

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.

VOLUME 7.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, FIFTH-DAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1881.

NUMBER 5.

The Signs of the Times.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, FOR THE
S. D. A. MISSIONARY SOCIETY.
[For terms, etc., see last page.]

CHRIST ON EARTH.

HAD we but lived in those mysterious days
When, a veiled God, 'mid unregenerate men,
Christ calmly walked our devious mortal ways,
Crowned with grief's bitter rule in place of bays—
Ah! had we lived but then!

Lived to drink in with every wondering breath
A consciousness beyond all human ken,
That, clothed in flesh, as long conceived in faith,
We viewed the Lord of life and Lord of death—
Ah! had we lived but then!

At! "Peace! be still!" the storm-wind ceased to roar,
And the lulled waters seemed to sigh, "Amen!"
Fear—the heart's mightier tempest—surged no more,
But a strange silence fell on sea and shore!
Ah! had we lived but then!

With our own ears to catch the words He said
(Their magic pondering o'er and o'er again)—
The wine of wisdom quaff from Fountainhead,
Mark the lame leap, and watch the rising dead—
Ah! had we lived but then!

The world grows old! Faith, once a mountain stream,
Now crawls polluted down a poisonous fen;
The Bethlehem star has lost its morning beam;
Thy face, O Christ! wanes like a wasted dream—
How changed, how cold since then!

Ah! 'tis our dreary lives whose promise fails!--
These languorous lives of low, lost, aimless men.
Through mockery's mist our Lord's pure aureole pales,
Yet tenderer than the Syrian nightingale's,
His voice sounds now as then!

—Christian Union.

General Articles.

THE CENTURION'S SON.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

AFTER laboring two days with the Samaritans, Jesus left them to continue his journey to Galilee. He made no tarry at Nazareth, where he had spent his youth and early manhood. His reception in the synagogue there, when he announced himself as the Anointed One, was so unfavorable that he decided to seek more fruitful fields, to preach to ears that would listen, and to hearts that would receive his message. He declared to his disciples that a prophet hath no honor in his own country. This saying sets forth that natural reluctance with which many people have to acknowledge any wonderfully admirable development in one who has unostentatiously lived in their midst and whom they have intimately known from childhood. At the same time, these same persons might become wildly excited over the pretensions of a stranger and an adventurer.

The miracle that Jesus had performed in Cana prepared the way for his cordial reception. The people who had returned from the passover had brought back the report of his marvelous cleansing of the desecrated temple, followed by his miracles of healing the sick and restoring sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. The judgment passed upon his acts by the dignitaries of the temple, opened his way at Galilee; for many of the people lamented the abuse of the temple and the lofty arrogance of the priests, and hoped that this man, who had the power to put these rulers to flight, might indeed be the looked-for Deliverer.

The news that Jesus had returned from Judea to Cana soon spread throughout Galilee and the region round about. It reached the ears of a nobleman in Capernaum, who was a Jew of some honor. He was much interested in what he had heard of the power of Jesus to heal the sick, for

he had a son suffering with disease. The father had consulted the most learned physicians among the Jews, and they had pronounced the case incurable, and told him that his son must soon die.

But when he heard that Jesus was in Galilee his heart was encouraged; for he believed that one who could miraculously change water into wine, and drive out the desecrators of the temple, could raise his son to health even from the brink of the grave. Capernaum was quite a distance from Cana, and the centurion feared that, if he left his home to seek Jesus and present his plea to him, the child, who was very low, might die in his absence. Yet he dared not trust this errand to a servant; for he hoped that the prayers of a fond parent might touch the heart of the great Physician with pity, and induce him to accompany the father to the bedside of his dying son.

He went to Cana, hastening for fear of being too late. Forcing a passage through the crowd that surrounded Jesus, he at length stood before him. But his faith faltered when he saw only a plainly dressed man, dusty and worn with travel. He doubted that this person could do what he had come to ask of him; yet he determined to make a trial. He secured a hearing from Jesus, told him his errand, and besought the Saviour to accompany him to his home for the purpose of healing his son. But Jesus already knew of his sorrow. Even before the centurion had left his home, the pitying Redeemer had read the father's grief, and his great heart of love had gone out in sympathy for the suffering child.

But he was also aware that the father had made conditions in his mind concerning his belief in the Saviour. Unless his petition should be granted he would not have faith in him as the Messiah. While the father waited in an agony of suspense, Jesus addressed him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." He here revealed the superficial faith of the centurion, that would lead him to accept or reject Christ according as he did or did not perform the work required of him.

Jesus designed, not only to heal the child, but to illuminate the darkened mind of the father. He saw unbelief struggling with his faith. He knew that this man had sought his help as a last and only hope. In this centurion he saw represented the condition of many of his nation. They were interested in Jesus from selfish motives; they desired some special benefit that they hoped to receive through his power, but they were ignorant as to their spiritual disease, and saw not their terrible need of divine grace, but staked their faith on the granting of some temporal favor. Jesus met this case as illustrating the position of many of the Jewish people. He contrasted this questioning unbelief with the faith of the Samaritans, who were ready to receive him as a teacher sent by God, and to accept him as the promised Messiah without a sign or miracle to establish his divinity.

The father's soul was stirred to its depths with the thought that his doubts might cost him the life of his son. The words of Jesus had the desired effect; the centurion saw that his motives in seeking the Saviour were purely selfish; his vacillating faith appeared before him in its true light; he realized that he was indeed in the presence of One who could read the hearts of men, and to whom all things were possible. This thought brings his suffering child to his mind with new vividness, and he cries out in an agony of supplication, "Sir, come down ere my child die!"

He fears that while he has been doubting and questioning, death may have closed the scene. This was enough. The father in his need seizes the merits of Jesus as his Saviour. In demanding him to come down ere his child dies, he clings alone to the strength of Jesus as his only hope.

His faith is as imperative as was that of Jacob, when, wrestling with the mighty angel, he cried, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!"

Jesus responds to the demands of the centurion by commanding him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." These brief and simple words thrill through the heart of the father; he feels the holy power of the speaker in every tone. Instead of going to Capernaum, Jesus, by a flash of divine telegraphy, sends the message of healing to the bedside of the suffering son. He dismisses the suppliant, who, with unspeakable gratitude, and perfect faith in the words of the Saviour, turns his steps homeward with a peace and joy he has never felt before.

At the same hour the watchers stood around the dying child, in the distant home of the centurion. The form that had been so strong and symmetrical in its youthful grace, was now worn and emaciated. The hollow cheeks burned with a hectic fire. Suddenly the fever leaves him, intelligence beams from his eyes, his mind becomes clear, and health and strength return to his body. The fever has left him in the very heat of the day. The attendants behold the change with amazement; the family is summoned, and great is the rejoicing. No signs of his malady linger about the child, his burning flesh has become soft and moist, and he sinks into the peaceful slumber of childhood.

Meanwhile the father hastens on his way with a hopeful heart. He went to Jesus with grief and trembling. He leaves him in joy and confidence. He feels the solemn assurance that he has talked with One whose power is unlimited. No doubt crosses his mind that Jesus has really healed his son at Capernaum. While still some distance from home, his servants meet him with the glad tidings that his son has recovered. With a light heart he hurries on, and, as he approaches his house, is met by the child, bounding out to receive him, radiant in health and beauty. He clasps him to his heart as one restored from the dead, and thanks God again and again for this miraculous restoration.

The centurion and all his household become disciples of Jesus. Thus their affliction was sanctified to the conversion of the entire family. They published this miracle through all Capernaum, and thus opened the way for Christ's further labors there. Many of his most wonderful works were done at that place.

This case of the centurion should be a lesson to all the followers of Christ. He would have them place implicit faith in him as their Redeemer, ready and willing to save all who come unto him. But he sometimes delays bestowing his precious gifts, in order to impress our hearts with a sense of our deep need of that true piety which entitles us to ask of him what we will. We are to lay by the selfishness that is frequently the sole cause of seeking him, and, confessing our helplessness and bitter need, trust in his promises. He invites all to come unto him who are weary and heavy-laden, and he will give them rest.—*Great Controversy*, Vol. 2.

AN impossible attitude toward the cause of Christ was recently claimed by a young man in response to a question touching his personal salvation. "Are you on the Lord's side?" an earnest Christian asked him. "No," he said, "I am neutral." There are many people who imagine they can be neutral in this matter, but a time will come when they will see that their neutrality was actual hostility to Christ. A man on a burning ship refusing to enter the life-boat might call his inaction neutrality, and remain to be burned. He would be quite as consistent as those who are offered pardon and eternal life, but neglect the offer on the plea that they are neutral. (Matt. 12:30).

THE LAW AND THE SABBATH.

CONCLUSION OF A LETTER TO A FRIEND IN SUSSEX.
BY J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH, OF SOUTHAMPTON, ENG.

YOUR next question reads, "How could the Christian slaves keep the Sabbath?" I do not understand that the early Christians were all slaves, and if they were under Jewish task-masters there would be no difficulty about the Sabbath; for according to their own usages their servants would be required to rest, as well as themselves. I suppose your question relates to those slaves who had heathen masters. I do not know that even in such a case we are to decide what is duty by circumstances. The words of both Christ and the apostles show that those accepting the gospel truth must be willing even to lose their lives for the sake of the truth. Had the rule of deciding duty by simply submitting to circumstances been applied, we should have no record of the deliverance of Daniel from the lions' den, or of the Hebrew children from the fiery furnace. According to the rule of convenience, Daniel would cease to pray, and the three worthies bow to the image.

Perhaps your difficulty grows out of a statement made in British prints about one year since, that St. Paul told servants to obey their masters in *all* things, and as their heathen masters regarded only the "day of the sun"—the first day of the week—they would not be allowed to keep the Sabbath, and it was supposed that St. Paul's teaching sanctioned their breaking the Sabbath.

There is no direct evidence that these slaves at Ephesus and Colosse had heathen masters; but quite the contrary, for St. Paul addresses the masters as well as the slaves. This he surely would not do, in the manner he did, if they were heathen. If we claimed that these were heathen masters, and that the expression "obey in *all* things" is to be understood in its broadest sense, what would be the result? Suppose such a master told his slave (as he would be likely to do) that he must not assemble with the Christians, nor accept the Christian religion, but instead must engage with him in the worship of idols, must he, the slave, do so because St. Paul had said to the Christian servants obey your masters?

Should you be permitted, as I have been, to witness the idol worship of the heathen Chinese in their temples in California even, you would see that the servants of idolaters have quite a conspicuous part to act in that worship, especially when it comes to spreading the meats before their idols.

In the instructions of St. Paul to the Ephesians (chap. 6) and to the Colossians (chap. 3) respecting husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, we see he is proceeding on the principle of mutual obligation, each respecting the right of the other. While he teaches the child obedience to parents he admonishes the parent to deal tenderly with the child, and while he exhorts the servant to obey the master, the master is told to give the servant that which is just and equal. It does not seem to be the design of the apostle in any of these cases to place the control of the conscience in the hands of either husband, parent, or master. In the case of obedience and submission on the part of the child and wife, he qualifies by saying, "In the Lord." God has never given to any man, whether in the capacity of husband, father, or master, the right to rule another man's conscience. St. Paul himself is good authority on this point when he says, "For why is my liberty judged of (or by) another man's conscience?" 1 Cor. 10:29.

Instead, then, of the apostle violating his own teaching and putting the control of the conscience of slaves into the hands of their masters, we find the instructions to servants to relate to temporal service, as "Not with eye service, as men pleasers," "not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity." Titus 2:9, 10.

The question of the Sabbath, like all moral questions, should not be decided by what one class could do or could not do, but by the word of God. What slaves could do or could not do does not decide our duty. The historians do show us, however, that when the gospel made advancement among the heathen, and when this difficulty came up, and servants were not allowed to keep the Sabbath, the people suggested the idea of allowing these heathen converts to have their assemblies on the "Sun's day" the same day as the holiday of their masters. This was not done, however, by Christ, nor the apostles, but was more than one century this side the time St. Paul wrote his epistles.

The *North British Review*, Vol. 18, page 409, says of the introduction of Sunday among these converts from paganism, "that every day was the Sunday of their heathen neighbors and respective countrymen; and patriotism gladly united with expediency in making it at once their Lord's day and their Sabbath."

Chafie, a clergyman of the English church, in a work published in 1652, pages 61, 62, seeks to justify this proceeding, thus, "Most Christians then were either servants or of the poorer sort of people; and the Gentiles, most probably, would not give their servants liberty to cease from working on any other set day constantly, except their Sunday."

Authentic history will show what men did in departing from the word of God, while duty must be decided by the Scriptures themselves. Jeroboam had his excuse for setting up the golden calves in Bethel and Dan, and by so doing opened the way for all Israel to depart from the worship of the true God, and go into idolatry.

You again ask, "Where is there any proof that the Sabbath was ever given to Gentiles *after* the fall of man?" I judge from your manner of stating this question that you admit the Sabbath was given before the fall of man. The fourth commandment (Ex. 20:10, 11.) gives the reason why the seventh day is the Sabbath. It is because God sanctified the day at creation, "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." Keep the day holy because God made it holy at the close of creation week, seems to be the sentiment of that commandment. This is not a reason that is peculiar to Adam or the Jews. The Lord is the creator of all men. He demands worship and obedience of all. The Sabbath is the sign of God's authority and power as creator. Our Saviour said, "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. Not the Jew-man, but for man—for the whole race. I suppose by your question you wish some scripture text that refers to the Gentiles in connection with the subject of the Sabbath. That we will have presently. You state that "God does not give commands to his enemies." If he does not give commands to his enemies, he may call upon them to turn from their transgression of the laws he has given his friends. So we have some of the Jews broken off by disobedience and unbelief, and those who before were at enmity by wicked works, grafted in by true repentance and faith in Christ.

We do not read in the Scriptures that God ever made any covenant with the Gentiles. If you note carefully Jer. 31:31, 33; Heb. 8:8-10, you will see that both the old and the new covenants are made with Israel. Gentiles are grafted in and become partakers of the root and fatness of the live tree—the blessings of God through Christ.

If God makes no commands to his enemies, he makes some for them. St. Paul says, that the law was made for "the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons." 1 Tim. 1:9, 10. It comes to such to give them a knowledge of their sins that they may truly repent, be born again, and thus become of the household of faith, yielding from the heart acceptable service to God.

Now we will notice a text where the "sons of strangers"—Gentiles—are called upon to keep the Sabbath, not because God has made a covenant directly with them, nor because they have decided to become Jews, but because they have "joined themselves to the Lord" to serve him. It is a prophecy of the work of the Lord in this dispensation which is found in Isa. 56:6, 7: "Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer." The sons of strangers were Gentiles, so here is a promise to Gentile Sabbath-keepers.

There is another statement in your letter of which I do not see the force, and must, therefore, ask you to state more fully. You say, "The church is part of the new creation, and so is not obliged to keep the Sabbath." If you mean by this new creation, that by being born again we become new

creatures in Christ, and that "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. 5:17, I would say the new things relate to the changed demeanor of the individual whose sins are washed away and his affections and habits of life point in an entirely new direction. In stating the same thing to the Ephesians, St. Paul says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. This is made plain by the words already quoted in this letter from his epistle to the Romans, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Rom. 8:4. So you see that being made new creatures in Christ, does not release us from the obedience to the law that God has before ordained.

Excuse such a lengthy epistle. I could not satisfy my own mind by saying less. Truth and not victory is my desire in what I have said.

A SEVENTH PART OF TIME.

BY ELD. W. H. LITTLEJOHN.

FOURTHLY, the providence of God is against this exposition.

Having found that the internal evidence of the law is overwhelmingly against our opponents, we might rest here in the confident conviction that our case is fairly made out. But, remembering that men who are called upon to change opinions of long standing, desire, if they do not require, all the light which can be given, we pause before submitting it to them to pass upon, that we may present testimony drawn from the providence of God, showing that his dealings with his people, during the forty years in which he walked and talked with them in the wilderness, were such as to render it utterly impossible for them to keep any day but the last of the week.

If we shall succeed in doing this, as there is in Him "neither variableness nor shadow of turning," as he never does anything the effect of which he does not previously comprehend, and, as the rule of action is precisely the same now as then, we shall be condemned for attempting, now, that which the Hebrew then found it impossible to accomplish. Or, to state the proposition in another form, as there can never be any shade of conflict between God's revealed will and his secret purpose, as his words and his acts always tend to the same end, if the former were designed to vindicate the idea of a variable Sabbath, the latter would have been equally decided in its favor. We will, for the sake of brevity, suppose that some one of the mighty host of Israelites had been seized with this modern notion. He has conformed to the usage of the multitude a long time; but finally he grows restless, and makes it manifest by intimating that Moses takes too much upon himself, in that he teaches the people that all are to keep the Sabbath simultaneously, since this, to his mind, was by no means a part of the original plan. Weary, at last, with simple remonstrance, he takes a step further, determined either to become a martyr to his own faith, or revolutionize that of the camp.

Sunday affords a convenient opportunity for carrying his plan into operation. As with the Hebrews, that day began with the setting of the sun on what is now Saturday evening, he assembles his family in his tent at that period, they having been previously notified of, and having acquiesced in, his intention. As the shades of evening draw on, they retire to rest, wooed by the almost holy stillness of the night into the impression that they are keeping an acceptable Sabbath unto the Lord. Morning dawns at last; and, as the rising sun throws for the first time his golden pencils of light across the landscape, they awaken to the consciousness that it is holy time. The first inclination is to break a fast which has been of so long duration that nature is somewhat importunate in her demand for food. This is especially true of the children, and they clamor for bread. But their appeals are unheeded; there is not a morsel of food in the tent.

It is true that the fields without are white with that most delicious substance, whose taste was said to be "like unto wafers mingled with honey;" but they remembered that the Lord had said that the people must not go out to gather it upon the Sabbath day. Ex. 16:29. The dilemma is an unpleasant one. The father appreciates the awkwardness of the situation, and, stung to the quick

at the prospect that his first attempt at innovation must prove abortive, since it would be folly to persist in it under the circumstances, and anxious to shift the responsibility of failure to the shoulders of another, reprovingly inquires of his wife why she did not foresee this upon the previous day, and guard against it by furnishing a double portion of manna, according to the usual custom. She gently reminds him that it was impossible; for, that being the seventh day, no manna had fallen, else the word of the Lord would have been broken. Ex. 16:26. Mortified, but not corrected, and failing to comprehend to its full extent the moral which this lesson ought to have taught, he attributes his first failure to the unfortunate selection of a day that had been preceded by one upon which there was no fall of manna, and decides to make one more effort. Monday furnishes the first opportunity for this purpose, and is therefore fixed upon; and Sunday, the very one which had witnessed his disappointment, becomes the preparation day for the second experimental Sabbath. There is now no lack either of the material to prepare, or of a disposition to put it in a state of readiness for the morrow. When the seething and baking of a sufficient quantity is completed, it is viewed with evident satisfaction, since it is supposed to furnish a complete guaranty against a failure similar to the one which had occurred in the past. The sun goes down, and holy time is once more fairly entered upon, the night is passed in unbroken silence, and the first dawn is hailed as the arrival of the auspicious moment which is to witness the triumphant vindication of a theory, the enemies of which, through the merest accident, have been enabled to ridicule for a period.

Again, the family circle is complete. As they gather around to partake of the morning meal, the urn, in which is deposited that which is at one and the same time the precious food of angels and that of God's wandering people, is brought forth and its cover removed, in order that each one may receive his portion of its most delicious contents. How perfect the revulsion of feeling and how great the chagrin, when they find in the place of that for which their souls longed, a living mass of loathsome worms. The words of Moses, that they should not keep any of that which was gathered on any day but the sixth until the morning, are brought to mind; and they perceive, at last, that they have but repeated the experiment of those who had formerly disregarded this injunction, and found that "it bred worms, and stank." Ex. 16:20. But folly had not yet run her perfect round. Reason seemed to have been dethroned until Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are tried with like success.

Upon the first day of the week, that which many are now solemnizing in supposed obedience to the commandment, there was found no food at all, while upon the remaining five, it was in such a condition as to forbid the entertaining, for a moment, the thought of its being appropriated as food by mortal man.

Thus terminates the first attempt to confound the sacred with the profane. Its victim, thoroughly humbled and profoundly penitent, returns to the old way, a wiser and a better man, resolving in the future, to atone, as far as possible, for the past, by a faithful observance of the Lord's Sabbath. Making Friday the preparation day, he once more enters upon its solemn hours. How different the experience now! No hunger here, nor sight of nauseating food! The creature is in harmony with the Creator. The latter, to make up for the lack of manna on the seventh day, gives a double portion on the sixth; and to obviate the difficulty which would arise from the fact that the manna which ordinarily fell would become corrupt within twenty-four hours, by an exercise of divine power, he makes this of a nature to last forty-eight.

Thus did the Lord distinctly teach his ancient people that his Sabbath was a particular, definite day of the week. If you would feel the force with which this conviction must have rested down upon their minds, you have but to remember that there were in each week, three distinct acts of God, or, if you please, miracles, all tending to confirm them in it; viz., the falling of the manna on the six days, the giving of a double portion on the last of them, the preservation of this over the seventh, and the absence of any, whatever, on this. Also, that, as there are in the year fifty-two weeks, they must have

witnessed in each year one hundred and fifty-six of these occurrences (there being three each week), and, in the forty years of their wanderings in the wilderness, the enormous aggregate of six thousand, two hundred and forty.

"ALWAYS THE BIBLE."

"Always the Bible!" it tells us of Eden,
Of Adam and Eve in the garden of grace;
T'was there 'mid the flowers, among the green bowers,
That Satan first plotted to ruin our race.

"Always the Bible!" the law of Jehovah,
The Sabbath, shines out, as when Israel heard,
When he thundered aloud from dark Sinai's cloud,
And trembled the host at the voice of the Lord.

Yes, "always the Bible," the dear blessed Bible!
It brings life to light, immortality too;
It tells the glad story, when earth, filled with glory,
Shall be the abode of the loyal and true.

"Always the Bible!" rich mine where the Christian
Finds jewels of worth, in its pages revealed
Are wisdom and truth for the aged and youth,
And its wonderful visions no longer are sealed.

"Always the Bible!" the book of brave martyrs;
Their comfort in dungeon, in darkness and gloom,
Their solace in death, when resigning their breath
At the stake, in the fagot-fires meeting their doom.

"Always the Bible!" it tells of God's prophets;
Of holy Elijah who prayed for the dearth,
The idolatrous tale of the prophets of Baal,
Of the waters of Noah, that deluged the earth.

We find in "the Bible" the story of Jesus;
It speaks of the birth of the poor Nazarene,
The sweet infant stranger, in Bethlehem's manger,
While angels, enraptured, hung over the scene.

"Always" in "the Bible" we find the great "Healer,"
Engaged in relieving the woes of mankind,
As he taught by the sea of "deep Galilee,"
Giving health to the leper, or sight to the blind.

Yet we find in "the Bible" the sad revelation,
How Christ died in anguish on Calvary's tree;
O cruel reward for thy love, dearest Lord,
That poor, guilty sinners should crucify thee!

"Always the Bible," good news of salvation,
Says millions shall waken from death and the grave
In lovely perfection; for Christ's resurrection
Doth tell of his might, and his power to save.

"Always the Bible!" the beautiful Bible!
The glorious record that God gave to man
Stands fair on its pages, and saints of all ages
Shall glorify him for the wonderful plan.

"Always the Bible!" the scenes of the Judgment
Are surely portrayed by prophetic pen;
When the King shall accord unto man his reward,
And mete unto each as his work shall have been.

"Always the Bible!" the beautiful city
Gleams out from its pages with battlements bright,
With pleasure untold, on its pavements of gold,
All the ransomed of ages shall walk with delight.

Then "always the Bible!" till earth robed in beauty,
At last the blest home of immortals shall be,
When saved from sin ever, to live now forever,
They'll swell the loud notes of the ransomed and free.

Yes "always the Bible!" till Heaven be my portion,
And Christ comes in glory, to dwell among men;
I'll then bow before him, revere and adore him,
And shout hallelujah forever—Amen!

MRS. MARCIA S. AVERY.

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

"He led them out as far as to Bethany," along the road they had so often journeyed with him, every step reminding them of some incidents or words of wisdom and love of the dear Master, who was now about to leave them alone, and all those happy evenings spent in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus—how freshly they return to the minds of the chosen friends. Here he stops and looks around on the little band. They have taken their last walk together, the last words have been spoken to his beloved disciples, whom he is about to leave in the world that had treated him so cruelly, and which he knew would treat them cruelly, also.

We may imagine the look of unutterable love he cast upon them, as he raised o'er them those hands so pierced and wounded, and blessed them, and was borne up, those hands still outstretched as pledges of his love!

"Lift up your heads, oh, ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." His work on earth is now ended, and his mediatorial work in Heaven begun. The bereaved disciples return to Jerusalem, not this time in sorrow, but in joy, their hopes fulfilled, their fears and doubts removed. Their Lord has gone up before their very eyes to the Father he had told them of so often, and where he was going, to prepare mansions for them.

They hastened now to fulfill his last commands, to go and spread abroad the story of his love. No more faithlessness, but strong, earnest, loving work for the Master, for though absent from them in the body, still they have his promise, "I am with you always."

Doubtless in the fiery trials that awaited them, and the cruel deaths they all (with one exception) suffered, his life, death and words, which they were privileged to see and hear, strengthened them to endure even as he endured. This same Lord is our Lord and Master; let us therefore hasten to obey his commands, for "The night cometh, when no man can work."—*Aimee.*

THE TRUE STYLE OF SPEAKING.

ON the whole, when once a man is master of himself and of his materials, the best rule that can be given him is to forget style altogether, and to think only of the reality to be expressed. The more the mind is intent on the reality, the simpler, truer, more telling the style will be. The advice which a great preacher gives for conduct, holds good for all kinds of writing: "Aim at things, and your words will be right without aiming. Guard against their love of display, love of singularity, love of seeming original. Aim at meaning what you say, and saying what you mean." When a man who is full of his subject, and has matured his powers of expression, sets himself to speak thus simply and sincerely, whatever there is in him of strength or sweetness, of dignity or grace, of humor or pathos, will find its way out naturally into his language. That language will be true to his thought, true to the man himself. Free from self-consciousness, free from mannerism, it will bear the impress of whatever is best in his individuality.—*Sharp.*

ACCORDING TO YOUR ABILITY.

"EVERY man according to his ability," is the Christian rule of giving and working. It is not very faithfully obeyed. There are many persons who have ample leisure, yet give but little time; who have large possessions, yet make small contributions. This is an evil that we have all seen under the sun. And there is another like unto it. There are a great many people who have some ability, but who do nothing; who have not much leisure, but who give no time to the Lord's work; who have a little money, but who put none at all into his treasury. Those who have a little and give nothing violate the Christian law just as truly as those who have much and give little. There are a great many persons, young and old, in all our churches, whose means and opportunities are limited, from whom not much ought to be expected; but they are able to do something and do they nothing. They are transgressors of the Christian law. They ought to repent, and do works meet for repentance.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

A STRANGE MESSENGER.

THIS is the title in one of our exchanges of this remarkable fact in natural history and its more remarkable outcome in morals:—

"A professional diver said he had in his house what would probably strike a visitor as a very strange chimney ornament—the shells of an oyster holding fast a piece of printed paper. The possessor of this ornament was diving on the coast, when he observed at the bottom of the sea this oyster on a rock, with a piece of paper in its mouth, which he detached, and commenced to read through the goggles of his head-dress. It was a gospel tract, and, coming to him thus strangely and unexpectedly, so impressed his unconverted heart, that he said, 'I can hold out against God's mercy in Christ no longer, since it pursues me thus.' He became, whilst in the ocean's depth, a repentant, converted, and (as he was assured) sin forgiven man. Saved at the bottom of the sea."

A LITTLE boy about five years old once tried to pick a small snail from a rock, but the creature's hold was stronger than his tiny fingers, and he could not get it off. When he prayed that evening he thought of the snail and said:—

"O God, grant that I may stick to thee as the snail stuck to the rock to-day, and couldn't be got off."

That was a good prayer. I hope it was answered, and that the noble little fellow was so helped that he did stick to his Creator. May all my readers stick to their religion, too.

"THIS GENERATION."

BY WM. PENNIMAN.

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. 24:34.

GREENFIELD defines the original *genea* thus: "A family, generation, descent, Matt. 1:17, also an age, race, generation of men, including, upon the average, a space of fifty years. Luke 1:50; 7:31."

Liddell & Scott's Greek lexicon also defines the word as race, generation, etc.

Smith's Bible Dictionary is very explicit in defining the word generation: "1. *Abstract*:—time, either definite or indefinite. The primary meaning of the Hebrew *dôr* is revolution: hence, *period* of time. From the general idea of period comes the more special notion of an age or generation of men, the ordinary period of human life. In the long-lived, patriarchal age a generation seems to have been computed at one hundred years (Gen. 15:16; comp. 13, and Ex. 12:40); the latter reckoning, however, was the same which has been adopted by other civilized nations, viz., from thirty to forty years (Job 42:16). For generation in the sense of a *definite* period of time, see Gen. 15:16; Deut. 23:3, 4, 8, etc. As an *indefinite* period of time:—for *time past*, see Deut. 32:7; Isa. 58:12; for *time future*, see Ps. 45:17; 72:5, etc. 2. *Concrete*:—the men of an age or time. So generation equals *contemporaries* (Gen. 6:9; Isa. 53:8); *posterity*, especially in legal formulæ (Lev. 3:17, etc.); *fathers* or *ancestors* (Ps. 49:19). Dropping the idea of time, generation comes to mean a *race* or *class* of men. In A. V. of N. Test., three words are rendered by *generation*. For the abstract and indefinite, see Luke 1:50; Eph. 3:21 (A. V. "ages"); future: Acts 15:21 (A. V. "of old time"); Eph. 3:5 (A. V. "ages"), *past*. For concrete, see Matt. 11:16."

It will be seen that the above definitions favor the idea of indefinite time, and that we are not now to look for a generation to last a hundred years or as long as it did in the patriarchal age. Mr. Barnes in commenting upon Matt. 24:34, says: "A generation is about forty years. The destruction of Jerusalem took place about forty years after this was spoken." But the question before us is, and it is certainly a very important one, Do the words, "this generation," etc., refer exclusively to the generation living before the destruction of Jerusalem, or do they refer to the one now living which has witnessed certain signs in these last days? These words of our Saviour are certainly very remarkable, and demand our serious attention, for he says, in truth or most certainly this generation, or as the original reads, *hee genea autee*, the same generation, etc. Therefore the same generation which witnesses the signs "will not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." And to make the language yet more forcible he says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

The objector to the doctrine of Christ's soon coming says that "this generation refers exclusively to the one living before the destruction of Jerusalem;" but this must depend upon what is included in the words "till all these things be fulfilled." Mr. Barnes in commenting upon "all these things," says: "The words of Christ in describing the destruction of Jerusalem had a fullness of signification that would meet also the events of the Judgment, and which meaning would not be filled up till the world was closed." Admitting then that by "these things" Christ meant those signs which were to precede the destruction of Jerusalem, it would only prove the two-fold meaning of his words, making that wicked and almost faithless generation, typical of the last generation, and Jerusalem, the doomed city, of the defiled and destined earth.

If it can be shown that all of "these things" were not fulfilled before the destruction of Jerusalem, then most certainly the words apply to the last generation on the earth, or to the one which witnesses the signs in the sun, moon, and stars. On page 48 of Exposition of Matthew Twenty-Four, we read: "The phrase, 'all these things,' does not embrace the mourning of the tribes of the earth, and the sign of the Son of man. Neither does it embrace the shaking of the powers of the heavens; for that does not take place until the seventh vial is poured out." If it can be shown that "all these things" of the 34th verse does not include "these things" spoken of in the 3d verse, then most certainly Christ spoke of the signs which the last generation would witness, instead of those which would be witnessed

by the one which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem. "And Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." "These things," in this connection, refer to the destruction of the buildings of the temple, and also of Jerusalem. Moses and the prophets also predicted this (Deut. 28:49-53; Lev. 26:29-33; Jer. 25:17, 18; 26:29; and Dan. 9:26).

After Christ uttered this prediction he crossed the brook Kedron with his disciples and ascended the Mount of Olives. "And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be?" (When shall the buildings of the temple, or when will Jerusalem, be destroyed?) "And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Christ had plainly told them what would take place, but he had not told them the *time* of these calamities. It was, therefore, quite natural for the disciples to inquire as they did. They wished to know *when* "these things" would come, or when all these calamities would come upon the Jews. It is evident that there are but two questions, and that Christ answered both of them. If the subject under consideration (or the passing away of "this generation") is not a full answer to the first question then it must be of the second. Therefore, in order to fully understand the answer to the second, we must find what is included in the answer to the first. The answer to the first will include what was fulfilled before, and in, Jerusalem's destruction.

Before telling the disciples what would take place, Jesus cautions them saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Before the destruction of Jerusalem, there is no history of any false christs. Josephus mentions one, but he is not considered a false christ by the best writers. Barnes in his notes on Matthew 24 mentions only Doritheus, the Samaritan, and Simon Magus. The Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge names twenty-four, all of whom appeared between the time of Emperor Adrian and the year 1682. As *one* or *two* are not *many*, consequently this prophecy extends beyond the fall of Jerusalem. We will admit that there were "wars and rumors of wars" before the destruction of Jerusalem as history records these events, but they were not special signs of the doom of that city, neither are they of the end of the world, as wars are calamities which have been in all ages. The language of Christ implies this, as he says in connection, "All these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." Why is the end not yet? "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." If these things were *only* the *beginning* of sorrows, then certainly much more would come before the end; therefore they were not special signs that the end was near.

We will further admit that the prophecy concerning the rising of nations and kingdoms against each other, and also concerning famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, were fulfilled in the period intervening the prediction and the fall of the city. The prophecy in regard to wars, was not fully fulfilled in those times; for what were large armies, a few battering-rams, bows, arrows, slings, and darts, in comparison to the tremendous machinery, and implements of the present day, or of modern warfare? The invention of gunpowder and fire-arms, which are modern inventions, have added much to the honors of war. The aggregate of national expenses in Europe, as well as in the United States, is the result of the cost of war, and of preparations for war.* These facts show that we are living in the time of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong." Joel 3:9, 10. Look at the wars of Europe, and those of Napoleon, who caused the death of 6,000,000 of people; the wars of the

Crimea, and the late Franco-Prussian war. The late American conflict was probably, in some respects, the most terrible war which has ever been. Is it not wonderful that the leading nations of Christendom are still equipping large armies for the work of death and destruction, sending them forth with their chaplains, supplicating the same God to aid them in butchering each other? We therefore conclude; that the prophecy concerning wars, has a wider fulfillment this side of Jerusalem.

Famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, are not mentioned by Christ as signs of his second coming, but he taught that they would occur all the way down the stream of time, to the end. It is said that these also occurred between the ascension of Christ and the destruction of the Jewish temple; but it is certain that they were not developed in an extraordinary manner, until since that time, as facts will prove. (See "Brief Exposition of Matthew Twenty-four.") The great earthquake at Lisbon, November 1, 1775, was no doubt the fulfillment of Rev. 6:12. By this earthquake, 50,000 were killed in the city of Lisbon. This must be the most extensive that ever occurred or of which we have any record, as Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, and the Atlantic Ocean, were affected by it. Over 15,000,000 square miles of the earth's surface were disturbed by it.

In a work entitled, "The Coming Earthquake," the author gives a table, showing the increase since A. D. 58, to 1850. Before A. D. 58, only four disastrous ones were recorded in 1700 years. From A. D. 58 to end of 9th century 197 in 900 years, of these 15 disastrous. From 9th to end of 15th century 532 in 600 years, 44 destructive. From 15th to 18th century 2,804 in 300 years, and two destructive. From 18th century to 1850, 3,240 (50 years), 33 disastrous. This is a wonderful increase. It may be said, "Are not all of these convulsions in nature the result of natural causes? and can they not be accounted for on philosophical and scientific principles? In answer to this question, let me say, Is there not an overruling Providence over these natural causes, so that they become subservient to the will of the great Author of these laws, and are the agents through which he accomplishes his great designs? Most certainly the prophecy concerning earthquakes has a fulfillment this side of the fall of Jerusalem.

(To be Continued.)

RESURRECTION AT DEATH.

BY ELD. R. F. COTTRELL.

A RECENT writer, a minister of an enlightened denomination of Christians, takes his stand, with Spiritualists, that there is no resurrection of the body to be hoped for in the future, but that the resurrection takes place at death. He gives the following comment on 1 Cor. 15:51, 52:—

"The mystery" explains the true ideas and facts of the *anastasis*, or future life. "We shall not all sleep." Death is not sleep at all—not soul-sleeping, unconscious state of the dead—but in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *we*, myself and you to whom I am writing, shall be changed, *anastasised*, from our natural to our spiritual life. "For the trump shall sound"—the event of death must take place—and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, from our earth life to our heavenly life." Again he defines: "The trumpet signifies the ushering in of some great event. Here it refers to the event of death, and passing away of mankind from their earth life to the spirit world, the Judgment, and the awards of the eternal world."

I do not intend to review the writer. An able minister of his own denomination has set forth some of the scripture testimonies for resurrection, which blows away his air-built theory as the chaff. But I make a remark or two. He says, "Death is not a sleep at all." This is true if his theory is true. For if nothing reposes in death that is to be awakened, there is no propriety in calling death a sleep. But this very scripture calls death a sleep. That "we shall not all sleep," implies that some of us shall sleep. And we are instructed by the prophet Daniel that "them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." And in the case of Lazarus, Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." Again we are told that "Jesus spoke of his death," and that he "said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead."

But I wish to call particular attention to the

*See *Economist*, the chief financial authority of England. In this is a table showing increase of expenses for the years 1873 to 1875—the increase in the United States, as well as in nations of Europe.

words of Jesus to Martha: "Thy brother shall rise again." Lazarus had been dead four days. There had been time enough for that work of a moment, of the twinkling of an eye, which our writer says takes place at death, to be fully accomplished. He was a friend of Jesus, and we are expressly told that Jesus loved him. Why then did Jesus say, "Thy brother shall rise again?" Why did he not say, The trumpet has sounded—death has taken place—and thy brother has risen to the spiritual life in the spiritual world? And then how sad the thought, that the liberated soul, one that had been "changed—*anastased*," from his natural to his spiritual life, whose corruptible body, according to our writer, has been "exchanged for the incorruptible, spiritual body," after spending four days in "the spirit world" should be remanded back to his prison life again. But we are not informed that he expressed his regret; so we must not complain.

In conclusion, I express my firm conviction that Martha was sound in faith. In reply to the assurance that her brother should rise again, she said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus did not correct her by telling her that there was to be no such time and event in the far future, but that the event took place at death.

THE HIGHER CHRISTIAN LIFE.

As to what it is—it is simply letting the Lord carry our burdens and manage our affairs, instead of trying to do it ourselves.

Most Christians are like a man who was toiling along the road bending under a heavy burden, when a wagon overtook him, and the driver kindly offered to help him on his journey. He joyfully accepted the offer; but when seated continued to bend beneath his burden, which he still kept on his shoulder. "Why do you not lay down your burden?" asked the kind-hearted driver. "Oh!" replied the man, "I feel that it is almost too much to ask you to carry me, and I could not think of letting you carry my burden too." And so Christians, who have given themselves into the care and keeping of the Lord Jesus, still continue to bend beneath the weight of their burden, and often go weary and heavy laden through the whole length of their journey.

I knew a lady who had a very heavy burden. It took away her sleep and her appetite, and there was danger of her health breaking down under it. One day, when it seemed especially heavy, she noticed lying on the table near her a little tract called "Hannah's Faith." Attracted by the name, she picked it up and began to read it, little knowing, however, that it was to create a revolution in her whole experience. The story was of a poor woman who had been carried triumphantly through a life of unusual sorrow. She was giving the history of her life to a kind visitor on one occasion; and at the close the visitor said, feelingly, "O Hannah! I do not see how you could bear so much sorrow." "I did not bear it," was the quick reply, "the Lord bore it for me."

"Yes," said the visitor, "that is the right way. We must take our troubles to the Lord."

"Yes," replied Hannah, "but we must do more than that; we must leave them there." Most people," she continued, "take their burdens to Him, but they bring them away with them again, and are just as worried and unhappy as ever. But I take mine and I leave them with him, and come away and forget them. And if they come back, I take them again; and I do this over and over, until at last I just forget I have any troubles, and am at perfect rest."

My friend was very much struck with this plan, and resolved to try it. The circumstances of her life she could not alter; but she took them to the Lord, and handed them over into his management, and then she believed that he took them, and she left all the responsibility and the worry and anxiety with him. As often as they returned, she took them back; and the result was that, although the circumstances remained unchanged, her soul was kept in perfect peace in the midst of them. She felt that she had found out a blessed secret; and from that time she never again tried to carry one of her own burdens, nor to manage anything for herself.—H. W. S.

The longer you are with God on the mount of private prayer and secret communion with him, the brighter will your face shine when you come down.

IS GOD DEAD?

BY ELD. S. B. WHITNEY.

THIS question, once propounded by Sojourner Truth to Mr. Douglass when he gave evidence of declining faith in Providence, was recently suggested to my mind by a very different circumstance, as the following will clearly show:—

A few days since, while in conversation with a no-day Adventist upon the law and covenants, the seventh chapter of Romans was alluded to, and I asked him what he understood the first husband to be. He replied, "God; for he says he was an husband unto them." Now Paul says, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." Rom. 7: 2. Then if God was the first husband, and we are loosed from the law by the death of the first husband, it follows that God is dead. This is a new way of proving the abolition of the law of God, but it shows the terrible extremity to which the opponents of that law are driven to find something with which to support their theory.

Another evidence on the same point is the contradictory nature of the positions taken by them. For instance, one man in this place says, in opposing the Sabbath, that the ten commandments are so strict that no man can keep them an hour. Another says they are so slack that they were designed, and were only fit, for a civil code for the Jews, and were altogether of too low a type as a rule for the Christian. Thus it would almost seem that the opposers of God's law are bereft of their reason, and in their insane attacks upon it are left to devour one another's positions. At least, the lovers of that law have nothing to fear from such efforts, and may labor with courage and earnestness for the propagation of its principles, and wait patiently for God to vindicate his own cause.

AMUSEMENTS.

THE law of Christianity is not an iron-clad asceticism. Holiness signifies wholeness, *wholth*, or health; and health breeds innocent mirth. Recreation is not only innocent, it is absolutely indispensable. Martin Luther relieved his stern battles with the Pope by cheerful songs, and by decorating Christmas trees for his children. Gladstone, the king of living statesmen, recreates with his axe; Spurgeon, the king of living preachers, recreates with his games; the saintly McCheyne with his gymnastic poles and bars. These were men, not angels.

No man lives who must not work, and who may not play. But what is recreation? We reply: It is everything which *re creates* what is lost in life's daily frictions or fatigues. Whatever makes the body healthier, the mind clearer, and the power more vigorous, is Christian recreation. To deny ourselves this is hazardous; to restrain others from it is an infringement on Christian liberty. We lay down this principle, that whatever pleasure or play tends to improve the body, mind and spirit, is right; but whatever play or pleasure inflames the evil passions of our nature, is a sinful amusement. The one is right; the other is wrong. The one, like pure water, refreshes and strengthens; the other, like alcoholic beverages, excites a morbid appetite, inflames the passions, and poisons the soul. Recreation is the Creator's pure water; sinful amusement is Satan's brandied beverage.

The theatre, in these days, asks for the suffrages and support of church members. But its advocates always present to us, in argument, an ideal play-house, whose actors are virtuous people, whose dramas conform to Christian morality and which rigidly excludes every kind of sensual temptation. Such a Puritanic theatre would be entitled, at least, to respectful treatment from the church. But every person of common sense knows that the actual average American theatre is no more like this ideal play-house, than the average Pope is like St. Peter, or the average politician is like Abraham Lincoln. A Puritanic theatre would become bankrupt in a twelve-month.—Rev. T. L. Cuyler, in the Evangelist.

CONTINUANCE.

It is a good thing to stick, if one only has something to stick to. Stubbornness on the wrong side is a great fault, but steadfastness in the right is most praiseworthy. The psalmist said, "I have stuck unto thy testimonies; O Lord, put me

not to shame." The man who takes God's testimonies for an heritage and who sticks to them in health and in sickness, in wealth and in poverty, in prosperity and in adversity, will never be put to shame. It is when men forsake the law and word of God, that they involve themselves in trouble. So long as they abide in him, and stick to the word of God, there is nothing else on which to build our faith and hope. Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.—*The Armory.*

DR. LYMAN BEECHER, the well-known American Presbyterian minister, once engaged to preach for a country minister on exchange, and the Sabbath proved to be one excessively stormy, cold, and uncomfortable. It was in mid-winter, and the snow was piled all along in the roads, so as to make the passage very difficult. Still the minister urged his horse through the drifts, put the animal into a shed, and went in. As yet there was no person in the house, and after looking about, the old gentleman—then young—took his seat in the pulpit. Soon the door opened, and a single individual walked up the aisle, looked about, and took a seat. The hour came for commencing service, but no more hearers.

Whether to preach to such an audience was a question, and it was one which Lyman Beecher was not long in deciding. He felt that he had a duty to perform, and he had no right to refuse to do it because only one man could reap the benefit of it, and accordingly he went through all the services, praying, singing, preaching, and the benediction, with only *one* hearer. And when all was over, he hastened down from the desk to speak to his congregation, but he had departed.

A circumstance so rare was referred to occasionally, but twenty years after it was brought to the doctor's mind quite strangely. Traveling somewhere in Ohio, the doctor alighted from the stage one day, when a gentleman stepped up and spoke to him, familiarly calling him by name. "I do not remember you," said the doctor. "I suppose not," said the stranger; "but we once spent two hours together in a house alone in a storm." "I do not recall it, sir," added the old man; "pray, when was it?" "Do you remember preaching, twenty years ago, in such a place, to a single person?" "Yes, sir," said the doctor, grasping his hand, "and if you are the man, I have been wishing to see you ever since." "I am the man, sir; and that sermon saved my soul and made a minister of me, and yonder is my church! The converts of that sermon, sir, are all over Ohio."—*Exchange.*

THE effectiveness of prayer does not depend in any measure, upon its fluency, or its grammatical accuracy, or its rhetorical finish, or its length, or the volume or solemnity of voice with which it is uttered. A prayer may be perfect in all these qualities, and yet be utterly ineffective. Effectual prayer is that which is wrung out of the heart by a sense of need, and offered in a spirit of faith—a "belief that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The man who has this sense of need, and this spirit of faith, may hesitate and stammer in his utterance; he may be faulty in the grammar and rhetoric which he employs; he may be as brief and informal in his prayer as Peter was when he found himself sinking beneath the sea of Galilee; he may not have voice enough to be heard by any human ear; but he will command the ear of God, and he will have assured to him the sympathy and help of God in that thing for which he prays. That which the psalmist says is eternally true: "Delight thyself in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart."

"Oh, mother, I did want one of those big oranges outside Dick's shop-window."

"You did not touch one, I hope, Eddy?" said his mother.

"I did not, mother; but I had to watch my hand hard not to let it grab," replied Eddy.

"That's right, my boy, watch."

YEARS cannot make their strength decay,
Who lean upon the Lord;
Nor age fling shadows o'er the way
That's lighted by His word;
Their path doth bright and brighter shine,
Till perfect in the skies;
And life's soft eve is no decline,
For heavenward still they rise.

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, FEBRUARY 3, 1881.

CAN WE KNOW OF THE SECOND ADVENT?

NO TRUTH of inspiration can be more clearly stated than that God reveals his designs to his prophets, that men and nations may be warned before their accomplishment. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3:7. Before visiting with judgments, God has sent forth warnings sufficient to enable the believing to escape his wrath, and to condemn those who have not heeded the warning. This was the case before the flood. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world." Heb. 11:7.

At a later period, when the nations had become sunken in idolatry and crime, and the destruction of wicked Sodom was determined, the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" Gen. 18:17, 18. And due notice was given to righteous Lot, who, with his daughters, was preserved; and none, even in that guilty city, perished without due warning. Let evidently warned the people; and, in thus communing with them, was "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked." 2 Pet. 2:7, 8. When he warned his sons-in-law, "he seemed as one that mocked." Gen. 19:14. And when "the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter," Lot warned them, and entreated them to desist from their wickedness. And they at once did that which all sinners, since the days of righteous Lot, have been disposed to do to those who faithfully warn them of their sins; namely, they charged him with being a judge.

Before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, a fore-runner was sent to prepare the way before the Lord. Those who did not receive Christ were rejected, "because," as he said to Jerusalem, when warning the people of the destruction of their city and temple, "thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke 19:44. We have on record the Lord's prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem during the time of the generation that rejected him, which was fulfilled in less than forty years from the time of his crucifixion. And that the Christians in Judea might escape its impending doom, they were told that when they should "see Jerusalem compassed with armies," or, as recorded by Matthew, "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place," they were to flee to the mountains. Luke 21:20; Matt. 24:15. They heeded the admonition, and escaped in safety to Pella.

Such is the testimony of inspiration respecting the dealings of God with his people in past ages. And it cannot be supposed that he will change his course relative to the future, when that future is to realize the crowning consummation of all prophetic declarations.

We accept the Bible as a revelation from Heaven. What God has revealed in that book, let no man call a mystery, or a secret of the Almighty. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." Deut. 29:29. If the sacred Scriptures do not designate any period in particular for the second appearing of Christ, then men should at once abandon the search for proofs of his second coming. But if prophecy, in a most harmonious manner, does point to the period of that great event, and if there is evidence that "it is near, even at the doors," the subject at once assumes vast importance.

Can anything be learned from the Bible relative to the period of the second advent is a question unsettled in many minds. This is a grave inquiry, and, from the nature of the subject, is worthy of close investigation and a candid answer. How did Christ himself treat the subject? When the disciples inquired, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the

world?" he did not reprove them for prying into that which was purposely hidden from all men. No, he answered them in the most definite manner. He even states that there should be signs of that event, and adds, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." The simple fact that the Lord mentions signs of his second advent is the best proof possible that his people were not to remain ignorant of the relative nearness of the event. Add to this evidence his declaration that when these signs should be seen, his people should know that it was near, even at the doors, and the case becomes an exceedingly strong one.

J. W.

THE THIRD DAY SINCE THESE THINGS WERE DONE.

ON what day of the week was Christ crucified? and on what day did he arise from the dead? These are questions which have been the occasion of no little discussion. There are substantially two views held in reference to them. The first is, that Christ was crucified on Wednesday, was laid in the tomb near the close of that day, and rose from the dead a corresponding hour on the Sabbath, or Saturday, having lain in the grave exactly seventy-two hours; this being the three days and three nights during which the Son of man was to be in the heart of the earth, as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly. The second view, and the one most generally entertained is, that Christ was crucified on Friday, and rose early on the morning of the first day of the week. There are others who place the crucifixion upon Thursday instead of Friday, thinking this necessary to make harmony between all the statements of the evangelists concerning that event. This view however, does not obviate the difficulty which the first view is designed to meet; namely, the apparent failure of the words of Christ that the Son of man should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, if a period of time less than seventy-two hours elapsed while he lay in the tomb. The main question lies between the first and second views here stated.

As already intimated, the first view rests wholly upon the testimony respecting Jonah. No other reason, at least of which we are aware, exists for placing the crucifixion so early in the week as Wednesday, except the statement of Christ that as Jonah was three days and three nights in the body of the fish, the Son of man should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Assuming that the phrase "heart of the earth," means the grave, which may perhaps be questioned, all rests upon the meaning of this phrase, "three days and three nights." What do these words signify? Must they be taken absolutely as they would be understood if used at the present day? or, was there in that age a *usus loquendi*, in accordance with which they could be taken in an accommodated sense? There is nothing in the record in Jonah to throw any additional light upon the expression; that is, there is no other testimony there, and no other events recorded, which show us that a period of time, absolutely seventy-two hours in length, is meant by the term "three days and three nights." We do have, however, in the evangelists, records of predictions and narrations of events, from which we can determine something respecting the time during which Christ lay in the tomb. Now, instead of taking the bare expression, "three days and three nights," assuming that the meaning attached to it when it was used, was the same as we would give at the present day, and then using that as proof that Christ was for seventy-two consecutive hours in the grave, and trying to make all other testimony harmonize with this view, it seems to us it would be fully as legitimate a mode of reasoning to try to ascertain from the evangelists how long Christ was actually in the tomb, and use that as a key for the interpretation of the expression, "three days and three nights."

The words placed at the head of this article give us, if we mistake not, a good clue to the solution of this question. They are the words used by the disciples to Christ when on their way to Emmaus. The time when they were used is beyond dispute. It was in the latter part of the first day of the week. And they said, "To-day is the third day since these things were done." From this, then, as a starting-point, let us count back and see how early in the week it is possible to place the crucifixion. If the first day of the week was the third day, the day before the first day, or the Sabbath, was the second day, and the day before that, or Friday, the first day, since the events of which they were

speaking took place; and this would forbid our placing the events themselves farther back than the preceding day, or Thursday. Reasoning from this statement of the disciples, we see not how the trial and crucifixion of Christ can possibly be placed earlier in the week than Thursday.

How, then, do those who place this event on Wednesday, meet this testimony? We have never heard any one try; but we have heard that some do attempt to get around it (for we can call it nothing less) by saying that the word *since* means from the first day; that is, the third day from the first day of the occurrence of these things. But it looks to us that this is not even respectable sophistry. If we are to reckon from some point subsequent to the occurrence of the events, then we are cut loose from all moorings, and might just as well say that that was the third day since Jonah was put into the whale's belly.

The original is very definite: "*Triteen tanteen heemeran agei seameron, aph' ou tanta egeneto* (This day is the third day from the time when these things took place.) Suppose, now, that the crucifixion took place on Wednesday. He was laid in the tomb that day. All was accomplished before Thursday began. Would not Thursday, then, be the first day following those events? Would not Friday, be the second, and Sabbath the third, even stretching the time all that is possible to stretch it? The expression, *since* these things occurred, cannot exclude Thursday; for Thursday was not the day of the occurrence of these things, but the day following their occurrence; and the disciples did not say, To-day is the third day from the day following the occurrence of these things; but the third day from the time when they occurred. This is a nail in a sure place; for in view of this testimony, we cannot go back more than two days from the first day of the week for the crucifixion, making it occur on Thursday, the third day, according to the most liberal reckoning, from that point. We do not say it did occur then, but only that we cannot go back farther than that day.

The seventy-two-hour theory thus falls to the ground; and we are held to the conclusion that the expression, "three days and three nights," cannot be taken to mean absolutely that length of time. The way is, therefore, now all open to adjust these events in such a manner as a harmonious interpretation of all the testimony shall demand.

And first, we call the attention of the reader to those passages which declare that Christ would rise on the third day from the time of his trial and crucifixion. There are eight of them, as follows: Matt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Mark 9:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7; and two passages state that he did rise on the third day: Luke 24:46; 1 Cor. 15:4. Take these texts with the declaration of the disciples, "To-day is the third day since these things were done," and, as it seems to us, the day of the resurrection is clearly identified. Christ was to rise on the third day after certain events, and the disciples, naming those very events, and speaking on the first day of the week, say, "To-day is the third day since these things were done." The day on which the disciples uttered these words, if they were correct in their reckoning, was the very day on which Christ was to rise, according to his own predictions. Did his predictions fail? If not, his resurrection is immovably fixed upon the first day of the week.

There is a passage in Mark which we consider a direct declaration that Christ did rise on the first day of the week, Mark 16:9: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene." Greek: "*Anastas de proi protee sabbaton, ephanee proton Maria tee Magdaleenee*," etc. Literally, "And having arisen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene," etc. The only question here is, whether the words, "early the first day of the week," are an adjunct of the participle, having risen, or of the verb, appeared. We think they qualify the participle; for, first, the verb has a qualifying word, in the word *first*, which seems to be all that the evangelist wished to assert respecting his appearing. There would be no propriety in saying that he appeared first to certain ones on the first day of the week, unless it is told to whom he appeared first upon some other day. Secondly, it would appear more important that the time of his resurrection should be named than the time when he appeared to his disciples. But if it is said that this is the

important point, then we reply that *this* certainly took place on the first day of the week, and hence Sunday-keepers retain all the force of their argument for first-day, based on the resurrection of Christ, even though the resurrection itself be removed to another day.

This brings us to another difficulty involved in the view that Christ lay in the tomb seventy-two hours, from near the close of Wednesday to near the close of the Sabbath; namely, it makes the resurrection of Christ occur on the Sabbath. Is there any testimony to show that Christ arose on the Sabbath? Matt. 28:1, is claimed for this purpose. It is held by some that this language means, "Late in the Sabbath [the day ending at sunset] as the first day of the week was drawing on;" that is, before sunset on the Sabbath, came the two Marys to the sepulcher. Previous to their coming, there had been [margin] a great earthquake, the stone was rolled away, and an angel, assuring them that the Lord was not there, but had arisen, bade them go quickly and tell the disciples that he was risen, and would go before them into Galilee where they would see him. This, it is claimed, is the record of a previous visit, which none of the other evangelists mention, they all speaking of a visit on the following morning, after the Sabbath was past.

The language of Matt. 28:1, is clearly susceptible of the translation given it in our common version, and means, after the Sabbath. Let us inquire whether this idea of a previous visit, in this passage, is consistent with the record of the other evangelists.

1. According to the view under notice, this visit was made on the Sabbath. But Luke says (23:56) that the disciples rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. It is hardly probable that they would thus clip the end of the Sabbath by a journey to the sepulcher, work from which they had so scrupulously abstained at its commencement; nor could such a course easily be reconciled with the testimony of Luke, above referred to.

2. The same Marys, according to Mark (16:1, 2), came to the sepulcher very early in the morning of the first day of the week; and they brought the spices they had prepared to anoint the Lord, Luke 24:2, and wondered who would roll away the stone for them. But how can it be supposed that they would come for this purpose on first-day morning, if they had been to the sepulcher the night before and found the stone rolled away, and been assured by an angel that the Lord was not there, but had risen? Were they so forgetful, or so thoughtless?

3. While the women were returning to tell the disciples, as the angel had bidden them, according to the record in Matthew 28, the guard went into the city, and between them and the chief priests the story was fabricated that the body of Jesus was stolen while they slept. Now, the supposition that Jesus rose in the daytime before the close of the Sabbath, involves the absurdity of supposing that the guard would acknowledge that they were asleep in the daytime! and that the body was taken in broad daylight! To avoid this, it is said that only the first eight verses of Matthew 28 refer to the Sabbath visit, the language of verse 9, and onward, referring to the morning visit which is noticed by the other evangelists. But this is a most forced and unnatural interpretation; for there is nothing in the language to denote a jump of a whole night between verses 8 and 9, and not an intimation that the record from verse 9 applies to an occasion different from that introduced in the preceding verses. But this view involves an absurdity equal in magnitude to the other; for it follows that the guard, after being struck down as dead men by the glorious manifestations attending the resurrection of Christ on Sabbath afternoon, waited a whole night, till first-day morning, before they went into the city to acquaint the chief priests with the wonderful events which had taken place.

Having now found that Christ's resurrection took place on the first day of the week, the only importance attached to fixing the day of the crucifixion is to show a fulfillment of Christ's words, and make all the statements of the evangelists harmonize. It has already been shown that we cannot go back farther than Thursday for the date of that event. The question here, then, lies between Thursday and Friday where it is generally placed; and it is only material to take that day which is required by the testimony in the case.

Let us suppose it to have occurred on Friday. The

betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and entombment, of Christ, then, occupied almost that entire day. Could this be taken as the first day in the computation? If so, then Sunday would be the third day, as the disciples said. In Luke 13:32, we read that Jesus sent this word to Herod: "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." The *to-day* in which Christ speaks is here made the first in the order of reckoning.

In Acts 27, we have an account of some of Paul's perils by sea. In verse 17, he speaks of a certain day of their distress. The *next* day, he continues, they lightened the ship; and the *third* day, cast overboard the tackling. Verse 19. Here it is evident that the day mentioned in verse 17 is called the first.

In Esther 6, we have an account of a feast given by the queen to Haman and the king. The *next* day she gave another; and that *next* day is called the *second*. Esth. 7:2.

So in reckoning backward, the day on which the person spoke was the first day, and the day but one before that, was called the third. See the marginal reading of Ex. 4:10; Deut. 19:4; Josh. 3:4; 1 Sam. 4:7; 19:7; etc.

From this it is evident that when Christ predicted that he was to suffer certain things, be put to death, and rise the third day, he reckoned the day of his suffering as the first day in the computation.

But how can a portion of Friday, the Sabbath, and a part of Sunday, be called, three days and three nights? There is no difficulty, if such was the manner of speaking in use among the Jews. What did they understand by it? This is the only question to be settled. There is a passage in Esther which would seem to throw some light upon the question. She told Mordecai (4:16) to gather the Jews together who were in Shushan, and fast for three days, neither eating nor drinking night or day; and she would do the same and so would go in unto the king. This expression is certainly equivalent to three days and three nights. And how was it fulfilled? In chap. 5:1, we read that on the *third* day Esther appeared before the king. In like manner, we read of Joseph that he put his brethren into ward three days, but on the third day he released them and permitted them to depart to Canaan.

From these instances it appears clear that, according to Jewish usage, it did not require three full days and nights to answer to the expression, "three days and three nights;" but that it was applied to a period of time covering the part of one day, the whole of another, and a portion of a third.

The day following the crucifixion, the chief priests came to Pilate desiring a guard to be set; and it is objected that they would not do this upon the Sabbath. This is not the way, to be sure, we should expect the Sabbath to be spoken of; but as to the chief priests and Pharisees, we do not think we can presume much on the piety of men who were just then so infuriated with the spirit of the devil as to condemn the Saviour to the cross. It is far easier to suppose they would come to Pilate upon the Sabbath than to think that the Sabbath which followed that preparation day, Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54, and which the women kept according to the commandment, Luke 33:56, was only a ceremonial sabbath.

But, says one, if we could show that Christ did not rise on the first day of the week, how it would sweep away the argument for Sunday-keeping. To be of any service, the argument to this end must be very plain and positive; for all the world almost are established in the belief that his resurrection was on Sunday. The evidence is not so clear; and to try to use it, is to seize the maul by the head instead of the handle; for it would be a hundred-fold harder to make a person believe that Christ's resurrection did not take place upon the first day of the week, than to show him that if it did, it proved nothing in favor of a Sunday Sabbath. Were we arguing with a Sunday-keeper, we would prefer to admit Christ's resurrection on Sunday rather than otherwise; for we like to agree with an opponent as far as possible; and because, after he has carefully built up his argument, it is so easy to show that point after point is only assumption, and that the whole structure falls in hopeless ruin to the ground.

And farther, to undertake to prove Christ's resurrection upon another day, is a tacit admission that if he did rise on the first day of the week, it is of force in

behalf of a Sunday Sabbath; whereas if ten thousand resurrections could be shown upon that day, it would prove nothing whatever in its favor as a day of rest and worship.

U. S.

OUR MESSAGE.

In Rev. 10:6, 7, an angel swears to the ending of *the time*, prophetic time, contained in the little book which was opened, in his hand. This was fulfilled by the first angel's message of Rev. 14:6, 7, proclaiming "the hour of his Judgment is come." The Judgment of investigation and of decision of character is identical with the cleansing of the sanctuary; a work to take place at the end of the prophetic period of two thousand and three hundred days. Dan. 8:14. Rev. 10 closes with these words: "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Without a full understanding of the fact that the time referred to in the oath of the angel is prophetic time, it would be natural to conclude that this oath announced the coming of Christ, and the end of the dispensation. And this was the view of those who gave the first message. They did not understand that the Judgment was to sit, and the sanctuary be cleansed, before the coming of the Lord. They fully believed that they were giving the first angel's message, and that, with the close of their message, time should be no longer. But "their eyes were hidden," that they did not see that two messages were to follow the one they were giving, and that the coming of the Lord is after the three are all given. The words of Rev. 10:11, are a prophecy of the third angel's message, and by this we learn that it is to go to "many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Rev. 14:9, says the third angel proclaimed his message "with a loud voice." Thus in these texts we learn two interesting and important truths: 1. This message is to go to the nations of the earth. 2. It is to go with a loud voice, or in mighty power.

God's purposes of grace are worked out by instrumentalities. He has committed to man the work of proclaiming the gospel to his fellow-man. The responsibility of this message is upon us. Not as a burden, grievous to be borne, but as a privilege granted to us by infinite mercy, that we may be "workers together with God," the highest honor that weak mortals can enjoy. This message must increase in extent and power. God's word has spoken it, and it cannot fail. But to fulfill this, those who proclaim it, who send it forth to the nations, must be clothed with power from on high. It is their privilege to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." As the message rises in power, God will clothe his servants with strength and power to rise with it. He will be "the health of our countenance," if we put our trust in him.

When Israel went out of Egypt they came to a point where they were hemmed in by the sea, the mountains, and the host of the Egyptians. At this point, with every avenue closed before them, the voice of the Lord is heard, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward."

These things "were written for our learning." Let us rise up and go forward. The sea, so dark and forbidding before us, will divide as we approach it, and soon we will sing the song of victory on the other shore.

J. H. W.

PEACE AND SAFETY.

BY ELD. J. O. CORLISS.

MANY and various are the interpretations given of the Bible, especially of those scriptures that refer to the coming of the Lord and the end of the world. Any view that will explain away their force and give them a "spiritual" meaning, or place the event of which they speak in the distant future, is listened to by many with evident pleasure.

Recently a man preached from the words, "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." 1 Pet. 4:7. The speaker commenced by saying that he, in common with all good orthodox people, believed in the second personal appearing of Jesus Christ upon the earth; but he could not, with some, think that these words had any reference to that event. He then gave some (to him, no doubt) weighty reasons why he differed from them. Mighty achievements were yet to be executed, whose completion would require ages. The entire world must first be settled, and brought under a high state of civilization, in order to become converted. The mighty forests must be cleared away, and the soil on which

they stand cultivated and become like the garden of Eden. In short, he seemed to think the end no nearer than when Peter wrote the text.

How strangely some men reason! Just think of it! The gospel must bring the world from its darkness occasioned by the fall to the highest point of civilization, convert the world, and restore the earth to its primitive beauty, in order for the Lord to come and destroy it! Could it not be just as effectually destroyed without? What marvelous views such people must have of the infinite wisdom of the great God, and how short-sighted the wisdom that begets such reasoning! It may truthfully be called human, and not heavenly, wisdom. Such representations are faithfully portrayed in the word of God. 2 Pet. 3:3, 4; "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Since Inspiration has recorded that such speeches will be made in the last days, may we not safely conclude, when we hear them on every hand, that we have entered upon that time?

Another argument advanced was, that had Peter meant the end of the world, he would have said so in so many words. The conclusion was therefore drawn that Peter simply exhorted the people to be sober, and watch unto prayer, because he was about to die! What? Everybody watch and be sober because Peter was going to die? Peter's death *the end of all things*? We could not believe that, for a number of reasons: 1. We believe Peter had more sense than to think his life of such importance as to call its termination the end of all things; 2. Had he meant the end of his life he would have "said so in so many words;" 3. That is not the way Bible writers talked about dying. Hear Paul: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." 2 Tim. 4:6. Peter also says, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, . . . I will endeavor that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance." 2 Pet. 1:14, 15

The apostle spoke of that which ever seemed uppermost in his mind—the time when all would render up their account, and receive their reward. 1 Pet. 5:4; 2 Pet. 2:9. God spoke through Peter to those who should live in the time of the end.

In his first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul spoke of the Lord's coming as an event immediately pending: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Chap. 5:4. "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others." Verse 6. Yet he told them in his next letter that before the Lord should come, certain events must transpire which were then matters of prophecy. 2 Thess. 2:1, 3. Paul here speaks as a representative of the whole Christian church, as his epistles cover the whole Christian age. Hence the "ye" and "us" used in the first letter, refer to a class living after the fulfillment of those events given in the second letter; and the apostle expresses himself in language appropriate to that time.

Peter, guided by the same unerring Spirit, takes the same course. In his first epistle he says, "The end of all things is at hand." In his second letter he speaks again of the Lord's coming, and says that in making it known he has not followed cunningly devised fables. He then cites for his authority the sure word of prophecy, to which, he says, "ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn." 2 Pet. 1:16-19. This certainly refers to that people who see the glad day dawn, and yet he speaks as though it applied to the church in his day. If we take heed to the prophecy, as to a light that shines in darkness, it will point with such unerring certainty to that great event that none need be in doubt.

In view of the many omens of the end, how strange that some still persist in lulling the world to sleep. "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5:3.

I AM A BAPTIST—AND I AM MORE.

BY ELD. R. F. COTTRELL.

I AM a Baptist, because I believe the Baptist principle of interpretation to be sound; viz., that whatever is commanded by an institution, is to be learned from the law of the institution, and not from other sources. Therefore, finding the ordinance of baptism in the New Testament, we are not to go back to the law of circum-

cision to determine who are the proper subjects of the ordinance; and in respect to the *mode*, or what baptism is, the only rule to determine this is the meaning of the word, the manner of its use in the New Testament, and the circumstances attending its administration as therein recorded. In other words, the *law* of the institution is the *only rule* of obedience. This is the reason why I am a Baptist.

And the reason why I am more than a Baptist is, I apply the same mode of reasoning and interpretation to other institutions and duties of revealed religion. For example, take the Sabbath institution. I know of no rule of obedience, but the 1st commandment, the fourth commandment. And taking this law for the rule of action, I can keep no other day as the Sabbath, but the one expressly named in the commandment, the seventh day. Therefore I am a Seventh-day Baptist.

And I am more than this. Applying the same obvious, common-sense rules of interpretation to the prophecies, or in other words, to the *promises* of the Scriptures, that I do to their *institutions* and *laws*, I find that Jesus, when he was about to leave the world and go to his Father, promised that he would come again in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, attended by all the holy angels. And he gave certain signs of his return, by which believers might know when his coming would be near, even at the doors.

These signs have appeared. I believe his promises, and I believe that the promised signs have been fulfilled; and hence, that his second advent is near, even at the doors. Therefore I am an Adventist.

But if it is time that the true people of God should be Adventists in the sense of believing that Christ's advent is even at the doors, it is certainly time that the advent messages, prophesied of in Rev. 14:6-12, should be in process of fulfillment, being distinctly proclaimed in the world, by the believers in Jesus Christ. True Adventists will find their duty and their history clearly marked out in this prophetic sketch. Those who cannot point out their progress in the advent proclamation by the use of this unerring prophetic outline, are not genuine Adventists, though they may bear the name.

The genuine experience of Adventists is here given in advance. And the final advent message develops the true people of God, distinguished as those "who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Are these the distinguishing marks of those Adventists who hold that the commandments of God have been superseded and abolished by the faith of Jesus? A person is not a commandment-keeper who breaks one of the commandments. Such should be described as those who break the commandments. And the Sabbath law is one of the commandments of God.

Therefore No-Sabbath Adventists are not the ones described in this prophecy. And the words of this commandment have not been changed. It still says, "The SEVENTH DAY is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Therefore I am a Seventh-day Baptist Adventist.

PAUL kept the faith at Antioch, even when the infatuated crowd attempted to drown his voice with their clamor, and interrupted him, contradicting and blaspheming. He kept the faith at Iconium, when the envious Jews stirred up the people to see him. He kept the faith at Lystra, when the fate of Stephen almost became his, and he was dragged, wounded and bleeding, outside the ramparts of the town, and left there to languish, and for aught they cared, to die. He kept the faith against his erring brother Peter, and withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. He kept the faith when shamefully treated at Philippi, and made the dungeon echo back the praises of his God. He kept the faith at Thessalonica, when lewd fellows of the baser sort accused him falsely of sedition. He kept the faith at Athens, when to the world's sages, he preached of Him whom they ignorantly worshipped as the unknown God. He kept the faith at Corinth, when compelled to abandon that hardened and obdurate city, and to shake off the dust of his garments as a witness against it. He kept the faith at Ephesus, when he pointed his hearers not to Diana but to Jesus Christ as their only Saviour. He kept the faith at Jerusalem, when stoned by the enraged and agitated mob—when placed upon the torturing rack and bound with iron fetters. He kept the faith at Cesarea, before the trembling, conscience-stricken Felix, when he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. He kept the faith before Agrippa, and, by his earnestness, compelled the king to say, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."—*Sel.*

The Missionary.

THE BELIEVERS IN THE TWO FIRST CENTURIES.

BY ELD. S. N. HASKELL.

THE obscurity which enshrouds the lives of the apostles is such that very few have any just idea of the extent and efficiency of their labors. To them the divine commission, "Go ye into *all* the world, and preach the gospel to *every* creature," was personally addressed. Profane history, faint, and uncertain though its record is of these times, gives abundant evidence that the disciples were not disobedient to this sacred charge. Their efforts were not confined to the learned and enlightened, but they went also to the heathen, those who had little or no knowledge of God. They had not the facilities for labor existing at the present time. Their journeys were largely performed on foot, and, to some extent at least, they labored with their hands for their own support. The printed sheet was not at their command. They could not through the mails send written communications of good cheer and counsel to their friends and each other; but with dauntless and unflinching zeal they labored on until all but one sealed their testimony with their blood.

Peter who for a time confined his labors to his countrymen and the Samaritans, having been admonished by divine revelation to call nothing common or unclean which God had cleansed, labored with much zeal and success in Greece, Thrace and Asia Minor. He also extended his travels as far as Babylon.

Paul who had his first experience after his conversion in Arabia, states that he labored more abundantly than the other apostles, and that from Jerusalem round to Illyricum he had fully preached the gospel of Christ. This embraces a large extent of territory, the different countries of which it would be useless to mention. Clements, who lived contemporary with him, states that "he preached the gospel both in the east and west, that he taught righteousness to the whole world, and went to the utmost limits of the west." For two years he also preached in the imperial city of Rome.

Andrew seems to have chosen Scythia and the adjacent countries as the field of his labor. He passed along the Euxine or Black Sea and returned to what is now Constantinople, where he labored with considerable success. He afterward traveled through Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia and Epirus.

Philip is supposed to have labored in company with Andrew in Scythia, afterward in Phrygia.

Bartholomew, supposed by some to be the same as Nathanael, extended his labors as far as India on the side of the Ganges. He is also said to have traveled in Lesser Asia.

Thomas, according to the testimony of Jerome, was very active and useful, laboring among the Medes, Persians, Parthians, Magians, etc., and traveling as far as the Island of Taprobane, supposed to have been the same as Ceylon. When the Portuguese visited India in the sixteenth century, they discovered, from certain traditions and ancient monuments, that this apostle had preached there, and it is asserted that he was put to death in that country by some Bramins, who feared that his labors might eventually prove subversive to their idolatrous superstitions.

Matthew remained in Judea for some time where it is thought he wrote his gospel, after which he labored in Ethiopia, Persia, Parthia, and India, in the latter place, or in Abyssinia, he was put to death.

Simon, who was probably called Zelotes, appears to have taken a wide field of labor. He traveled in Egypt, Cyrene, Asia, etc. By some it is asserted that he introduced the gospel into Britain. Others, however, are of the opinion that he directed his course toward Persia, where he suffered martyrdom.

John, the beloved disciple, shared with Peter for some time the severe persecutions which came upon them at Jerusalem, after which his field of labor is not definitely known. Some locate it in Parthia and India, others in Asia Minor.

Jude, the brother of James, commenced his labors in Palestine, but afterward extended them to Mesopotamia, Persia, Armenia, and Libya. James the less, was an eminent supporter of the church at Jerusalem, and did not extend his labors beyond that place.

About twenty-four years after our Lord's ascen-

sion, the Hebrew rulers, having become violently enraged at the rapid dissemination of evangelic truth, commanded this apostle, then in his ninety-sixth year, to ascend one of the galleries of the temple and proclaim to the people that they had deceived themselves in supposing Jesus of Nazareth to have been the promised Messiah. Fired with holy indignation at these orders, and resolving to devote the last remnant of his life and strength to the honor of the Saviour, this venerable man ascended the eminence, and, with a loud voice asserted that the crucified One was indeed the Son of God, and that he would, in fullness of time, appear in the clouds of heaven as the great Judge of quick and dead. Exasperated by this declaration, the Pharisees threw him headlong over the battlement, and while he was in the act of praying for his inhuman murderers, their associates beat out his brains with a fuller's club.

Although the apostles were successively removed from the scenes of their labor, the great cause of missions inaugurated by them and the great Teacher, was by no means checked. Holy men were raised up to take their places, and the gospel light was rapidly diffused. Early British historians give strong intimation that as early as A. D. 60 the gospel had begun to be successfully established in that country. Eusebius distinctly states that some of the apostles "passed over the ocean and preached in the British isles," and Theodoret mentions the Britons among the nations whom the "fishermen, publicans, and tent-makers," as he styles them, had induced to embrace the religion of the crucified Jesus. It also appears that the gospel was carried to Britain by persons of royal birth who were prisoners at Rome about the time that the apostle Paul was held a captive at that place.

In the second century this work continued. The followers of the apostles imitated their example in distributing their worldly goods to the poor, and leaving their own country to carry the gospel to distant lands. As soon as they were enabled to organize a Christian society in one nation they hastened to another, unlocking the stores of divine revelation to those who were sitting in darkness. In A. D. 106, Pliny in writing to the Emperor Trajan says: "The number of culprits [Christians] is become so great as to call for serious consultation; the contagion of their superstition having spread not only through cities, but even in villages and the country." Some years after this Tertullian in speaking of the extension of the gospel, numbers among those who had previously embraced it, the Dacians, Germans, Scythians, Sarmatians; many of the Getuli, great numbers of the Moors, those in the utmost bounds of Spain, the various nations of Gaul, and those parts of Britain which were inaccessible to the Roman arms.

Thus we see disseminated throughout the entire Christian church, the same spirit of reaching out for the salvation of others which was manifested in its commencement. No sooner had Andrew found the Saviour than he sought his brother Simon and brought him to Christ. So likewise did Philip bring Nathanael to the Saviour. John 1:41-49. It is the spirit of Christ, and hence it will ever remain with the true church.

ORIGIN OF METHODISM.

It is strange, and yet it is true, that out of the classic cloisters of Oxford, out of the conservative and consecrated shades of the English church, came this rough, fervent, urgent child of religion. In the year 1729 existed there the "Holy Club," composed of John and Charles Wesley—then twenty-six and twenty-one years of age—Morton, an Irish commoner, and Kirkham of Merton College. They read together, walked together, prayed together. They fasted twice a week, and received the communion once. They were a sort of monks, and in danger of becoming sick, and morbid, and foolish, and useless. But Morton inspired them to visit the sick, to go to the prison, to teach poor children, and thus laid the beginning of an active piety which never tired, and never ended, and never will end, we may hope.—*Selected.*

THE only prayer that can save the soul is one in downright earnest. Conventional forms avail not with God. He sees through the thin gildings of formal words. Heart language will reach Him. The whisperings of penitence he hears; the prayer of genuine faith he will answer.

Temperance.

THE DRINK CURSE.

WE are glad to see the question of intemperance receiving such general attention from those in influential positions. The following from the *Christian at Work*, for Dec. 2, 1880, will be of interest to temperance workers:—

Of the various publications issued by Congress, a volume entitled *The State of Labor in Europe* is one of the most interesting and valuable. The document is a compilation of Consular reports in answer to a circular letter sent out by the State Department asking information upon various subjects, such as rates of wages, cost of living to the laborer, business habits and systems, habits and modes of living of working men and women, and many other points touching the present condition of labor and trade. The answers have evidently been carefully prepared, and necessarily contain a variety of important information. With one point only, however, are we concerned just now, and that is the revelation made of the relation which strong drink bears to the welfare of working men and women as incidentally exhibited in these answers. We have here the most direct testimony, and that, too, in an official shape, showing that intemperance is the great destroyer of the happiness and prosperity of the working men and women, and their families, and what is no less important, we have a clear refutation of the specious argument, so often advanced in our midst, that we have only to imitate the universal beer and light-wine drinking of European countries, to do away almost entirely with the evils of intemperance in this country—an argument utterly unfounded, in fact, since such has not been the effect of their use in the countries set forward as an example. Let us see what kind of testimony we get from Germany, France and England, especially.

The Hon. Edgar Stanton, United States Consul at Bremen, writes: "A fruitful cause of want and ruin among the laboring classes is the enormous increase of the drinking saloons and dancing-halls, and the complaints are universal as to the disposition of the laborers to indulge in excessive drink. Whatever be the character of the laborer in other parts of Germany, in this and the neighboring districts he is, as a rule, improvident and quarrelsome. The towns are in consequence heavily burdened by poor rates."

Consul Mason writes from Dresden: "The cost of living to the laboring classes almost invariably goes *pari passu* with their wages. They seem to be generally improvident and regardless of the future, and spend in beer-drinking, dancing, and idleness all they earn. Sunday is always remarkable for the crowds of people moving in all directions in pursuit of pleasure, such as beer-drinking, dancing, concert music, excursions by boat and rail."

Consul Gerrish writes from Bordeaux: "Although wages have increased somewhat, the savings of this class have diminished. The principal cause of this comes from the pernicious habit of spending their time in *cafes*. The number of these drinking-places in Bordeaux and its environs is upward of two thousand. . . . The hard-earned money as well as the time uselessly lost in these resorts of idleness and bad manners it is impossible to calculate."

Consul Webster writes from Sheffield, England: "Many a man who can easily earn his fourteen and nineteen dollars a week will be satisfied with earning half that sum, or just enough to provide him with his food, beer, sporting, allowing his wife but a mere pittance of his wages for herself and children. . . . Any one walking our streets will see where the earnings of the working men go, and in very many cases the earnings of the working women also. . . . The amount spent in drink in Great Britain in 1877, according to the excise returns, was more than seven hundred million dollars. Sheffield's share of this expenditure would amount to more than five million dollars. A considerable part of this sum would not come from the earnings of what are termed the laboring classes, but a sufficient amount comes from that source, if saved, to place a great proportion of them above want."

Consul Cooper, of Glasgow, writes: "Whiskey (which is considered a positive necessity by the great mass of laborers here, and costs about three hundred per cent more than in the United

States), with beer (which latter is comparatively cheap), absorbs the larger portion of the laborer's earnings here."

Columns might be added to the same effect, all going to prove that the ushering in of the temperance millennium is not imminent. The item of waste alone through the use of strong drink by our laboring classes is enormous, but this is a minor consideration compared with the physical and mental unfitness and disinclination for work which it produces. The prosperity and welfare of every country must always depend upon the worth and virtue of its laboring classes. Whatever elevates or depresses them, proportionately elevates or depresses in the scale of prosperity the nation itself. The Government deserves the thanks of the whole people for gathering and publishing the important testimony contained in this volume. Its lessons involve the welfare and prosperity of the nation at large, and especially the happiness and welfare of the laboring poor, who have disabilities enough to contend with without adding to them that heaviest of all burdens—"The Drink Curse."

"TO ARMS! TO ARMS!"

BY W. N. GLENN.

If some foreign foe were assuming as formidable an attitude toward the Government of the United States as is presented by the domestic foe, intemperance, the cry, "To Arms! To Arms!" would ring throughout the length and breadth of the republic, and a million of men would be ready at once to respond to the call, with their "lives, fortunes, and sacred honor." Here are a few statistics over which even a national sand-lot agitation might be pardonable.

There are 400,000 drunkards in the United States.

Intemperance kills 40,000 persons every year.

Intoxicating drink sends more than 100,000 persons to prison annually.

The same cause furnishes the poor-houses and other charitable institutions with over 200,000 inmates per annum.

The frenzy of intoxication causes 500 murders, and leads to probably 400 of each year's suicides.

The proportion of deaths of intemperate people to those of temperate livers is as four to one.

Magistrates, chaplains and prison-keepers testify that four-fifths of all the crimes have their origin in intoxicating liquors.

Seven-eighths of all the pauperism in the Union has arisen from the same cause.

It costs the country \$60,000,000 a year to support pauperism and crime.

The United States makes for home consumption 250,000,000 gallons of fermented and brewed liquors annually—about five gallons to each man, woman and child. And of distilled liquors, about 85,000,000. Besides these amounts 25,000,000 gallons are imported for consumption, and probably millions of gallons are made of which there is no statistical account.

The whole cost of the liquor drank in the United States is not less than \$700,000,000; and the total revenue to the Government is but \$50,000,000. The balance, \$650,000,000 is total loss in cash, to say nothing of the loss of life, of happiness, of morals, of time, and of material productions of a legitimate nature—the aggregate of which, figures fail to compute.

In view of all these facts, relating both to time and eternity, what is the duty of every loyal citizen—Jew or Gentile, Christian or Pagan? Surely no one can do less than to sign a total abstinence pledge and keep it inviolate.

NEITHER ILL NOR THIRSTY.

A MAN of temperate habits was once dining at the house of a free drinker. No sooner was the cloth removed from the dinner table than wine and spirits were produced, and he was asked to take a glass of spirits and water. "No, thank you," said he, "I am not ill." "Take a glass of wine, then," said his host, "or a glass of ale." "No, thank you," said he, "I am not thirsty." These answers produced a loud burst of laughter.

Soon after this, the temperate man took a piece of bread from the sideboard, and handed it to his host, who refused it, saying that he was not hungry. At this the temperate man laughed in his turn. "Surely," said he, "I have as much reason to laugh at you for not eating when you are not hungry, as you have to laugh at me for declining medicine when not ill, and drink when I am not thirsty."

The Home Circle.

TRUE HEROISM.

Let others write of battles fought
On bloody, ghastly fields,
Where honor greets the man who wins,
And death the man who yields;
But I will write of that brave man
Who struggles on through years
Against himself, and wins the day
Unstained by human tears.

He is a hero staunch and brave,
Who fights an unseen foe,
And puts at last beneath his feet,
His passions base and low,
And stands erect in manhood's might,
Undaunted, undismayed,
The bravest man that drew a sword
In fury or in raid.

It calls for something more than brawn
Or muscle to overcome
An enemy who marcheth not
With banner, plume or drum;
A foe forever lurking nigh,
With silent, stealthy tread,
Beside your board each passing day,
At night beside your bed.

All honor then to that brave heart,
Though poor or rich he be,
Who struggles with his baser part,
Who conquers and is free.
He may not wear a hero's crown,
Nor fill a hero's grave,
But truth will place his name among
The bravest of the brave.

WHAT PEOPLE WILL SAY.

A FEW days since, we were pondering the question, Why is it that, with a few exceptions, every one is under the thumb of Mrs. Grundy when we called to see a friend. Her little child was playing in the room. Presently the nurse girl came to take him away and prepare him for dinner. But the young gentleman preferred to remain with the company, when mamma interposed in this manner:—

"Oh! Willie must go and have his hair brushed. Why, that lady thinks Willie has not had his hair brushed to-day. See how astonished she looks! And [to the nurse], Mary, every one will think Willie has no more clean aprons unless you put one on him right away."

This had the desired effect. The child went at once to be brushed and dressed, from fear of what persons would think of him.

The next call was made on a poor, sick woman. She had a child somewhat younger than the other—two years old, perhaps. Soon the little one began to cry, interrupting our conversation.

"Oh, my!" said the mother. "See gampa looking at you. He thinks it is awful queer Minnie should cry."

Now, grandpa was a surly old man sitting in the corner of the room, reading his newspaper, and paying no attention whatever to the child. But Minnie straightened her face, and wiped her eyes, to see whether "gampa" didn't think her "awful queer."

This visit finished, we returned home, and proposed to take Ethel, our own little girl, out for a walk. We asked the lady who has her in charge to put on her coat. But Ethel said,—

"Oh, no! I want to wear my 'ittie boo shawl."

Immediately the lady exclaimed: "Mercy on us! If the little girl should go out with only her little blue shawl on, everybody in the street would look at her. And they would say to themselves: 'Is it possible that little girl hasn't got her winter coat yet?'"

At this Ethel laughed. The coat went on, and the walk proceeded. The young lady carried herself and eyed every passer-by in a manner that said, "Look at me. I've got my winter coat on."

Returned from the walk, her wraps were removed, but her mittens, being a novelty from gloves, she did not wish to relinquish.

"Mercy on us!" was again exclaimed. "Did I ever hear of a little girl wearing her mittens in the house? What would everybody think?"

At this point we sat down, with the clear conviction that we had arrived at the solution of the question previously pondered. From the earliest dawn of consciousness up to maturity, the motive most frequently held before our children is the opinion of others. What wonder that so many of us are slaves to Mrs. Grundy? Boys and girls thus trained will be at fourteen years of age thoroughly unconscious, and will ask themselves, in regard to every action, not what is wise and

right, but "What will people say?" If parents and all who have the care of children will watch themselves, they will probably be surprised to discover to what an extent they present this motive. It is so easy in this manner to stop children from crying, or to induce them to conform to our wishes, that the temptation is great. But a very little thought will obviate this, and offer true motives of action.

For instance, take the case of Ethel. The very next day she was going to play in the yard, and her warm coat was needed; but again she preferred her shawl, and was cute enough to suggest,—

"Nobody tan see me in the yard."

We drew her into our arms, and said: "Our little darling must wear her coat because it is right to do so. Does she not remember how bad a cold and cough and sore eyes she had when she came from the asylum to live with us? She is now strong and well, and we love little Ethel too much to let her get sick again. At that time, you know, Pet, you had no warm clothes to wear; but now our heavenly Father has given you home and friends, and nice warm things, and he expects you to wear them and keep well. Is it not kind in our heavenly Father to take such good care of little Ethel?"

By this time the coat was on and buttoned, and the child's lips were held up to us for a kiss, as she said,—

"I 'ove heav'ly Father most, and 'ou next."

And thus with her thoughts drawn off from herself to the goodness of God, she went out to her play.

Now we submit if such motives are not far in advance of the former. Besides, the former are not true. People are not thinking about us, are not talking about us. If we pause to reflect, it is very apparent that the world—a few gossips excepted—is thinking of itself, not of us.

The one general reason to be given to children, however young, for any course to be pursued is, because it is right. Why it is right can also usually be explained to them. If we had one generation trained to such motives, we would need fewer prayers against a "man-fearing spirit," and heroes would be more common, who would "dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone."—*N. Y. Independent.*

BEATING HIS WIFE.

THE story was all over town. Everybody was talking about it. It was too bad, they said. What was too bad? Why, the new minister had been beating his wife! Was it possible? Yes, there could be no doubt about it. Mrs. S., who lives next door, heard a shriek about ten o'clock last night—a woman's shriek—from a chamber in the parsonage. She looked across, and through the curtain she could see that a man and woman were running about the room in great excitement. He was flourishing a stick, and striking with it. The blows could be plainly heard. And as he struck, she screamed.

Mrs. S. could hardly sleep that night, she was so excited by what she had seen. She was up early next morning. She hurried through her breakfast, and then started out—to see the poor abused minister's wife, and comfort her? Not a bit of it. She went to Eld. A.'s, found the family at the table, and told the news. Then she footed on to Eld. B.'s and Dea. C.'s, and over half the town. The other half that she had no time to call on soon heard it from the first half, and before noon there was great excitement in Ballville.

The officers of the church discussed the matter with heavy hearts. Such disgraceful conduct could not be endured. Something must be done. But what? Call at once on the minister and his wife and inquire into the matter? Oh, no; that would not be dignified and official. Besides, there could be no doubt about it. Did not Mrs. S. see the beating with her own eyes? So they called a meeting of the session, and summoned the minister and his wife. He had to answer a charge of unministerial conduct, and she to testify in the case.

They came, greatly puzzled and surprised. The case was gravely stated by the senior elder, when the culprit and witness burst into a laugh. Checking themselves, when they saw how serious and sad the session looked, they explained.

The minister's wife, though an excellent woman who loved everybody, and especially her husband, did not love rats. But the house having

been vacant for some time, the rats had taken possession. When they went to their chamber, a huge rodent ran under the bed. The wife screamed. The husband caught up a stick and missed the rat, the lady screamed again. How could she help it? It was an exciting scene, and must have looked very funny to their neighbors who were watching through the curtained window. They laughed heartily when it was all over, and the rat was dead; and they could not help laughing whenever they thought about it.

The session were in a fix. They were down on Mrs. S. for making fools of them. They asked her, "Why didn't you go over to the minister's and make sure about the matter before you reported it?" And she retorted, "Why didn't you go and inquire into it before you called a meeting?" And all the town that talked yesterday about how the minister abused his wife, is talking to-day about what an awful gossip Mrs. S. is, and how she fooled the elders of our church.

I am mortified and disgusted. Is there any way to cure these mischief-making gossips? Would it be right to hang them? It seems to me that that passage in the third chapter of James about the tongue ought to be printed in big letters on a card, and hung up in all our churches. Don't you think so?—*The Occident.*

SWEARING.

OF all bad habits, it would be difficult to name one that has less reason or provocation in it than that of using profane and vulgar language. When coolly viewed, the act of one human being calling violently on his Maker to deliver over his fellow-man to condemnation is wicked in the extreme; it is a vain and irreverent use of his Maker's name; and it is the expression of a hateful and infernal wish. But leaving the wickedness of the habit out of account, it is useless and irrational. It brings no pleasure, nor comfort, nor relief. No swearer is ever the wiser, richer, or happier for his curses. He cannot inflict the evil he invokes. He may curse his enemy for a lifetime, without turning one hair of his enemy's head white or black by the process. The language furnishes all the words and terms needed to give strength and vigor to expression, without resorting to oaths and curses. All the words needed to express indignation and wrath even are to be found in it. An oath does not give strength or emphasis to the truthful man's yea; and all the oaths and maledictions that can be imagined cannot give an atom of strength to the liar's nay.

Swearing is chiefly a habit. For the foul volleys of oaths and curses that the habitual swearer pours out in ordinary conversation, or on slight provocations, there is no shadow of excuse. They are a shame to himself, and a disgust to his acquaintances. Some men are such slaves to the vicious habit that they swear without knowing it; they converse in a dialect of oaths. They would be disgusted themselves if they could see one of their simple conversations taken down in shorthand and put in print, with coarse oaths bristling all along the line of their remarks. Profanity and vulgarity do not always go together, but they are apt to. The swearer is in danger of becoming vulgar, and the vulgar man is almost invariably a swearer. When both habits meet in the same individual, they make him intensely offensive to all pure-minded people. It is imagined by some that an occasional oath or a little vulgarity gives spice and flavor to conversation; but if it does, it is a very offensive flavor. There is nothing more charming than chaste and simple language, and it is worth any young man's while to cultivate the habit of using it. An oath would not be considered a flavor to the conversation of a modest and beautiful maiden; neither can it be justly held to add to the spirit or piquancy of the conversation of a man.

RETALIATION.

A LADY once, when she was a little girl, learned a lesson, a good lesson, which she tells for the benefit of all whom it may concern: "One frosty morning I was looking out of the window into my father's farm-yard, where stood many cows, oxen, and horses waiting to drink. It was a cold morning. The cattle all stood very still till one of the cows attempted to turn round. In making the attempt, she happened to hit her next neighbor, whereupon the neighbor kicked and hit another. In five minutes the whole herd were kicking each other with fury. My mother said: 'See what becomes of kicking when you are hit'

THE COMPASS FLOWER.

THERE is a little plant away on the prairies of Texas which always, whatever the weather may be, in rain, frost, or sunshine, turns its flower towards the north. This makes it a sure guide for the traveler, and gives it its name, Compass-Flower, from its resemblance to the compass, which always points to the north pole.

God's word, which he has given to us, is a compass to guide us in our way; and if we are faithful to the Lord in all things, our lives may benefit others, and guide them in the narrow path. And while Jesus is like the Star to direct the Christian in his course, a word may be like the compass-flower, and guide the steps of those who have gone astray, to life, and light, and peace.—*Sel.*

ITEMS OF NEWS.

—Great damage by floods is reported in Spain.
 —A ladies anti-polygamy society has been formed in New York.
 —San Francisco is again excited over a female walking match.
 —The Chinese New Year, the seventh of Quong See, was celebrated Jan. 29 and 30.
 —Mrs. Hayes has accepted the presidency of the Woman's Home Missionary Society.
 —The President has nominated Stanley Matthews for Justice of the Supreme Court.
 —Increased mining activity is noticeable in nearly all the mining counties of the State.
 —Twenty-nine young women have just graduated at the New York Training School for Nurses.
 —The man who recently robbed the Walnut Creek stage has been sent to the insane asylum.
 —There are forty-two night schools in Philadelphia with a registered attendance of 3,200 pupils.
 —The Russian army has 25,000 officers, which just equals the whole army of the United States.
 —General Ord has been placed on the retired list of the army with the rank of Major-General.
 —The rain-fall in Oakland for January was 16.38 inches; for the season, it has been 23.35 inches.
 —Portugal proposes to mediate between England and the Dutch Boers of Transvaal, South Africa.
 —The trial of Rev. I. M. Kalloch, for the murder of Chas. De Young, is progressing in San Francisco.
 —The new census gives 103,000 Chinese in the United States, of whom 99,000 are on the Pacific coast.
 —Rev. John Westrup, Baptist missionary to Mexico, was recently murdered by twenty Indians near Monterey.
 —Eight Chinese wood-choppers were buried by a land-slide in the Santa Cruz mountains, during the recent rain-storm.
 —King Kalakaua, of the Hawaiian Islands, arrived in San Francisco Jan. 29, on a tour of the principal points of the world.
 —Prodigality and speculation on the part of two tellers has caused a defalcation in the Detroit Savings Bank of about \$30,000.
 —The consolidation of the great telegraph lines of the country has stirred up an active move in Chicago for a new competing line.
 —There are 1247 persons employed in the Census Bureau at Washington. There were 31,265 persons employed in the enumeration.
 —The bill permanently remitting 1,400,000 marks from the annual taxation by the State has been adopted by the Prussian Diet—343 to 106.
 —A move is on foot among prominent Italian and Swiss merchants for colonizing some of California's rich foot-hill land and planting vineyards on a large scale.
 —In the Greek church the sixth of January is celebrated as Christmas day. Imposing services were accordingly held in the Russian chapels in this country on that day.
 —Two hundred and twenty-six street lamps at Providence, R. I., which extend over a distance of nine miles, are now extinguished by electricity in fifteen seconds by one man.
 —There are at present only two Hebrew colleges in this country—one in New York and one in Philadelphia. A third, however, is to be established permanently in Cincinnati.
 —The census of the city and county of San Francisco shows a total population of 233,006, of whom 20,840 are Chinese, leaving in San Francisco a population, other than Chinese, of 212,165.
 —The San Francisco Post wants to know if the Moody and Sankey meetings have done all that the regular clergy of that city expected of them; and if so, are they prepared to adopt the methods of the evangelists.
 —A new feature in some of the leading schools of New Jersey is placing daily and local newspapers in the highest department for the use of the pupils. The students are required to give an occasional abstract of the news of the day as gleaned from their columns.

—On the 26th inst., the wife of Dr. H. St. George Hopkins, of Oakland, was accidentally shot while removing her husband's pistol from beneath his pillow, where he was in the habit of keeping it. She died the next morning.

—It is reported that President Hayes has arranged to visit England in May next, and intends to prolong his European tour into the Autumn, so as to be present at the Methodist Ecumenical Congress to be held in London in September.

—In the largest library in the world, in Paris, may be found a Chinese chart of the heavens, made about 600 years before Christ. In this chart 1460 stars are found correctly inserted, as corroborated by the scientists of the present day.

—The station agent at San Gabriel, Los Angeles county, says that already 1,000,000 grape-cuttings have been shipped northward from that point this season. Also that 1,000 acres of new vineyard have been planted in that county.

—A thousand persons, mostly women, are employed in engraving and printing Government money and bank notes at Washington. They are so strictly watched during work hours that they look upon themselves then as prisoners.

—The Harvard College library contains 500,000 books and pamphlets, and has a fund of \$175,000 to buy new books. Charles Sumner gave it 1,300 volumes, 250 maps, and nearly 20,000 pamphlets. It is said to be the largest and best library in America.

—It is authoritatively stated that about 60,000 women in and about New York City earn their own living as seamstresses, saleswomen, teachers, copyists and the like. Their average income is from \$4 to \$4.50 per week, and out of this they support themselves and dependents.

—Twenty-seven Chinese gamblers were fined \$20 each in the San Francisco Police Court Jan. 29, and the two keepers of the den in which they were caught were fined double that amount each. On the night of the 30th the Oakland police arrested a gang of twelve and broke up their den.

—Victorious Chile proposes the following conditions of peace: Cession of Asto Agoste to Chile; surrender of allied fleet, and payment of an indemnity of \$30,000,000, whereof Peru shall assume \$20,000,000 and Bolivia \$10,000,000, Chile to occupy Callao and work the Grand copper and saltpetre mines until payment of the indemnity is made.

—A Yankton, Dakota, dispatch of Jan. 30 says: "There has been 60 cases of small-pox in Union county, 50 miles east of here, half of which proved fatal. Both Houses of the Legislature suspended all other business and passed an act authorizing rigid quarantine. A private letter says there are 100 cases near Elk Point, and guards are placed at all entrances of the town. No trains stop at Jefferson, and mails have been discontinued."

—Late African news gives the following account of the recent engagement between the Boers and British troops: "General Colley's advance guard attacked the Boers' position. The attack was at first partially successful, but subsequently the Boers were reinforced, and repulsed the British troops with heavy loss, the Boers suffering severely. Both sides maintain their former positions. As to the reinforcements which General Colley must now await, the infantry portion arrived at Durban last Thursday, and are now on the way to Pietermaritzburg by railroad, but thence they have 200 miles to march before they can join General Colley, and the horses to mount the Hussars who arrived at the same time are still on the way from Cape Town."

—Here is an item for American misses: "France has agricultural schools for girls. One of the chief is near Rouen, which is said to have begun with a capital of 1 franc by a sister of charity and two little discharged prison girls, and to be now worth \$160,000. The establishment has now 300 girls from 6 to 18. The farm, entirely cultivated by them, is over 400 acres in extent. Twenty-five sisters form the staff of teachers. More than one medal of the French Agricultural Society has been awarded to this establishment at Darnetal, and the pupils are in great demand all over Normandy on account of their skill. They go out as stewards, gardeners, farm managers, dairy women, and laundresses. Each girl has, on leaving, an outfit and a small sum of money, earned in spare hours. If they want a home, they can always return to Darnetal, which they are taught to regard as their home."

—The Russians under General Skobelloff captured Geoktepe on the 24th, inflicting enormous loss upon the Turcomans. In consequence of the large number of corpses of Tekke Turcomans, more or less decomposed, lying before and behind the Russian positions, and in view of the impossibility of burying them without incurring fresh losses, Skobelloff proposed to the Tekkes that they should remove their dead, hostilities to be suspended one hour, and in order to avoid any misunderstanding it was proposed to the Tekkes that they should afterwards reoccupy their positions and should be the first to reopen fire. This was done, after due warning given to the Russians, the Tekkes taking care not to fire until the Russians, who had temporarily left their trenches, had returned into them. The conduct of the Tekke Turcomans was altogether honorable. Fighting was afterwards renewed with the former fury.

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The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1881.

WE had expected reports from the Cal. T. and M. Society quarterly meeting for this paper, but owing to the rain-storm no meeting was held. The report of labor for the past quarter will be given next week.

THE RAIN.

THE rain-storm, which set in January 28, has been the topic of general remark and newspaper comment during the past week. It is many years since so heavy a rain-fall, extending over so much territory, occurred in California. The most telling effects have been along the Sacramento river and its principal tributaries, the lower San Joaquin, and in the Russian River and Napa valleys; as also down the coast in Santa Cruz county. At Marysville, the water was a foot higher than ever before known. At Placerville, seven and a half inches of rain fell in twenty-four hours. At Napa, also, the river is reported higher than ever before, and much damage occurred to streets, roads, stores, houses, etc. The breaking of levees, destruction of bridges, and washouts on the railroads, are reported from all the places where such disasters generally occur. Trains on the North Pacific railroad, and all its branches, were stopped. Overland trains are again running on the old Livermore route, via Stockton, on account of a slide near Martinez, and track washings north of the river. The Southern Pacific road is the only road not reported as more or less damaged. Santa Cruz county has suffered heavy losses. The Howe Truss railroad bridge was washed into the bay, and the narrow-gauge railroad through the mountains has been greatly damaged by land slides. One locomotive was completely covered by a slide. The casualties are too numerous to mention. At Nevada City, four inches of rain fell in eighteen hours, and twelve inches during the storm, which makes 42.48 inches for the season thus far.

The rain extends high up in the mountains, and much damage to mining interests is the result. In San Francisco, the heavy strain of water in the sewers caused them to give way in many places. The storm gradually decreased toward the southern part of the State, till at San Diego the report stated that it only "threatened" rain. This visitation has been heavy enough and extensive enough, to mark another epoch from which to reckon in gauging future wet spells, and will secure crops in many notably dry localities.

SPEAKING of the "embarrassments" and "possible results" of the revival now in progress in San Francisco under the leadership of Moody and Sankey, the *California Christian Advocate* gives the following timely hints on future pulpit ministrations: "The work appears to have been hindered by the unthoroughness and generalizing habit of the pulpit. The ministry of San Francisco is exceptionally scholarly and able; but the too prevalent style of preaching has ranged along the summits of abstract thought and unapplied doctrine. Moses has been in the mount, half-deafened by the thunder, half-blinded by the lightnings, while the people feasted and reveled and danced about their golden calves far below. Moses should have descended with the tables of the law, and called all who were on God's side to separate themselves and gird on their swords."

"The ministers of this city and this coast, if not too dull to learn, have received a lesson on preaching which ought to need no repeating. The *gospel* has approved itself 'the power of God.' Shall we ever, ever, ever go back to the weak and pitiable expedients of men? Shall we ever again hear or see pulpits desecrated by themes announced to the ears of an unhealthy curiosity? Is not God's word rich, and full, and varied enough? We have somewhere read a little poem about the devil and a saint going a-fishing. The devil was to furnish the bait, and the saint to haul in the line, and the partners were to divide even. If we remember rightly, the senior partner in the end got all the fish. And so it will always be."

A PHILADELPHIA scientist frankly says in the *Christian Register*: "Our science of nature, like our science of man, is a patchwork of half-stated, half-worked-out sums on a slate; and we are kept as busy with the sponge as with the pencil."

AN IMPRESSIVE PHENOMENON.

THE *Christian Herald* of Jan. 6, 1881, says. "An impressive phenomenon was witnessed at Pittsburg, Pa., on Dec. 23. Until after noon on that day darkness settled over the city so dense that it was necessary to burn lights in the houses and stores, and even to light the lamps in the streets. Snow several inches in depth lay on the thoroughfares, and deadened the noise of vehicles and the footsteps of pedestrians."

The darkness and silence together had a strangely solemn effect, and many citizens were seriously alarmed by the thought that the day of Judgment had arrived. Later in the day the darkness lifted, but a day is fast approaching when for the impenitent there will be real cause for alarm. Of this day we are fully warned (Matt. 24:29), but how many there are who live in carelessness, disregarding the warnings, and neglecting the refuge offered them." WM. PENNIMAN.

THERE is food for thought in what Spurgeon said in a recent sermon delivered while he was suffering great bodily pain: "When a man gets to cutting down sin, paring down depravity and making little of future punishment, let him no longer preach to you. Some modern divines whittle away the gospel to the small end of nothing. They make our divine Lord to be a sort of blessed nobody; they bring down salvation to mere salubility, make certainties into probabilities, and treat verities as mere opinions. When you see a preacher making the gospel small by degrees and miserably less, till there is not enough of it left to make soup for a sick grasshopper, get you gone. . . . As for me, I believe in the colossal; a need deep as hell and grace as high as heaven. I believe in a pit that is bottomless and in a heaven that is topless. I believe in an infinite God and an infinite atonement, infinite love and mercy; an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, of which the substance and the reality is an infinite Christ. Christ is all; Christ is unspeakable, the speakable gift of God. Hold to that, or you will not thank God as you ought." Then, speaking of thankfulness, he added: "I have known what it is to thank God with all my heart for being able to move my limbs and turn in bed. Perhaps you have enjoyed perfect health; do you thank Him for that? To be out of the hospital, to be out of the lunatic asylum, to be out of prison, to be out of hell, do we ever glorify God for these things?"

FEW men are more given to hitting the nail on the head, and so putting the fact that everybody can see how it was hit, than our friend, Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, of Brooklyn. "What we need," he says, "is not the blaze of a few powerful electric lights in certain conspicuous places, but the steady shining of every lamp in the whole church of Christ over the land. Brooklyn is not lighted by two or three calcium-burners in its public squares, but by innumerable lamps distributed into every street and alley. A genuine revival means a trimming of personal lamps."

MRS. H. W. MILLER, Oakland, Oregon, desires to communicate with any of the brethren living in Oregon who know of a place where a man with small means could make a living. They desire to locate in the spring where they can have the society of those of like faith.

MEN are frequently like tea—the real strength and goodness are not perfectly drawn out until they have been in hot water.

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