth from the wilderness, "leaning upon her beloved," with her voice raised for Bible religion, Bible life, Bible hope, and strong confidence ultimately of Bible felicity. Let her awake in vindication of the law of the Lord, in defence of the down-trodden Sabbath, the rest-day of the Creator, blessed and sanctified, and given to man before sin had marred the Creator's work.

Says David, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." In behalf of the Scriptures the apostle bears the following testimony: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in

righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Doctrine is the first thing specified for which the Scripture is said to be profitable. Amid the confusion of creeds and sentiments of religious bodies at the present time, we cannot look too closely to the word of God, or by it too thoroughly test our religious faith.

False sentiments may please and charm us, but they cannot convert the soul, nor secure to us eternal life. Said Christ, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." And again he prays in behalf of his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." And it is a painful reflection that the apostle looked forward to the time when men would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts should heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they should turn away their ears from the truth, and should be turned unto fables.

Says one man, Our business now is to convert the world, and if it shall prove that our theology is incorrect, we will settle that question when we get to Heaven. But I incline strongly to the opinion that Heaven will not prove the place to settle theological debates.

"For instruction in righteousness," Paul affirms the Scripture is also "profitable." As Christians we need "reproof," "correction" and "instruction." For these we are directed to the Scriptures. Not a word is said about taking our feelings as a sure guide.

What apology, then, shall be offered for those who have been soundly convinced from the Scriptures of their obligation to hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, been blest in acknowledging the claims of this ancient institution, and in keeping it unto the Lord, and yet, all at once, have a conviction come over them of the sacredness of the first day, so much as to lead them to sacrifice reason and judgment and the plain teachings of the Bible, and turn from the Sabbath of the Lord to the first day?

How will men and women, whose minds have been enlightened on this question to that extent they know the Bible enjoins no weekly Sabbath but the seventh day, meet the Judge and stand before him with no excuse for not obeying the commandment only that some dying friend had warned them never to leave the church of their early choice? And how will ministers meet the record of their lives, who have taught men to honor and keep as the Sabbath another day than God's chosen rest-day, while they see the Bible contains no commandment to sustain them, and declare they want no command, and are satisfied without Scripture enjoining the observance of it?

A heavy responsibility rests upon the minister of the gospel. Oh, that it might be realized! The voice of the Master is, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Of the false prophets he says, "If they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings." Jer. 23:22.

PETER'S LADDER—HOW TO CLIMB IT.

BY ELD. A. C. BOURDEAU.

PETER'S ladder, which sets forth true sanctification as being a progressive work, is composed of eight rounds: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." 2 Peter 1:5-7. There are seven steps from faith to charity. The convert has first a deep sorrow for his sins; or "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." From this point, the work is onward and upward till the top round is reached. But sanctification is a work which is not accomplished in a moment; neither should it take long years of anxious toil to attain the most excellent grace, charity, or love.

In music the diatonic scale consists of eight sounds with seven intervals called steps, of which two are small and five are large. The scale is likened to a "ladder," and it is but carrying out the figure to apply the term "step" to the parts of it. In going up the scale from one to eight, the eighth tone is the octave of the first; and in ascending from this point the same tones in the scale are gone over, yet they range an octave higher, and so on.

Thus it is, in a certain sense, in going up the ladder of Christian sanctification. In adding to faith virtue,

and the rest of the Christian graces, when the eighth round, charity, is reached, it is, as it were, the octave of the first, it is operative, or *working faith*—faith that works by love and purifies the heart. This kind of faith is needed in the earliest stages of Christian experience. At this point the child of God finds himself on a higher plane of action. He realizes that he must hold fast whereunto he has attained. And as he continues to ascend, in perfecting the work that he has begun, he steps onto the same rounds in the ladder, yet they range higher. In this way, we may truly sing as we go:—

"We are climbing, climbing, climbing up Zion's hill."

LENGTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

MARK TWAIN mourns over the diminished length of the Mississippi in this strain: Therefore, the Mississippi between Cairo and New Orleans, was 1,215 miles 176 years ago. It was 1,180 after the cut-off of 1722. It was 1,040 after the American bend cut-off, some years ago. It has lost sixty-seven miles since. Consequently, its length is only 973 miles at present.

Now, if I wanted to be one of those ponderous scientific people, and to prove what had occurred in the long past by what had occurred in a given time in the recent past, or what will occur in the far future by what has occurred in late years, what an opportunity is here! Geology never had such a chance, nor such exact data to argue from! Nor development of species, either. Glacial epochs are great things, but they are vague—vague. Please observe:—

In the space of 176 years the Lower Mississippi has shortened itself 242 miles. That is an average of a trifle over one mile and a third per year. Therefore, any calm person, who is not blind or idiotic, can see in the Old Oolitic Silurian period, just 1,000,000 years ago last November, the Lower Mississippi river was upward of 1,300,000 miles long, and struck out over the Gulf of Mexico like a fishing-rod. And by the same token any person can see that 742 years from now the Mississippi will be only a mile and a quarter long, and Cairo and New Orleans will have joined their streets together, and be plodding comfortably along under a single mayor and a mutual board of aldermen. There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact.—*Christian at Work.*

WANTED—A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

THERE is no article so rare, none for which the market price is so high, as a good conscience; nothing for which, in others, men are willing to pay such good wages. We all want carpenters that will put no green timbers and no sappy boards in our houses, masons who will mix no mortar with ill-slacked lime, farmers who will put no thistles and no stone in the center of their baled hay, market men who will not put the ripe fruit at the top and the green fruit at the bottom, lawyers who are not liars, shopmen who guarantee nothing that they do not know, authors who never forget to put quotation marks where they belong, ministers who preach their own earnest and hearty thoughts.—*Lyman Abbott.*

THE London Times, speaking editorially of the advance in England of religious liberty, says: "Two centuries ago Nonconformists could not meet for public worship. They could only meet in holes and corners, in back parlors and hay-lofts, on the sly and as law-breakers. Only a century ago upon the least suspicion of a private 'mass house'—a public one was out of the question—constables were set on, suspected Papists hunted down the street to find shelter where they could. Half a century ago a Dissenter would only be in Parliament on sufferance, and a Papist not at all, on any terms." Now it is stated that Dean Stanley is in favor of permitting Nonconformists, under certain restrictions, to use parish churches for their own religious services at hours which would not interfere with any regular services. He has ascertained that it would not be illegal to do this, and he has tried it already in Westminster Abbey.

It is said that clergymen in this country have received circulars from a London dealer in second-hand sermons, who offers them in manuscript form for 25 cents each, or \$20 a hundred; also a line of still cheaper ones, at ten cents each, warranted orthodox, with "a pleasantness, yet an awful solemnity about them." Should there not be a double duty on such importations?

A WORLD without a Sabbath would be like a man without a smile, like a summer without flowers, and like a homestead without a garden.

The Home Circle.

MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.

A NEW YEAR'S STORY—BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"I WONDER what I shall get for a New Year's gift?" said Ellen Grant, on the day before New Year's.

"I'll tell you what I'd like to have," said little Mary. "I'd like to have one of the biggest wax dolls that could be found. As big as a real baby, and a great deal bigger, too. Wouldn't you, sister?"

"No; but I'd like to have—let me see what I would like to have;" and Ellen sat and thought for a few moments. "Yes, I'd like to have a shawl just like Aunt Mary's."

"And I'd like to have a pony," spoke up Harry. "Oh! I wish father would buy me a pony for a New Year's gift."

Thus the children talked, first wishing for one thing, and then for another, while Aunt Prudence sat knitting and listening to what they said. At last, little bright-eyed Mary, the merry pet of the house, came, and leaning her arms on the knees of Aunt Prudence, looked up into her face, and said:—

"What are you going to give me for a New Year's gift, Aunt Prudence?"

"A kiss, dear," replied Aunt Prudence. "Won't that do?"

"I want something besides a kiss. I get kisses every day."

"Oh, yes, and what are you going to give me?" spoke up Ellen.

"And me, Aunt?" said Harry.

"Wait until to-morrow, and we'll see. But I don't hear anything about what you are going to give, only about what you expect to receive. Now, ain't that a little selfish? I am sure you might make somebody a present of something, and then be made to feel how true the words are, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. What do you say, children? You've got a good many shillings in your money-boxes, and can make New Year's presents as well as anybody else."

"Sure enough!" exclaimed Ellen, "so we can. I never thought of that. I have got two dollars in my money-box. What shall I buy? Mother shall have a present, and so shall father."

"Can't you think of somebody?" replied the aunt, "to whom you might make a New Year's present that would be useful? There are a great many people who have not the comforts of life, much less its luxuries. There are hundreds of poor children who never think of toys, and for whom New Year's day comes and goes without bringing a present of any kind."

Not far from where Mr. Grant, the father of these children, resided, lived a poor man named Barker, who from sickness, had not been able to do any work for many months. He had four children. The two oldest, William and Jane, were only ten and twelve years of age; and Hetty and Philip were much younger. Since her father's sickness, Jane had got herself a place in a family to look after some children, for which she received a dollar a week. This, with about two dollars a week which the mother earned by sewing, was all the family had to live upon.

New Year's day came with a sober face to the inmates of poor Mr. Barker's comfortless home. The children looked for no presents, for even a full supply of nourishing food was lacking, and their clothing was now worn almost into tatters.

For breakfast they had some milk and water and a dish of fried potatoes. Hunger made these sweet to the taste, and they ate with a keen relish. After the table was cleared away, and the room swept up, Mrs. Barker sat down at her sewing—there was no holiday for her—and Mr. Barker took a book, as he lay on his bed, and gave each of the children a lesson.

"I wish they would let Jane come home to-day," he said, after he had given the lessons. "It is New Year's, and they might give the poor child a few hours' holiday."

As he finished speaking, the door opened, and Jane came in. The smiles that half awoke upon the father's lips died away as he saw that tears were in the eyes and glistened upon the cheeks of his child.

"Jane, dear," said he, tenderly, "what is the matter?" as the child came hastily across the

room, the moment she closed the door, and, sinking down upon a chair by the bed, hid her face among the clothes and sobbed.

Mrs. Barker threw aside her work, and came and laid her hand gently on the neck of her daughter, repeating what the father had said, with yet a more earnest and tender expression: "Jane, dear, what is the matter?"

But it was some time before Jane could find voice to express her grief. At last, putting her hand in her pocket, she took out a dollar, her last week's wages, and, handing it to her mother, said in broken accents:—

"They've sent me home, mother!"

"Why, dear?" asked Mrs. Barker.

"Because my clothes are so poor, and my shoes are all worn out so, they say I'm not fit to be seen in a decent body's house."

And the child wept and sobbed again.

Poor Mr. Barker caught his breath several times, like a person who strives to conceal the emotion that nearly overmasters him; and Mrs. Barker, unable to contain her feelings, laid her head down upon Jane's shoulder to hide her tears.

At last Mrs. Barker, feeling that such weakness on her part was not right, raised herself up and said, with a voice as steady as she could command:—

"Don't take it so to heart, Jane. We will buy you a pair of shoes with this dollar, and I will alter you one of my old frocks to-day, so that you can go back to-morrow looking quite smart."

"But you need the dollar, mother, in the family," replied Jane, looking up and drying her tears. "It won't do for me to spend it all for a pair of shoes."

"You must have shoes, you know, my child. These you have are all worn out. We can't expect people to keep you if you have not decent clothes. So we will buy the shoes, and trust that Providence will help us get along. If we use the dollar in the family this week, you cannot earn us anything next week, nor, perhaps, at all; but if we buy the shoes, and you go back, you will bring us home a dollar next week, and so on week after week. It is, therefore, best for us that you should have the shoes. Don't you think so?"

And Mrs. Barker turned to her husband.

"I do certainly," he replied.

And so it was determined that the shoes should be bought, and that Jane should see about the house and cook their frugal dinner, while the mother altered one of her old frocks to fit her.

The old dress was brought down from a closet up-stairs, turned over and over by Mrs. Barker, and examined in every part, before she put the scissors into it. It was very thin in many places and worn clear through in others.

"It isn't worth the labor of making over," she at length said, letting it fall in her lap. "I am sure it won't hold together two weeks."

Just as she said this, some one knocked at the door, and William ran and opened it. A colored man stepped in and putting down a large basket on the floor, said:—

"I was told to leave this here," and he turned and went out before any one could ask him a question.

"What does this mean?" asked Mr. Barker, raising himself from the bed. "There must be some mistake."

"We will soon see," replied his wife, laying aside her work and taking hold of the basket, which proved to be heavy. It was covered with a newspaper, which, on removal, showed a package neatly done up, marked, "New Year's gift for Jane."

"Jane, to whom it was handed, hurriedly broke the string, and out fell a pair of strong leather shoes, very little worn, two pairs of stockings,—but there was still something else in the package, which, upon examination, proved to be a handsome calico frock.

While Jane was examining the contents of her package, the mother was going deeper into the basket. The next things taken out were a pair of India rubber shoes, a package of sugar, one of tea, another of coffee, and another containing six or seven pounds of rice, each marked, "A New Year's gift for Mrs. Barker." Then there was a very good jacket and a pair of trousers for William, and shoes and stockings for Philip and Hetty; and last, a paper of sweet Malaga grapes, marked, "For Mr. Barker," and as much New Year's cake as could be crowded into the basket between the other things.

Surprised, bewildered, yet happy even to tears,

was that poor family on that long remembered New Year's morning.

"Where are they all from, mother?" asked Mr. Barker, as soon as he could speak, after the excitement of the first surprise was over.

"Heaven only knows," replied Mrs. Barker. "They are sent from above."

"And to God we are thankful, said the sick man, lifting his eyes upward. "He that feedeth the ravens will not suffer us to want."

"I know where they come from!" exclaimed Jane, breaking in upon her father's expression of thankfulness, and holding up the frock she had received at the moment she stood so much in need of one. "This is Ellen Grant's dress; I remember it very well. She wore it the day I went there, a few weeks ago."

"And this is Harry Grant's jacket," said Willie.

"Are you sure?" asked Mrs. Barker.

"Oh, yes. I know it right well. I've seen him wear it many a time."

"Bless the children!" ejaculated Mr. Barker, whose mind had a strong suspicion of the truth. "If it is their presents—if they have remembered us in their happiness—may Heaven reward them a hundred fold."

Jane tried on her frock and shoes, and they fitted her as well as if they had been made for her. She staid at home a couple of hours and then went back to her place, looking so much smarter than when she went away, that the lady said:

"You should have worn those clothes before."

"But I didn't have them," replied Jane.

"Where then did they come from?" asked the lady.

Thus questioned, Jane related, in the most artless yet touching manner, the distress of her father and mother when she went home; and then told of the timely relief that came from friends unknown.

We cannot stop to tell of all the beautiful presents that Ellen Grant, and Mary, and Harry received on New Year's day. Papa and mamma had not forgotten them. Nor had papa and mamma been forgotten by the children, who, under the direction of Aunt Prudence, had laid out all the money in their money-boxes in order to buy presents; and in bestowing them they did indeed prove it to be true that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Evening had come—the evening of New Year's day—and all the children were in the parlor with papa, mamma, and Aunt Prudence, when a servant brought in a note directed to Mr. and Mrs. Grant. On breaking the seal, Mr. Grant read aloud:—

"TO MR. AND MRS. GRANT.—For your generous kindness to us this day, our hearts are full of gratitude. Your presents came in a moment of great need, when we knew not which way to turn, and fully supplied that need. Jane was sent home from her place this morning because her shoes were worn out, and her clothes not decent for her to be seen in a respectable family. The frock and shoes just fit her, and she went back with a light heart. Comfortable shoes and warm stockings were needed by the children above all things. You have supplied them, and may Heaven reward you a hundred and a hundred fold. Forgive this expression of our gratitude; but I felt that I could not sleep to-night without letting you know the real good you had done, and the warmth of our thankfulness. MARY BARKER."

"What does all this mean?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Do you understand it, mother?"

"Not a word of it," replied Mrs. Grant, with a look of surprise. "There is some mistake. We are receiving thanks for benefits conferred by others. It is good to remember the poor; but we have forgotten them this day. That touching letter of Mrs. Barker's rebukes me deeply."

"Why, what's the matter, Ellen? and Harry? and Mary? What ails you, children?" asked Mr. Grant, looking from face to face of the little ones, and being unable to comprehend the expression that rested upon each.

"Let me explain," said Aunt Prudence. And she told how the children had spent their money in buying things, for a New Year's present to the family of poor Mr. Barker, and how they had sent clothing, also, that she had picked out from such as they had outgrown or thrown aside. But how Mrs. Barker knew where they came from was more than she could tell.

"And my children have done this!" said Mr. Grant, with much emotion, drawing them to his side, and pressing his lips tightly upon their pure young foreheads. "How happy they have made me! And they, too, are happy—happier in thus giving than they ever were in receiving."

The Missionary.

THINK truly, and thy thought
Shall some soul's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A grand and noble creed.

MANY THANKSGIVINGS TO GOD.

BY ELDER S. N. HASKELL.

THE apostle Paul uses this expression when encouraging the Corinthian church to put forth personal effort for the salvation of others who when they received the gospel, would praise God on their behalf. See 2 Cor. 9:6-12.

"I would rather have an interest in the prayers of half a dozen devoted widows," said a man who was reproved by his brethren because of his liberality to the unfortunate, "than the best farm in the State of Massachusetts." Disinterested acts of benevolence in the cause of our Redeemer as surely bear fruit as performed. This is true in a special manner with those who are ever trying to enlighten others with the rays of divine light which they have received. The mission of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is to convey these rays of light and truth from God's word to souls who would obey God did they know his will. Already there are hundreds of precious souls, scattered in various parts of the world, who are praising God for these glorious truths, who first had their attention called to them by this paper. In the great day of reckoning many will rejoice in seeing that it was their efforts in remailing the SIGNS, with the blessing of God, which brought these persons to the fold of Christ. Those thus saved will not come from any one nation or people but be gathered from every part of the civilized world. "Give me a little stock in that enterprise" said a brother, when the matter of sending SIGNS to England was spoken of. "I want to see some souls saved from that country through my instrumentality."

A brother who is obliged to labor from six A. M. to seven P. M. at least five days in the week, was anxious to show me some letters which he had received. He uses ten copies of the SIGNS each week, and says he would like to use one hundred. He opened a small trunk in which were bundles of letters. The following are samples of many which he placed in my hands.

"The copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have been received and read, not only by myself and husband but several of our boarders. We are all interested in them and would like very much to read them regularly and also to have more of that class of reading matter. We prefer it to the sensational literature read by a large class of the rising generation. We heartily thank you for the SIGNS, and hope soon to be able to remunerate you for them. Please write me in regard to them and by whom the expense of publication is and has been paid. Again thanking you, I remain yours, etc."

The above is from Massachusetts, and the following is from England: "I was very glad indeed to receive a letter from you the other week, bearing date of Sept. 7th, and thank you very much for your very kind wishes for my spiritual welfare. I am glad at all times to hear of the well doing of a brother in Christ. You may ever depend upon my prayers for your success. May God bless all your labors to further his cause. I read the SIGNS regularly. I feel deeply interested in it, so also does my friend the Rev. Mr. ——. I read with much pleasure the journal on health. I have given them to friends to read who are also interested in them."

We cannot safely conclude that good is not accomplished when no response is received. It is our business to sow the seed; to sow it in tears, trusting in God for the fulfillment of the promise that we shall return with joy bearing our sheaves with us. If we receive encouraging letters in response to those we send, we will rejoice; if not, we pray that God will still bless and give success, knowing that "as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall the word of the Lord be that goeth out of his mouth, it shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he send it."

VIGILANT MISSIONARY WORK IN CALIFORNIA.

DURING the past year the interest in this branch of the work has been steadily increasing in California. There are nearly a thousand SIGNS taken in California by individuals and organized societies, in clubs. Besides these, a good number of other publications are used. Some of the most interesting cases have been developed by remailing these papers, and correspondence. One member by some means obtained the name of a lady in England, to whom he sent several papers followed by a letter. The lady proved to be quite a missionary worker herself, having at one time in her youth traveled with Dr. Adam Clarke. In her second letter, after expressing many thanks for the papers and tracts sent her, and stating that she believes with us upon the subject of the advent, she says:—

"Well, I have been inquiring in regard to the Sabbath question. I gave the Sabbath tracts to several ministers and asked what they had to say against it. They asked if you were Jews. I answered, No. They could say nothing against the Sabbath, only that 'Our Sabbath is working well.' That is all I could get even from my own minister, a Methodist. I believe you are right. I can find no place in the Scriptures where the Sabbath was changed. Your letter has made me search the word of God more thoroughly."

In another letter the same writer says: "I went to a lady friend of mine with two of your tracts. She asked me if I never saw before that the Jewish Sabbath was the real Sabbath. She belongs to a Baptist church, and has told them in a Bible class that we keep the wrong day. I wonder at myself to think that for fifty years I have read my Bible daily, and never before got light on that part of the Scriptures. I belong to the Methodist church, but have been baptized. I am now reading Dr. Adam Clarke's Bible. Not long before he died, when I was quite young, I traveled with him. He visited the Shetland Islands, which is my native land, built chapels, and sent out missionaries. He was a sample man. I never was proud after being with him. It was a wonder that he did not see that the seventh day was the Sabbath; but greater light has since been given. Methodist missionaries then taught that we should keep the commandments, but I never saw that the Sabbath should be kept on the seventh day of the week until you wrote."

Reading matter is still being sent to this lady, and she in turn loans it to her neighbors and friends, and so the heaven is working. Not only are the organized societies actively engaged in this work, but scattered Sabbath-keepers are taking hold, as the following from one of the lone ones will show:—

"Our T. and M. work is prospering slowly, but I think surely. It is doing a work in our own hearts, and teaching us the necessity of having clean lives if we would be carriers of the Lord's vessels. My little girls are thoroughly interested in the work. They send out five papers each week, with a tract in each, and after four weeks they write a letter to each one. These letters receive great care, and all our prayers follow them. They have received four letters during the past quarter, and obtained two subscribers for the SIGNS. In God's strength we are going forward, and even if our measure holds only a gill, we will fill it for the Lord."

"Our home Sabbath-school has started with new life on the new lessons. They are so interesting and instructive. My Bible class held on Sundays, is prospering. We have a very regular attendance of nearly all the young people in the neighborhood. One lady a backslider, has been much interested for some time, and several, who rarely attend church or any such gatherings, are my constant pupils. Oh, how I pray I may be able to gather some to shine in the Kingdom."

VACAVILLE AND FAIRFIELD, CAL.

DECEMBER 14, we went to Vacaville, where we spent one week holding meetings and visiting the brethren. A goodly number of them signed the tithing pledge. The V. M. Society organized some years ago was revived, new officers elected, and a club of thirty-three SIGNS taken.

Some members of this church were disaffected because credentials were not given to Elder B. A. Stephens at the last session of the California Conference; but upon an explanation of the case, a vote was unanimously passed, endorsing the course of the Conference in his case. It was his

duty to have attended the Conference and had his case investigated then, instead of waiting until it was over, and then trying to array churches against the Conference of which they are a part. Why will our brethren allow their sympathies to be aroused in favor of wrong, and decide upon a case when they know only one side of it, and thus be led into trial?

We found the temperance cause here being agitated by quite an interesting American Health and Temperance Club. The citizens are also waking up to the work, and called a meeting to decide upon the best measures to advance the cause. We presented our organization to them, and the leading temperance men of the place voted to unite with us in this work.

We left the church in quite good condition, and pray for the blessing of God upon them. We spent two days in Fairfield, and found a few keeping the Sabbath, and others interested from the labors of brethren Briggs and Howard.

M. C. ISRAEL.
W. M. HEALEY.

Temperance.

OAKLAND HEALTH AND TEMPERANCE CLUB.

THIS Club met according to appointment, December 9, 1880. The meeting was opened by a song entitled, "Keep Me," followed with prayer by W. N. Glenn, after which the song, "Peace be Still," was rendered by a quintette of well trained voices.

After the reading of the Secretary's report of the last meeting, the President, Bro. C. H. Jones, made some remarks pertinent to the work of Health and Temperance Clubs, showing wherein they differ from other organizations of a similar nature. We do not depreciate by any means the work of other societies; but while wishing them God-speed, and all possible good, we cannot but feel that they do not reach the root of the matter. We believe that true temperance is the moderate use of those things that are good, and the total abstinence of all that is bad. And herein, we go farther than other societies. We do not believe in supplementing one evil with a lesser. We would that we might see the rum-sellers' frightful and accursed traffic overthrown, but we do not want to see his place re-occupied by the tobacco shop.

We have three degrees of pledges, so that those in the depths of intemperance, not feeling sufficient strength to spring with one bound from the darkness, may be brought, step by step, to a firm footing. In signing the Anti-Whisky Pledge, such take the first step upward, after which, when sufficient strength has been gained, the second step is taken in signing the Anti-Rum and Tobacco Pledge. It then takes but a comparatively short time to enable them to step out entirely by signing the Teetotal Pledge, which prohibits the use of tea and coffee, as well as rum, tobacco, opium, etc.

Following these remarks, came the song, "Banner Bearers," after which an essay, entitled, "Afterward," was impressively rendered by Mrs. E. J. Waggoner. Then came the "Song of the Fountain," followed by a short address by Bro. Aldrich, vividly portraying a touching scene in the life of a drunkard.

The pledges were passed, and seven signed the Teetotal, four the Anti-Rum and Tobacco, and one the Anti-Whisky. The usual committees were then appointed, and the meeting closed with the song entitled, "Temperance Work."

This meeting was considered, by all who attended, as one of the most successful ever held by our Club. Much interest was manifested, and warmth of feeling expressed. God grant that the good resolutions there made may be lasting.

J. W. GARDNER, Sec.

THE *New York Witness* tells of a church in Brooklyn whereof the minister smokes, the superintendent smokes, and the sexton smokes. Of course, then, it is a sort of smoking school for boys. That church is under a cloud.

As to being prepared for defeat, I certainly am not. Any man who is prepared for defeat would be half defeated before he commenced. I hope for success, shall do all in my power to secure it, and trust to God for the rest.

The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, DECEMBER 30, 1880.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

THOUGH circumstances, with which the readers of the SIGNS are sufficiently acquainted, compel me to be absent for a season from the Office, I have not ceased from my labors for the paper, nor lost any of my interest in it. I have of late had opportunities to learn, in person, how the paper is esteemed by the missionary workers and friends of the cause in general. I am very happy to know that it is not losing in interest or in usefulness. It is doing a great work, the importance and extent of which will never be fully realized until we "shall know as we are known."

It is my intention to return to the Office as soon as the condition of my health will warrant; and I would not now absent myself did I not know that it is the only means by which I shall be able to serve the work successfully in the future. In the meantime I must congratulate the readers of the SIGNS in its continued interest and prosperity. It is my daily prayer that God will bless and guide those who are laboring so faithfully in Oakland, and I ask all who feel an interest in the paper to join me in this prayer. God has blessed them, and he will bless them.

I would say a word to the friends in California in behalf of the coming volume. At this period in the work of the third angel's message the possibilities of a year are immense, and we cannot afford to let such opportunities pass unimproved. Let us stand by our paper, which has been blessed to the good of so many who are now rejoicing in the present truth.

God is favoring us with great opportunities. He gives us a season of peace and quietness in which to labor for his truth, and for the salvation of our fellow-men. In the light of prophecy, we must look for a change not long hence. The nations are making great preparations for the coming "time of trouble," which they all dread, but which none can avert. Dan. 12:1; Jer. 25:15-33. But the most important preparation is that which God's people are making, that they may "stand in the battle in the day of the Lord." Eze. 13, etc. And he works best for himself who works most for his fellow-men. Now is our opportunity; and let us work in faith, imitating our Saviour who was not discouraged (Isa. 42:1-4), though, to all human appearance, his efforts made but little impression upon the world. Results are with God. Trust in him; delight thyself in him and in his work, "and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

J. H. WAGGONER.

CLOSE OF THE VOLUME.

WITH this issue volume six of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is brought to a close. The average number printed weekly has been about nine thousand four hundred. This speaks well for a religious paper advocating unpopular Bible truths. The improvements which were made in the size and form of volume six and the very low club rates at which it was furnished met the approval of our missionary workers, to whose efforts its wide circulation is largely due, and the experiment of two editions has proved that our people were more anxious to have a good paper than to have a cheap paper.

The eight-page edition, having decreased to about two thousand copies, is discontinued, and all who have subscribed for it will receive the regular twelve-page paper in its place. We leave it to the liberality of those receiving clubs whose term of subscription extend into 1881, whether they will make up to us a part of the amount lost by furnishing them a larger and better paper than they have paid for.

The terms of the SIGNS are as favorable as possible. Two dollars a year is very low for a twelve-page paper filled each week with new matter. In most religious papers several pages are devoted to advertisements which, while they rob the readers, are a great source of income to the publishers.

In order to encourage missionary work, the SIGNS is furnished in clubs of five or more to one address at \$1.50 a year.

The season of the year for the greatest activity in missionary work has fully come. During the leisure of winter and the long evenings is the time to call the attention of the people to the importance of Bible

truths. Now is the time for a general and united effort. We hope to see the circulation of the SIGNS greatly increased during 1881.

It is desirable that new subscriptions should commence with the new volume. It is also important that our old patrons, whose subscriptions close with this number, should renew at once so they will not lose two or three of the first numbers. Be in season.

Address, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Oakland, Cal.

In the SIGNS of December 9, there was published a short paragraph entitled, "Newton and Voltaire on Railway Traveling," credited to Rev. J. Craig. It was merely an extract, and given as such, and for the statements contained therein, the editors of this paper are not responsible, while they have every reason to believe them true. But the San Francisco Chronicle's religious column editor has doubts of the correctness of Mr. Craig's statements, as might be expected, and very inconsistently challenges the editor of the SIGNS to prove them. And more, it challenges us to give "the passage in Daniel (or 'Revelations') predicting railway traveling at the rate mentioned, with chapter and verse." This challenge is mere infidel braggadocio, for there is no intimation in the paragraph referred to, of the existence of such a passage anywhere. There is the simple statement that—

"Sir Isaac Newton wrote a work upon the prophet Daniel, and another upon the book of Revelation; in one of which he [Newton] said that in order to fulfill certain prophecies before a certain date was terminated, namely, one thousand two hundred and sixty years, there would be a mode of traveling of which the men of his time had no conception; nay, that the knowledge of men would be so increased that they would be able to travel at the rate of fifty miles an hour."

The editor of the SIGNS is also challenged to mention the volume and page of the passage in Voltaire, where Newton is called "a poor dotard," for expressing the sentiment accredited to him above. Now we do not presume to know upon what authority Mr. Craig based his assertions; there are, no doubt, authentic sayings of Voltaire not in any of his own published works. But we would ask the editor of the Chronicle if he holds himself ready to furnish vouchers for all the statements made in selected articles in his paper, even though they bear the indelible impress of truth on the face. Or, is the unreasonable demand made in this particular instance merely to cast a shadow of doubt upon the genuineness of the Bible prophecies?

That railroad travel is a subject of prophecy, and a sign of the day of God's "preparation," may be seen by a reference to Nahum 2:3, 4.

OUR EX-PRESIDENTS.

WE have noticed with considerable interest the animated discussion which has been going on of late as to what disposal should be made of our ex-presidents. They seem heretofore to have been regarded very much as the little girl did her wax doll when she was obliged to sit and hold it all day because she could find no place nice enough in which to lay it. A more practical, and to our mind correct, view of the matter we have nowhere seen than the following from a leading New York paper:—

"The newspapers must have something to talk about, and plans for pensioning ex-presidents or making life senators of them are as harmless topics as any they are likely to hit upon, but neither plan is likely to serve any other purpose than that of a day or week's discussion in the political press. As to pensioning, there is no reason why an ex-president should not earn his daily bread like the rest of us, and there are many reasons why he should. Labor is honorable, idleness is ignoble. The spectacle of an ex-president at work in productive industry would itself be an incentive and an inspiration to industry, while the spectacle of a nation retiring its ex-presidents from toil would be a kind of public endorsement of the aristocracy of idleness as demoralizing as it would be unrepugnant. The proposition to make them life senators is more specious, but not more sound."

"The Senate is a representative body of the separate States, and, being such, no one can rightly become a member who does not represent a State. What State does an ex-president represent? Obviously none as such. If the State at any one time give a majority for the party opposed to that of which he is a member, it is clear that he does not represent his State. But who does the ex-president represent? Obviously not the people, for the people have already elected some one else to fill the place which he once occupied. The ex-president, therefore, represents neither his State nor the people. He only represents himself and those who may think with him; and so far he is on a

plane with any other citizen. As a representative, therefore, an ex-president is not entitled to a seat in the Senate."

God did not take up the three Hebrews out of the furnace of fire, but he came down and walked with them in it. He did not remove Daniel from the den of lions; he sent his angel to close the mouths of the beasts. He did not, in answer to the prayer of Paul, remove the thorn; but he gave him sufficiency of grace to sustain him.

WE are often more ashamed than grieved and humbled for our sins. Our own consciousness of them and of God's being privy to them, does not pain us near so much as it would to have them known to others; see, therefore, whether what you call your penitence, is not more pride than anything else.

THE noblest thing on earth is the man who rises to the dignity of self-mastery.

Appointments.

CHURCH QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

THE church quarterly meetings will be held Sabbath and Sunday, Jan. 1, 2. On Sabbath the list of members should be read by the clerk, and each member present is expected to respond by testimony. Those who cannot be present should send in a letter that all may be heard from at this time. Evening after the Sabbath or on Sunday the church T. and M. meeting will be held, at which time the reports of labor will be handed in by the T. and M. members and the one-third or donations paid in. This will also be a proper time to "bring in the tithes" that have been laid by during the quarter.

DISTRICT QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

THE quarterly meetings of the several districts will be held as follows:—

No 1 at Santa Rosa,	Jan. 8-9.
" 3 " St. Helena,	" "
" 4 " San Pasqual,	" "
" 5 " Woodland,	" "
" 6 " Chico,	" "
" 7 " Oakland,	" "
" 9 " Santa Ana,	" "
" 2 " Lemoore,	" 15-16.
" 8 " San Francisco,	" "

We hope to have a report from every church in each of these districts, and that each district will be prompt to report in time for the State quarterly meeting.

STATE QUARTERLY MEETING.

THE State quarterly meeting of the California T. and M. Society, will be held at Oakland, on the fourth Sabbath and Sunday in January. As this is the commencement of another year and the best season for missionary work, we would urge that as many of the directors and brethren be present as possible, that plans may be decided upon for work during the coming year.

M. C. ISRAEL, Vice President.

Business Department.

RECEIVED FOR THE "SIGNS."

\$2.00 EACH. Almira Preston 8-1, H H McKinstry 8-1, Maria Young 8-1, Dr M G Kellogg 7-37, Mrs Mary Gould 8-1, Mrs Arnold 8-1, Geo H Roberts 8-1, M A Eldridge 8-1, Mrs John Cox 8-1, Betsey Healey 8-1, O P Bidemour 8-1, Lucy Gardiner 7-6, Mrs A P Wheelock 8-1, A J Beeler 8-1, W H Stewart 8-1, C S Wilson 8-1, C S Towers 8-1, Mrs H Everts, 8-1, Mina Kline 8-1, Harriet E Carr 8-1, S M Moore 7-23.
\$1.00 EACH. J W Owen 7-17, Onarga Public Library 8-1, James Watt 7-43, Homer P Draper 8-1, Bertha Farnum 8-1, Charles Lea 8-1, T M C A Medina N Y 8-1, Alden Hetherly, 8-1, G Newcomb 8-1.
\$1.00 EACH. E C Shawson 7-29, A C Huntington 7-24, John A Hardy 7-24, Almon D Farrar 7-47, Mary A Remley 7-30, Mrs M E James 7-36, Elden Mahaffey 7-24, T A Myers 7-24, J St Nichols 7-24, Benjamin Souther 7-24.
MISCELLANEOUS. J S Green 20.00, 8-1, J N Loughborough (sent by Mrs M J Green) 10.00, 8-1, C Turnipseed 6.00, 8-1, James Bowles 3.50, 7-43, Thomas Francis 75c, 7-24, John Walr 75c, 7-24, Allie Coombs 3.00, 8-1, J E Graham 4.00, 7-24, J B Hall 45.00, 8-1, J E Morgan 4.00, 8-1, Mrs M D Morgan 4.00, 8-1, Mrs Anna Haynes 8.00, 8-1, Zerab Brooks 3.00, 8-1, W H Eggleston 3.00, 8-1, Wm Lucas 3.00, 8-1, L P Baldwin 3.00, 8-1, Mrs M Fryer 5.00, 7-12, J W Morsman 50c, 7-12, Florence Butcher 45.00, 8-1, J L Decker 4.50, 8-1, Wm Arnold 3.00.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT OAKLAND, CAL., FOR THE

MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS.

A twelve-page Religious Family Paper, devoted to a discussion of the Prophecies, Signs of the Times, Second Coming of Christ, Harmony of the Law and Gospel, with Departments devoted to Temperance, The Home Circle, The Missionary Work, and the Sabbath-School.

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REVIEW AND HERALD, Battle Creek, Mich. ELDER J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH, Ravenswood, Shirley Road, Southampton, England.
MISS ELIZA TRAYNER, Secretary N. E. Tract Society, So. Lancaster, Mass. MRS. A. P. VAN HORN, Beaverton, Or.

ITEMS OF NEWS.

—Electric light is to be tried for lighting the Hoosac Tunnel.

—In Paris \$120,000 is paid out annually for sweeping the streets.

—It is estimated that 100,000 Canadians immigrate annually to this country.

—The son of Abraham Lincoln was one of the Presidential electors of Illinois.

—The 179 Government life-saving stations were the means of saving 1,980 lives.

—Broadway, New York, is being lighted with electricity a few weeks on trial.

—Mrs. Garfield refuses to have her photograph sold or her portrait engraved.

—The Maine rivers froze earlier than usual this winter, and millions of logs were locked in the ice.

—The Pope has presented 50,000 francs to the sufferers by the earthquake at Agram, Austria.

—Illinois will be out of debt at the end of this year, and have \$100,000 to begin the New Year with.

—Aroostook county, Me., has 22 starch factories, which will consume 135,000 bushels of potatoes this season.

—There are only five ministers in the Spurgeon family—Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, his father, brother and two sons.

—The American Israelite states that there are only two Jewish synagogues in the United States wholly free from debt.

—Two new transatlantic cables are projected, to be used in connection with the American Union Telegraph Company.

—The sale of the Penny Testament in England, the cheapest edition ever published, has already reached nearly 500,000.

—The San Francisco Board of Health has petitioned Congress for a grant of land on Angel Island, for quarantine grounds.

—Hon. D. A. McKinley, a prominent merchant of San Francisco, has been nominated by the President as U. S. Consul to Honolulu.

—Spurgeon will spend the winter at his favorite resort in Mentone, Southern France. His health is said to be slowly but surely failing.

—Maj. Whittle and Mr. McGranahan are holding meetings in Glasgow, Scotland. They will devote January to Edinburgh and February to Dublin.

—On Wednesday last, Healy and Walsh were tried at Cork, Ireland, for intimidating farmer Manning. They pleaded not guilty, and were acquitted.

—The directors of the Northern Pacific Railroad have completed arrangements with a Syndicate of American and foreign bankers for the completion of the road.

—The loss of life among the fishermen of Gloucester, Mass., for the year has been forty-one, which is two more than in 1877, and six more than in 1878, but smaller than for any other year since 1866.

—A woman was arrested in Brooklyn on a charge of having too many husbands. It was proved that she rejoiced in not less than fourteen, whom she inveigled into marriage in order to rob them.

—It is proposed to divide Dakota Territory, and admit the southern part into the Union as a State. The population of the new State would be about 100,000, and that of the Territory about 36,000. The former would include about 80,000 square miles, and the latter 70,000.

OBITUARY.

GRANT.—Died at Walnut Creek, Contra Costa Co., Cal., Dec. 13, 1880, Bro. Melvin Grant, aged 22 years, 4 months, and 13 days. Bro. Grant has been a patient sufferer for several years, from that dread disease consumption, but patiently endured and fell asleep in Jesus, in full hope of the resurrection. Funeral services were held by the writer in the Methodist church at Walnut Creek.

W. M. HEALEY.

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