

The Signs of the Times.

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

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The Signs of the Times.

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LIFE'S RECORD.

BY MRS. MELISSA F. GOULD.

I HAVE read that an angel from glory
Is standing by my side,
And is ever faithfully writing
A record that will abide.
A record I'll soon be called to meet
When standing before the Judgment-seat;
I wonder sometimes as the day slips by
What record to-night is borne on high.

Have I followed my blessed Saviour
Let whatever else betide?
Have I learned the blessed lessons
From him who suffered and died?
Ah! the answer the record bears to-night
Far, far away to the realms of light,
And the answer I shall surely meet
When standing before the Judgment-seat.

General Articles. (1)

GOD'S JUSTICE VINDICATED.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

THE course of Israel, after the death of Gideon, is thus described by the sacred historian: "The children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side. Neither showed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel."

When men cast away the fear of God, we need not be surprised to see them departing from the path of honor and integrity. They are following another guide. They hurry on in the journey of life, heedless, presumptuous, yet ever fearful and dissatisfied; for they have left the only one who can give them rest and security. When once started in a wrong path, many press on as if infatuated, although every step leads them farther from the Source of light and the Tower of strength.

The great sin of Israel had ever been that of departing from God, forgetting his matchless love and his mighty power as revealed again and again in their deliverance. An appreciation of the Lord's mercy and goodness will lead to an appreciation of those who, like Gideon, have been employed as instruments to bless his people. The cruel course of Israel toward the house of Gideon was what might be expected from a people who manifested such base ingratitude to God.

The calamities which had constantly threatened them being past, the selfishness of Israel now became apparent. The men so grateful after that glorious victory over Midian, now forgot their offer to place Gideon and his sons upon the throne. They had been filled with wonder and admiration by the noble, unselfish, unambitious spirit which prompted him to refuse the honor, both for himself and for his sons. But the impression wore away as other influences were brought to bear upon them. Gratitude died out of their hearts, and after Gideon's death, the people treated his sons with the basest neglect and cruelty. The human heart is fickle. It is not to be trusted. All who rely upon the favor or support of men will sooner or later find themselves leaning upon a broken reed.

Yet Gideon himself had sowed the seeds for that baleful harvest, when he performed that one wrong act by which Israel were led away from God. Now they had become blinded by the sophistry of Satan, and they were wandering away from Him who was their light, their strength, and their glory. The Lord withdrew

his restraining Spirit from them, and gave them up to their own base passions.

According to the evil custom of those days, Gideon had taken numerous wives, and at his death he left no less than seventy sons. Besides these, there was another, Abimelech, "the son of a strange woman." This person had no right in the inheritance with Gideon's lawful children, and his debased character rendered him still more unworthy to be numbered with the descendants of the illustrious leader. The sons of Gideon had concurred in their father's refusal to accept the throne of Israel, but Abimelech determined to secure the position for himself. Being a native of Shechem, where his mother's relatives dwelt, he induced them to influence the Shechemites in his favor. He endeavored to advance his own interests by basely misrepresenting his brethren. He accused them of designing to seize upon the government and unite in its administration, and he sought to convince the people that it would be much better for them to be ruled by one of their own number than by such a band of tyrants.

Had the Israelites preserved a clear perception of right and wrong, they would have seen the fallacy of Abimelech's reasoning, and the injustice of his claims. They would have seen that he was filled with envy, and actuated by a base ambition to exalt himself by the ruin of his brethren. Those who are controlled by policy rather than by principle are not to be trusted. They will pervert the truth, conceal facts, and construe the words of others to mean that which was never intended. They will employ flattering words, while the poison of asps is under their tongue. He who does not earnestly seek the divine guidance will be deceived by their smooth words and their artful plans.

There are many who would scorn the appellation of policy men, yet who will stoop to concealment, evasion, and even misrepresentation, to accomplish their purposes. He who, in a matter of right and wrong, remains noncommittal that he may retain the friendship of all; he who seeks to secure by evasion of truth what should be won by courage; he who waits for others to take the lead, when he should go forward himself, and then feels at liberty to censure their course,—all these are in God's sight numbered as deceivers.

Abimelech was successful in his schemes, and was accepted, at first by the Shechemites, and afterward by the people generally, as the ruler of Israel. But while thus exalted to the highest position in the gift of the nation, he was utterly unworthy of the trust. His birth was ignoble, his character vicious. The higher and nobler qualities,—virtue, integrity, and truth,—he had never cherished. He possessed a strong will and indomitable perseverance, and thus, by the most unscrupulous measures, he accomplished his purposes.

The Israelites, blinded by their own sinful course of apostasy, were acting directly contrary to God's express commands, and he left them to reap the results of their own folly. It was not God's will that Israel should have a king. But in case they desired to be thus governed, the Lord, understanding the pride and perversity of the human heart, had reserved to himself the right to appoint a king over them. God had brought Israel out from Egypt to be a peculiar people, especially devoted to himself, and unlike any other people. Israel's great ambition to imitate the idolatrous nations around them was the result of separation from God.

Pride and ambition similar to that which cursed ancient Israel, exists in the church of God to-day. They are unwilling to be a peculiar people, distinct and separate from the world. To reach the Bible standard requires self-denial, a crucifixion of the affections and lusts. The unsanctified heart reaches out for forbidden things, but these very

objects of desire will prove now, as anciently, a source of weakness and corruption. Christ "gave himself for us, that he might cleanse us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Those who seek the honor which comes from men are ever ready to adopt the customs and practices of the world. They gain their position by the exercise of traits of character which should lie dormant. If only those were exalted who had gained their position by fidelity to God and to man, the standard of morality and religion among the people would be elevated. The sin of which we are guilty in acting contrary to God's expressed will is as much greater than was that of ancient Israel, as our light and privileges have been greater than theirs.

The Shechemites sealed the compact with their new king by presenting him with a sum of money from the treasure which had been dedicated to their god, Baal-berith. By accepting the gift, Abimelech covenanted, at the very commencement of his reign, to use his influence and authority to promote the worship of this god. Thus he publicly pledged himself to counteract, as far as possible, the work which Gideon his father had done in overthrowing idolatry. Such has ever been the history of the world since the fall of man. God will use those who give themselves wholly to his service. And Satan not only marshals his host of evil angels and arrays them against God, but he employs men to execute his plans and to defy the King of Heaven.

Abimelech now proceeded to execute his power as suited his cruel character. With the money he had received, he hired a set of unprincipled men who were ready for any crime. At the head of this company he marched to Ophrah, where Gideon's family still dwelt, and basely murdered them all, except one brother, Jotham, who escaped. Abimelech well knew that these men were far better qualified than himself to stand at the head of the kingdom; and he felt that while they lived, his throne would not be secure. Hence he conceived and executed this fiendish crime, that he might undisturbed enjoy the coveted honor, being the first who had borne the name of king among the descendants of Jacob. Returning in triumph to Shechem, Abimelech was immediately anointed king.

When Jotham was informed of this, he immediately repaired to Shechem. Burning with a sense of the horrible injustice and cruelty heaped upon his family, he determined at all hazards to present it before the people in its true light. While the multitude were engaged in festivities in honor of their king, celebrating the occasion with hilarious mirth and sensual gratification, Jotham ascended Mount Gerizim to a position where he could be seen and heard by all the people, and addressed them in words of keen reproof.

In a most fitting and beautiful parable, he presented before them the folly and injustice of their course. He represented the trees as seeking to make one of their number king over them. But the olive refused to leave its oil, the fig-tree its fruit, and the vine-tree its wine. The worthless bramble, however, readily appropriated the honor and at once stated the conditions of its acceptance: "If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Libanon."

The unselfish, unambitious conduct of Gideon and his sons was then forcibly portrayed, and also the ingratitude of the Shechemites. Jotham then concluded in words which proved to be a prophecy: "If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. But if not let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the

men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech."

After delivering this speech, Jotham, fled and dwelt in a part of the country beyond the power of Abimelech.

The transaction of making Abimelech their king, shows how low Israel had fallen. What a contrast between their humble, God-fearing leader, Moses, who had felt wholly unworthy to occupy his position, and this upstart king, who had secured the throne by treachery, and established himself by violence and bloodshed. It should send terror to our souls when we reflect to what lengths men may go in crime, when they have rejected the influence of God's Spirit. A despot, a murderer, was placed as commander-in-chief of Israel. Satan was now exultant. He had gained control of the mind of Abimelech, and through him he hoped to rule the people.

Truly what a striking contrast between the self-sacrificing, devoted leader whom God appointed, and the monster of ingratitude and cruelty whom Israel had now placed upon the throne. By the olive, the fig-tree, and the vine, in Jotham's parable, were represented such noble, upright characters as Moses and Joshua, who had been a living illustration of what a leader of Israel should be. Such men claimed no kingly honors. It was their work to bless their fellow-men, and they did not aspire to rank or power.

The worthless bramble, grasping for honor, and destroying that which was better than itself, was a fitting symbol of the vile and cruel Abimelech. Millo was the name of the senate-house, or town-hall, and by the house of Millo are meant the chief men of Shechem, who had united in making Abimelech their king, but who, according to Jotham's prophecy, were to destroy Abimelech, and to be destroyed by him.

For three years this wicked man's reign continued, and then the Lord sent trouble among those who had united in an evil course. The very men who had made Abimelech king became disgusted with his demoralizing rule, and his heartless tyranny. By treachery he had gained the throne, and now by treachery they determined to remove him. The words of Jotham were fulfilled. Discord, strife, and hatred prevailed between Abimelech and his subjects. The king's cruelty had not ended with the sons of Gideon. Every one who opposed his will was summarily put to death. But the time of retribution, both for Abimelech and for the Shechemites who had sustained him, was at hand.

The city of Shechem having rebelled, it was attacked by the king's forces, the inhabitants were slain, the city itself was reduced to ashes, and the ground was sown with salt, as a token of perpetual desolation.

A neighboring city united with Shechem in the insurrection, and Abimelech proceeded next to attack this place also. Having gained possession, he determined to burn the inhabitants with the tower, as he had done at Shechem. But the wicked king had passed the limits of divine forbearance. He had been permitted to execute the vengeance of God upon Israel, and his career of crime was now to be cut short.

As they were about to burn the tower, the king approached too near for his own safety. A piece of millstone hurled by the hand of a woman, struck and fatally wounded him. To avoid the disgrace of dying by a woman's hand, he was, at his own request, immediately slain by his armor-bearer. Thus ended the career of Abimelech. A vile murderer no longer lived to execute his tyranny.

Thus the justice of God punished both Abimelech and the Shechemites. This terrible history should teach us the lesson that sin will never go unpunished, and it should impress upon our minds the danger of entering upon the path of disobedience.

All true greatness of character, all peace and joy of soul, must come from entire conformity to the will of God. The path of cheerful obedience is the path of safety and happiness. Messages of mercy are sent from Heaven, to teach us the right way. Strength for the conflict of life is ever awaiting us. With the help of God we may gain the victory.

NEVER condemn your neighbor unheard, however many the accusations preferred against him; every story has two ways of being told, and justice requires that you should hear the defense as well as the accusation, and remember that the malignity of enemies may place you in a similar position.—*Sol.*

IS SIN ETERNAL?—NO. 11.

BY ELD. J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH, OF SOUTHAMPTON, ENGLAND.

FULKE makes reference to the Catholics seeking to maintain their doctrine by the Fathers, particularly Augustine, but he quotes from him in opposition to their ideas of a hell with one part of it a paradise, as follows: "I could never find the word hell in the Scripture, taken in good part, which if it be never read in the divine authorities, verily that bosom of Abraham, that is, that habitation of quiet rest, is not to be believed to be any part of hell." He then says, "But Bede, no doubt out of more ancient Fathers, peradventure out of Athanasius, whose judgment of this text also he citeth, thus interpreteth these words of Peter,—'He which in one time coming in the flesh preached the way of life to the world, even he himself came before the flood, and preached to them which then were unbelievers, and lived carnally. For he even by his Holy Spirit was in Noah and the rest of the holy men which were at that time, and by their good conversation, preached to the wicked men of that age, that they might be converted to better manners.'"

"You see, therefore, that our exposition is not new, which so many hundred years ago was delivered by Bede, who, though in some things he were carried away with the error and corruption of his time, yet had he a care to interpret the Scriptures, as near as he could, according to the writing of the elder Fathers that were before him.

"They that take these words of Christ's descending into hell, and add further, that Christ by his descending delivered the captive souls, are driven to invent many things, beside the book, of their own head. The apostle speaketh only of the unbelieving and disobedient in the days of Noah, not to show their deliverance, but their just damnation, affirming that eight persons only were saved by water, the rest perishing, which is to be understood both of their bodies and of their souls. Bede rejecteth the opinion of one man that thought some comfort should come to them that had been unbelievers in the days of Noah, as contrary to the Catholic faith; because 'Christ, by his descending to hell, delivered none but the faithful, neither preached to the souls that are out of their bodies, and shut up in hell prison for their wickedness, but in this life, either by himself, or by the examples and words of the faithful, he daily showeth the way of life.' Oecumenius also, out of Gregory, sheweth that their disobedience and condemnation were testified by the Scripture, before Christ came in the flesh, and that salvation was preached to men from the beginning, but despised, because of their declining unto vanity and pleasure."*

In his discourse, the Canon made reference to the words of St. Peter in the fourth chapter of his first epistle as further proof of Christ preaching to the dead. It is where, in speaking of the judgment, he uses these words: "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick (living) and the dead. For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." 1 Peter 4:5, 6. Mark well the language; he does not say, preached to them that *were* dead, as though they were dead when the preaching was done, but it says, "preached to them that *ARE* dead." That is, they were dead at the time St. Peter wrote his epistle, A. D. 66. This was some thirty-five years after Christ's resurrection, and if they were still dead at that time, they had not yet been quickened into life, and will thus be made alive in the resurrection at the last day.

This language, when carefully read, does not give an intimation that the preaching to these persons took place after they had died, but rather that the gospel had been preached to them and they were then dead. As they in their life-time had heard the gospel, and had taken their course relative to it, either accepting or rejecting, they would be treated when the Judgment shall come, just the same as "men in the flesh"—like those found living, as they will also have received or rejected gospel truth.

If, as the Canon states, this text refers to those of Noah's time, they were not delivered from hades at Christ's resurrection; they were still dead, in St. Peter's time, and will so remain until the Judgment.

Hoping for a day of grace after death, because of St. Peter's statements, reminds one quite forcibly

bly of what the prophet Isaiah calls weaving spider's webs, saying, "Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works." Isaiah 59:6. Bildad the Shuhite said of the wicked that their "trust shall be as a spider's web." Job 8:14.

Canon Wilberforce, in advocating his theory of probation and hope for the ungodly after death, claims that the dead, between death and the resurrection, are in a state of consciousness—are in paradise. Speaking of the righteous after death, he says, "Every beauty of character which we have admired on earth will there be marvelously developed. Every capacity for greatness which we have recognized, even through the veil of the flesh, will be unfolded and perfected, every lesser weakness which has grieved us will be cast away. Mind, heart, will, spirit, hitherto deteriorated by contact with sin, will be growing purer in the light of Christ's love, attaining rapidly their perfect development, for there, in the kingdom of calm contemplation, the soul is being purified with a painless, progressive purification, until in God's time the plant is perfected for his garden, and the full beatific vision of Heaven is attained."

Speaking of the wicked in the state of the dead, he says, "Awful must be the sadness, the restlessness, the intensified consciousness, the vivid remembrance of the unhappy spirits in hades." Again, he says, "The action of memory will be the test of personality—memory, full, free, unclouded memory—the flashing into the imprisoned soul of that intolerable light which makes all past present. If we but realized the keen torture that this will be, we should hardly dare to sin. What fire is to the shrinking body, that is memory to the shrinking soul. No words can paint the torture that remorseful memory can inflict on this side the grave. A cruel, wicked deed, beyond human power to undo, lying blistering on the memory like a living coal on the hand, has burned and agonized many a man till it has driven him into a suicide's grave. What must it be in the silence of the prison of spirits?"

Relative to this state the Canon inquires, "Where is the dear soul we loved? What are the present conditions of his existence? Does he sleep unconscious of the lapse of time? Does he grieve? Does he pine in loneliness?" Regarding the dead he states: "We surrounded with the ministrations of love the dying bed; we whispered the last farewell; we pressed the hand for the last time; we laid them in the grave—

Before decay's effacing fingers
Had marred the lines where beauty lingers.

And the silence of eternity seems to have dropped between us. Yes, and it is God's silence; it is not to be broken by the desire or curiosity of man. There have been mortals whose favored eyes have beheld the deep and rapturous repose of paradise, and who for the benefit of others have been recalled to this earthly sphere. They might have told us much, but the finger of God has closed their lips in an iron silence. The blessed apostle, St. Paul, was caught up into paradise and tasted of the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Thus was he strengthened for the life of exceptional trial that awaited him, but it was forbidden him to speak of the mysteries of disembodied life. He simply declares that what was there revealed to him 'it is not lawful for a man to utter,' and he never did utter it. It was his personal experience of the peace of paradise which drew from him that saying of unspeakable consolation, 'I reckon,' I pronounce my deliberate conviction, 'that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us;' and it was his experimental knowledge of that perfect rest where tears and sorrows never come, that wrung from him that yearning cry, 'I desire to depart and be with Christ.' Lazarus, the friend of Jesus, the brother of Martha and Mary, was recalled from paradise, and though tradition says he never smiled again, there is no record of his divulging the secrets of Abraham's bosom. Many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves after the resurrection of Christ, but there is no intimation that any communication was made to mortal ear of what they had experienced in the world of disembodied spirits."

If these persons said nothing of the "world of disembodied spirits," may it not be because they knew of no such world? The Bible writers have used the word that is rendered *spirit*, eight hundred and twenty-seven times, but in not one single instance have they called it immortal spirit,

*Fulke's Confutation, p. 366.

deathless spirit, or disembodied spirit. They have told us in plain language of the state of the dead, and that God only hath *immortality*; that man is a *mortal* being; that if he is faithful in obeying God he may, in the resurrection, obtain immortality. In no place in the Scriptures have these writers stated that man is now possessed of a nature or entity capable of a conscious existence without the body.

We must look a moment at the scriptures the Canon presented, as quoted above. St. Paul was "caught up into paradise." 2 Cor. 12:4. He was not dead. He was in vision. He was no more dead while in that condition than were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, or St. John when they had their visions and revelations from God. Then his case of going to paradise has no bearing on the condition of the dead. In the record of Lazarus, and those raised after Christ's resurrection, there is not a word said about "the world of spirits" or coming from the land of "disembodied spirits." Of Lazarus, it is said, "He that *was* dead came forth" (St. John 11:44), not that he came forth who did not die. In the other case, "Many bodies of the saints which *slept* arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection." Matt. 28:52, 53.

GIDEON'S ARMY.

BY ELD. R. F. COTTRELL.

At the sound of the war trumpet, a host of thirty-two thousand rallied to the standard of Gideon to be led against the mighty host of the Midianites. But the Lord said there were too many; he could not give the Midianites into their hands, lest they should take the glory to themselves. So a proclamation was made, by the direction of the Lord, that whoever was fearful and afraid should depart and return home, whereon twenty-two thousand departed, leaving ten thousand. But the Lord said there were still too many; so they were brought down to the water to drink, and there the Lord chose out three hundred only to go to the battle, men that by faith could do the Lord's bidding and give him the glory and praise of saving them from the mighty host of their enemies.

At the sounding of the proclamation, "The hour of his Judgment is come," a mighty host was rallied in expectation of the second advent. But the great disappointment of 1844 came; and the fearful and faint-hearted returned to their former homes. Still there remained a respectable force who would not quit the field. But when they were directed to the waters of truth, and tested by the commandments of God, but a small handful were found to commence the mightiest work in the history of the church—that of proclaiming the last fearful warning of probationary time. May that few ever humbly give God the praise and glory due to his name, and may they live to see glorious victory achieved. And may you, dear reader, and the writer, share in the glory soon to be revealed.

INFIDELITY.

HUMANITY is left hopeless and helpless by infidelity. If we are in sorrow, it has no comfort; if we are in sin, it has no deliverance; if we are in perplexity, it has no message; if we are in darkness, it has no light. The virtue it preaches, is without foundation; the heroism it inculcates, is without inducements; and the immortality it whispers, is without evidence. Its loftiest sentiments are borrowed from the religion it affects to despise; the liberty which it claims to champion, it has sacrificed but little to secure; and the sweet charities it commends, it has done nothing to secure. The garland of eloquence wherewith it clothes itself, is the adornment of a corpse, every flower sheathes a worm in its bosom, and every breath of fragrance is mingled with death. Its oratory smells of the tomb, and the symbol of its hope is an eyeless, tongueless skull, grinning in mocking insolence at everything that dignifies and ennobles life. It brings no benefaction, it pronounces no benediction, but casts its baleful shadow on all that is fair and sacred. From its cold lips there comes no grand and full rounded "Yea" to match its piercing, blighting and destroying "Nay." It is simply a huge negation, seeking with one hand to stop the mouth of religion, and with the other to write on human aspirations and beliefs a bitter and derisive "No." It has no gospel of salvation even for this world, but only an evangel of destruction. Let us then turn from it, and proclaim Him in whom is life,

and who came "that we might have life and have it more abundantly." Let us in realizing the insufficiency of all other answers, repeat to those who ask "What must we do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," saved from sin, saved from despair, saved from uselessness and misery, and saved forevermore in the kingdom of his glory.—Rev. G. C. Lorimer, D. D.

PATIENCE IN AFFLICTION.

QUIETNESS under God's discipline is simply the willingness to let God have his own way. It is ready to go where he sends us, to bear what he lays upon us, to sit still just where he places us. Why should we desire to get away from his blessed discipline? When you would fill a vessel with water from a hydrant or a rain-spout, you do not remove the vessel while the stream is pouring in. It is filled by setting still. And if God's storms are filling your heart with Heaven-descended graces, why should you seek to move away from beneath its blessed outpour? If God is refining your heart, why seek to be taken out of the furnace? We have seldom met with a finer illustration of this grace of quietness than was presented by an aged lady, who, after a busy life of doing good, was at length laid upon her bed, pain-worn and helpless. A good minister went to see her, and asked if, after her active habits, she did not find her confinement hard to bear? "No, sir," said she, "not at all. When I was well I used to hear the Lord say day by day, 'Betty, go here; Betty, go there; Betty, do this and do that,' and I used to do it as well as I could; but now I hear him say, 'Betty, lie still and cough.'" Which of these two acts of obedience was the most difficult to perform we leave our readers to testify from their own experience.—*Evangelist.*

BE NOT AFRAID.

CHRISTIANS who are constitutionally timid are apt to suffer keenly from fear of trials and afflictions. As sensitive plants shrink when touched by the human hand, so they shrink from anticipated suffering. This shrinking is natural, but it cannot be pleasing to our heavenly Father, because it implies a lack of faith in his loving care, and disobedience to his commands. Has he not said to his children, "Fear not, for I am with thee"? Did not Jesus say to his disciples in their extremest hour of trial, "Let not your hearts be troubled"? Moreover, the very trials which such souls dread may never come, or, if they do arise, may be the only discipline by which they can gain that purification of the affections which is essential to the highest development of their characters. Hence the fearful disciple needs to heed this maxim of the saintly Molinos: "Be not afraid of those trials which God may see fit to send upon thee. It is with the wind and storm of tribulation that God, in the garner of the soul, separates the true wheat from the chaff. Always remember, therefore, that God comes to thee in thy sorrows as really as in thy joys."—*Zion's Herald.*

RELIEF BY THE CROSS.

BUNYAN does not set Christian to undo his own burden by arguing—"I have fled from the city of Destruction; I have forsaken house and friends, wife and children; I have resisted temptations to return; I have knocked at the gate and entered in, and am in the narrow path;" but with all this done he brings him to "a place somewhat ascending," where stands a cross; and "just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back." He did not cast off the burden by a process which could easily be explained, but when he set his eye upon the cross, it fell off of itself; and "it was very surprising to him that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden."

And so it is to others; but however surprising, do thou, my penitent brother, heed no other direction but that which points thine eye straight to the cross, for pardon, for escape from hell, for rest, hope, purity. Look thither, only thither. If thy burden fall not at once, yet still look; look to the cross, and fall it will far sooner and far more surely, than if thou attempt to untie it by thy arguments.—*Baptist Flag.*

It would improve some people very much if they were as careful of their daily lives as they are of their orthodoxy.

MUSIC IN OUR HOMES.

DR. OSCAR JENNINGS, a noted physician of Paris, writes a discriminating letter to the London *Lancet* on music as a remedy for disease, and among other things, says; "Whatever may be its mechanism, there is no doubt that music does exert a powerful physical action. Pythagoras held that music might be made serviceable in the treatment of various diseases, and so have many generations of physicians down to our own time. 'Music,' says Esquirol, 'acts upon the physique by determining nervous vibrations, and by exciting the circulation. . . . It acts upon the *morale* by fixing the attention upon sweet impressions, and by calling up agreeable recollections.' 'In the treatment of mental disease,' says the same author, 'I have constantly used music. It calms and soothes the mind, although it does not cure; it is, however, a precious agent, and ought not to be neglected.' Pinel, who was no mean authority, also gives ample proof of its value in his treatise on Mental Alienation. At the present day, concerts are a standard element of treatment in many lunatic asylums, but, as generally conducted, they may be considered to form a part of the general hygienic and moral treatment, and to differ entirely from the therapeutic selection of various kinds of melody, according to the condition of the patient. The use of music as a remedy may be truly said to date from the very origin of medicine. In one of his odes, Pindar relates that Æsculapius himself so treated some of his patients."—*Sel.*

WHO MADE THE BIBLE?

WHEN a young collegian said to Dr. Wayland that he did not think it required great wisdom to make such proverbs as those of Solomon, the old man replied, "Make a few, make a few."

The world has been producing literature for ages, but where are the books that infidels themselves would set forth as being fit for companionship with the Bible? Men can make laws, creeds, fashions, disciplines, systems, and theories, but when we think of being shut up to them, how small, how mean, how meager they are. Take any church and *deprive it of the Bible*, and leave it nothing but its *creed*, and what a miserable show it would make; but give it the Bible with nothing else, and it would have a collection of law, literature, poetry, and ethics, such as the world could not parallel. Who made this book? It comes down to us from rude and dark ages. Surely the breath of God streams through this volume as through no other book which the world has ever seen. It carries its own credentials, and the world must confess, when listening to the words of Jesus, "Never man spake like this man."—*The Christian.*

GOLDEN MOMENTS.

How sorry one would be for a man who, starting out upon a journey, had his pockets full of golden coin which, one by one, had slipped through some unattended hole or rent, so that when he came to the end of his trip he had not one left, but lay down upon his bed a beggar! How strictly we would look to our own pockets after hearing the tale, and make sure that what coin we had should be well spent, or hoarded carefully and not scattered in the roadside dust! Yet we start upon our lives, each one of us, with a store of golden moments of which we keep little account. Rapidly they slip away through the rents of sloth or ignorance. Many a one, rich in all the golden moments of seventy years, lies down at last scarcely able to remember how he has frittered and scattered them, knowing only that he has no more—that all are gone, and that he cannot say that he has purchased anything of use to himself or another with what he might have bought so much.—*The Sunday Chat-ter Box.*

A BAPTIST missionary of Alcoy, Spain, was recently stoned by Romanists on the streets, and a priest took pity on him and protected him. For this the priest was summoned before his superiors and severely reprimanded for "protecting Protestants." Spain is just now aspiring to be recognized as one of the "Great Powers" of Europe, but she will never be great until she gets from under priestly rule and establishes religious freedom. All the Congresses of Europe can never make it otherwise.—*Ex.*

"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

BY ELD. U. SMITH.

CHAPTER II.—THE GREAT IMAGE.

VERSE 24. Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and said thus unto him: Destroy not the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.

Daniel's first plea is for the wise men of Babylon. Destroy them not; for the king's secret is revealed. True, it was through no merit of theirs or their heathen systems of divination that this revelation was made; they were worthy of just as much condemnation as before. But their own confession of utter impotence in the matter was humiliation enough for them; and Daniel was anxious that they should so far partake of the benefits shown to him as to have their lives spared. Thus they were saved because there was a man of God among them. And thus it ever is. For the sake of Paul and Silas, the bands of all the prisoners were loosed. Acts 16:26. For the sake of Paul, the lives of all that sailed with him were saved. Chap. 27:24. These are but specimens of the countless instances all along the track of time in which the wicked have been benefited by the blessings of the righteous. Well would it be if they would remember the obligations under which they are thus placed. And what saves the world now? For whose sake is it still spared? For the sake of the few righteous persons who are yet left. Remove these, and how long would the wicked be suffered to run their guilty career? No longer than the Sodomites were suffered, after Lot had departed from their polluted and polluting presence. Yet the wicked will despise, ridicule, and oppress the very ones on whose account it is that they are still permitted the enjoyment of life and all its blessings.

VERSE 25. Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

It is ever a characteristic of ministers and courtiers to ingratiate themselves with their sovereign. So here Arioch represented that he had found a man who could make known the desired interpretation; as though with great disinterestedness in behalf of the king, he had been searching for some one to solve his difficulty, and had at last found him. In order to see through this deception of his chief executioner, the king had but to remember, as he probably did, his interview with Daniel, verse 16, and Daniel's promise, if time could be granted, to show the interpretation thereof.

VERSE 26. The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof? 27. Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; 28. But there is a God in Heaven that reveleth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream and the visions of thy head upon thy bed are these.

Art thou able to make known the dream? was the king's doubtful salutation to Daniel, as he came into his presence. Notwithstanding his previous experience, the king seems to have questioned Daniel's ability, so young and inexperienced, to make known a matter in which the aged and venerable magicians and soothsayers had utterly failed. Daniel declared plainly that the wise men, the astrologers, the soothsayers, and magicians could not make known this secret. It was beyond their power. Therefore the king should not be angry with them, nor put confidence in their inefficient superstitions. He then proceeds to make known the true God who rules in Heaven, and is the only revealer of secrets. And he it is, says Daniel, who maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.

VERSE 29. As for thee, O King, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter; and He that reveleth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. 30. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

Here is brought out another of the commendable traits of Nebuchadnezzar's character. Unlike some rulers who fill up the present with folly and debauchery, without regard to the future, he thought forward upon the days to come, with an anxious desire to know with what events they

should be filled; doubtless that he might the better know how to make a wise improvement of the present. For this reason God gave him this dream, which we must regard as a token of the divine favor toward this king, as there were many other ways in which the truth involved in his dream could have been brought out, equally to the honor of God's name, and the good of his people at that time, and the benefit of subsequent generations. Yet God would not work for the king independently of his own people; hence, though he gave the dream to the king, he sent the interpretation through one of his own acknowledged servants. Daniel first disclaimed all credit for himself in the transaction, and then to modify somewhat the feelings of pride which it would have been natural for the king to have, in view of being thus noticed by the God of high Heaven, he informed him indirectly that, although the dream had been given to him, it was not for his sake altogether that the interpretation was sent, but for their sakes through whom it should be made known. Ah! God had some servants there, and it was for them that he was working. They are of more value in his sight than the mightiest kings and potentates of earth. Had it not been for them, the king would never have had the interpretation of his dream, probably not even the dream itself. Thus, when traced to their source all favors upon whomsoever bestowed, are found to be due to the regard which God has for his own children. How comprehensive was the work of God in this instance. By this one thing of revealing the king's dream to Daniel, he accomplished the following objects: 1. He made known to the king the things he desired. 2. He saved his servants who trusted in him. 3. He brought conspicuously before the Chaldean nation the knowledge of the true God. 4. He poured contempt on the false systems of the soothsayers and magicians. And, 5. He honored his own name, and exalted his servants in their eyes.

VERSE 31. Thou, O King, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. 32. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, 33. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. 34. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

Nebuchadnezzar, according to the Chaldean religion, was an idolater. An image was an object which would at once command his attention and respect. Moreover, earthly kingdoms, which, as we shall hereafter see, were represented by this image, were objects of esteem and value in his eyes. With a mind unenlightened by the light of revelation, he was unprepared to put a true estimate upon earthly wealth and glory, and to look upon earthly governments in their true light. Hence the striking harmony between the estimate which he put upon these things, and the object by which they were symbolized before him. To him they were presented under the form of a great image, an object in his eyes of respect and admiration. With Daniel, the case was far different; and to him these same earthly kingdoms were afterward shown under the form of cruel and ravenous wild beasts.

But how admirably adapted was this representation to convey a great and needful truth to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar. Besides delineating the progress of events through the whole course of time, for the benefit of his people, God would show Nebuchadnezzar the utter emptiness and worthlessness of earthly pomp and glory; and how could this be more impressively done than by an image commencing with the most precious of metals, and continually descending to the baser, till we finally have the coarsest and crudest of metals, iron, mingled with miry clay; the whole then dashed to pieces, and made like the empty chaff, no good thing in it, but altogether lighter than vanity, and finally blown away where no place could be found for it, after which something durable and of heavenly worth occupies its place. So would God show to the children of men that earthly kingdoms were to pass away, and earthly greatness and glory, like a gaudy bubble, would break and vanish; and the kingdom of God, in the place so long usurped by

these, should be set up to have no end, and all who had an interest therein, should rest under the shadow of its peaceful wings forever and ever. But this is anticipating.

VERSE 36. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. 37. Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. 38. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

Now opens one of the sublimest chapters of human history. Eight short verses of the inspired record tell the whole story; yet that story embraces the history of this world's pomp and power. A few moments will suffice to commit it to memory, yet the period which it covers, dating from twenty-four centuries in the past, reaches on down past the rise and fall of kingdoms, past the setting up and overthrow of empires, past cycles and ages, past our own day, over into the eternal state. It is so comprehensive that it embraces all this; yet it is so minute that it gives us all the great outlines of earthly kingdoms from that time to this. Human wisdom never devised so brief a record which embraced so much. Human language never set forth, in fewer words, a greater volume of historical truth. The finger of God is here. Let us heed the lesson well.

With what interest, as well as astonishment, must the king have listened to the words of the prophet, as he informed him that he, or rather his kingdom, the king being here put for the kingdom (see the following verse), was the golden head of the magnificent image which he had seen. Ancient kings were grateful for success; and in cases of prosperity, the tutelar deity to whom they attributed their success, was to them the adorable object upon which they would lavish their richest treasures, and bestow their best devotions. Daniel indirectly informs the king that in his case all these are due to the God of Heaven, since he is the one who has given him his kingdom, and made him ruler over all. This would restrain him from the pride of thinking that he had attained his position by his own power and wisdom, and would enlist the gratitude of his heart toward the true God.

The Babylonish Empire, this head of gold, was founded by Belesis, called also Nabonassar, and in the Scriptures called Baladan, B. C. 747. Arising from the ancient Assyrian Empire founded by Nimrod, Gen. 10: 9, 10, which had governed Asia for about thirteen hundred years, it reached the summit of its glory under Nebuchadnezzar, who added to his original dominions the provinces of Asia Minor, Phœnicia, Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. These, with the empire of Babylon proper, embraced all the then known world of any national influence or power. See "Prideaux's Connection."

We do not take it to be necessary that Babylon, to be called a universal kingdom, should have had every class of people and every country in the world absolutely under its sway; for this was not in a strict sense the fact with any one of the kingdoms which are called in history universal kingdoms. Babylon never conquered Grecia nor Rome; but Rome was founded before Babylon had risen to the climax of its power. Rome's position and influence, however, were then altogether prospective; and it is nothing against the prophecy that God begins to prepare his agents long years before they enter upon the prominent part they are to perform in the fulfillment of prophecy. We must place ourselves with the prophet, and view these kingdoms from the same stand-point. We shall then, as is right, consider his statements in the light of the location he occupied, the time in which he wrote, and the circumstances by which he was surrounded. It is a manifest rule of interpretation that nations are not particularly noticed in prophecy until they become so far connected with the people of God that mention of them becomes necessary to make the records of sacred history complete. When this was the case with Babylon, it was the great and overtowering object in the political world. In the prophet's eye, it necessarily eclipsed all else; and he would naturally speak of it as a kingdom having rule over all the earth. So far as we know, all provinces or countries against which Babylon did move in the height of its power, were subdued by its arms. In this sense, all were in its power. And this will explain the somewhat hyperbolical language of verse 38. That there were some portions of territory and considerable numbers of

people unknown to history and without the pale of civilization as it then existed, which were neither discovered nor subdued, is not a fact of sufficient strength or importance to condemn the expression of the prophet, or to falsify the prophecy.

THE INQUISITION NOT DEAD.

THE Roman correspondent of the *New York Observer* thus writes about the Inquisition:—

"As to the existence of the Inquisition even now, no liberal Roman doubts it, although it has no longer the power to burn and torture and imprison. Only the presence of the Italian government renders it harmless. But tokens of its existence are given now and then by the prohibition of new books. They are put 'in the Index'—that Index which must now contain the noblest and best of Italian thought for centuries. Padre Curci also, a Jesuit of liberal opinions, was a year or two ago banished from the Order. When the Roman Republic was established in 1849 the palace of the Inquisition was converted into homes for the poor, first being exposed to the public for a few days. It was proposed to raze it to the ground, and erect a column of infamy on the spot, but the idea of using it for the poor prevailed. But when the French replaced Pius IX. on the papal throne, the Inquisition took possession of that palace again, and it returned to its original use. After that fearful revelation of its secrets the Jesuits did not presume to torture as they had done, but they did keep prisoners there 'in duro carcere.' The liberals, whom they persecuted and imprisoned instead of heretics and Jews, were kept in another prison—that of San Michele—but this was also the work of the Jesuits and their tool, the Holy Inquisition. Many liberals, still comparatively young men, now live in Rome who were imprisoned there for years. Only the entrance of the Italian government into Rome in 1870 opened the prison doors, and also let into the gates of the city that noble army of Italian exiles who had been wandering in strange cities and in foreign lands.

"Volumes could be written on this subject, and those who wish to inform themselves in regard to it can read a book which, I think, has been translated into English—'Papal Rome' by the Rev. Luigi de Sanctis. Professor Timothy Dwight's book on the 'Roman Republic of 1849' also gives many interesting details. Of this there is no doubt, that wherever the Jesuits go there will be the Inquisition in one form or another. Far from being dead two hundred years ago, it still lives, and would display all its fierceness even in New York if it had the power."

The Sabbath School.

LESSON FOR PACIFIC COAST.—AUG. 6.

Sending forth the Disciples.—Matt. 10; Mark 6: 1-13; Luke 9: 1-6.
LESSON COMMENTS.

THE apostles had now passed through a lengthened and varied experience, and besides the constant instruction of their Master's words and life, had learned from their own hearts how great their moral deficiencies still were. Their faint-heartedness, irresoluteness, and want of faith, were evident, and they were thus brought to that modest self-distrust which alone could fit them for the heavier duties before them. They were now to rise from the position of dependent and simple followers and scholars, and become co-workers with Jesus, and that not only on the good soil already sown, but, rather, on the hard trodden paths, the stony ground, and that pre-occupied by thorns. In Gadara and Nazareth they had learned to distinguish the opposite aspects of unbelief; in the one, that of common natural selfishness and harshness; in the other, that of proud, perverted fanaticism. After long wanderings and continuous trials, the twelve were now, in their Master's opinion, in a measure prepared to work by themselves in spreading the new kingdom. In spite of the opposition of the interested professional classes, the enthusiasm of the people to hear the new teaching was unabated. Multitudes followed Jesus wherever he appeared; the synagogues still offered access to the whole population each Sabbath, and in all the cities and villages of Galilee, the "gospel of the kingdom" was the great topic of conversation.

Under any circumstances, the crowds following Jesus would have touched a heart so tender, but their wild despair and religious enthusiasm made the sight of them doubly affecting. Might

they not be won to the peace and joy of the glad tidings? They seemed to him, the Good Shepherd, like a great flock needing many shepherds, but with none; footsore with long travel, wandering they knew not whither, with no one to lead them to still waters and green pastures. "The harvest," said he to his disciples, "is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." There were multitudes to be won for the new kingdom,—multitudes prepared to hear, for their spirits were broken under personal and national sorrow. But the number of right teachers was small.

He decided, therefore, to delay no longer sending forth the twelve. Calling them together, he told them his purpose, and fitted them to carry it out. As a proof of their mission from him, he invested them with authority over spirits, and gave them power to heal diseases. They were to confine themselves for the present to Jewish districts, avoiding Samaritan towns, and not entering on the road to heathen parts. Galilee itself was thus virtually their field of labor for, heathenism had a footing in every place round it, and within a few miles of them lay Gadara, Hippos, Pella, Scythopolis, and even Sepphoris, with heathen worship in their midst. Judea and Jerusalem were not to be thought of. The simple Galileans would be a better beginning for the apostles than the dark, bigoted population of the south. One day they would be free to visit Samaria, as he himself had already. Meanwhile they must not stir up Jewish hatred by going to either Samaritans or heathens. Moreover, their own Jewish prejudices unfitted them for a mission to any but Jews, for, even after this, the first signs of hostility made John wish to call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village, and they were not fit as yet to handle aright the many questions such a journey would elicit. Besides, Israel must have another year in which to bring forth fruit; and withal, it was their first independent journey.

The burden of their preaching was to be the repetition of that of John, and of Jesus himself, when he began. "The kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Like John, they were heralds, to prepare the way. "Heal the sick," said He, "raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons." They had received their miraculous gifts freely, and must dispense them as freely. Their equipment was to be of the simplest, for superfluity diverted the mind from their great object, and made an extra burden which would only hinder them on their journeys. It became them, also, by their humble guise, to disarm the suspicion of worldliness, and to show their implicit trust in God. They were to take no money; not even any copper coin in their girdles—the usual Eastern purse; nor a wallet for their food by the way; nor two under garments, but were to wear only one; nor were they to have shoes, which looked like luxury, but only the sandals of the common people, and they were to have only one staff. They were to go as the peasants of Palestine often do yet, trusting to hospitality for food and shelter; offering in their simplicity a striking contrast to the flowing robes and bright colors of the population at large. But they were not to go alone. Each must have a companion, to accustom them to brotherly communion, to give counsel and help to each other in difficulties, and to cheer each other on the way.

No mention is made of the synagogues in their instructions; it may be, because the apostles were not yet confident enough to come forward so publicly. It was to be a house-to-house mission. While every traveler, according to the custom of the country, greeted his acquaintances with laborious formality, raising the hand from the heart to the forehead, and then laying it in the right hand of the person met; even, according to circumstances, bowing thrice, or as many as seven times; they were forbidden to indulge in any greetings by the way. Time was too precious, and their mission too earnest for empty courtesies. On entering a town or village, they were to make inquiries, to guard against their seeking hospitality from the unworthy, but having once become guests, they were to stay in the same family till they left the place. They were to enter the dwelling which heartily welcomed them, with a prayer for its peace. Any house or city, however, that refused to receive them, was to be treated openly as heathen, by their shaking off its dust from their feet as they left it. But woe to such as brought down this wrath; it would be better

at the last day for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for the Galilean village in such a case.

To these directions for the way Jesus added warnings that might have well filled with dismay men less devoted. He predicted for them only persecution and universal hatred, jails, public whipping, and even death, but cheered them by the promise that their brave and faithful confession of faith in him, before governors and kings, would serve his cause, and that endurance to the end would secure their eternal salvation. They would be like helpless sheep in the midst of treacherous wolves.

No details are given of the mission, except that the twelve went on a lengthened circuit through the towns and villages of Galilee, preaching the need of repentance, and the glad tidings of the new kingdom; and that their ministry was accompanied by miraculous works of mercy—the casting out of devils, and the anointing of many sick with oil, and healing them—which were themselves proofs of their higher success, since such wonders were, doubtless, as in the case of their Master, wrought only when there was a measure of faith.—*Geikie's Life of Christ.*

BETTER CHARACTER NECESSARY TO BETTER TEACHING.

NO ONE can teach well who does not live well. If words are as bullets, the character back of the words is as the powder which makes them effective. In small communities the teacher is well known to all his scholars. Does he keep a store, or work a farm, or run a mill, and cheat a little on weight or measure on the plea that "they all do it"? The sharp boys and girls will not forget that fact when he is talking to them about the sin of worldliness. Is he passionate, vindictive, impatient, puffed up, envious, given to small tattling? His exposition of sweet "charity," as given in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, will have small power to draw his young pupils. Their reasoning, though half unconscious, is conclusive to their own minds. It amounts to about this: If our teacher is so little affected by these truths which he attempts to teach, how can he expect them to affect us who are only taught?

Some older people are sure they see the logical and practical fallacy of this reasoning. Long experience has taught them that consistency is so rare a jewel that not one in a thousand will possess it. They know something of the astonishing blindness of all people to their own faults, while they are so sharp-eyed to see the faults of others.

They have ceased to expect perfection or rounded symmetry in Christian character, knowing the weakness of "poor human nature." They are rather glad to hear anybody talk better than they act, so be it they are not hypocritical or conceited; for it seems to show that the ideal within them is not wholly dead. Such talkers are not quite satisfied with themselves, and they are still less satisfied with the low attainments of their neighbors.

When a man is content with himself as he is he ceases to advance. Paul never seems to have settled into the comfortable indolence which is a prevalent fashion among modern Christians. "I count not myself to have apprehended," he says, but I press towards the perfect standard of Christian character given us in Christ Jesus. O, for a little of Paul's noble discontent with ourselves as we are! When we are better Christians we shall be better teachers.—*Sunday-School World.*

OUR Bible Teacher aptly remarks, that "men interested in the manufacture or sale of liquors are seldom friendly to the success of churches and Sabbath-schools. They recognize an inevitable antagonism between these and their trade. In China the strongest enemies of Christian missions are the merchants engaged in the opium trade. This business is the source of their greatest gains. The late treaty between the United States and China forbids Americans engaging in this nefarious trade, and so will prove material aid to the success of the missionaries, as well as relieve in some measure the calamities which foreign nations have brought upon China by forcing upon its people this mischievous drug." We hope that all good people, and especially members of churches and Sabbath-schools, will exert their influence in favor of educating the masses to favor the enactment of a general prohibitory law for the suppression of this nefarious trade.—*S. S. Workman.*

"THEY that seek me early shall find me."

The Signs of the Times.

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

J. H. WAGGONER, EDITOR.
J. N. ANDREWS, }
JAMES WHITE, } CORRESPONDING EDITORS.
URIAH SMITH, }

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, AUGUST 4, 1881.

OUR POSITION AND WORK.

"ORDER is Heaven's first law." This saying has gained wide acceptance, because order is so essential in the estimation of all that all could see that Heaven would not be Heaven without it. It is but the complement to a declaration coming from Heaven itself: "God is not the author of confusion." But with this truth before their eyes, some of the professed "children of the light" are not as wise as the men of this world. We do not write to offer praise or blame to any, but a consideration of important truths may always be made profitable to those who have to deliberate and counsel for the work of God in the earth.

It has been a reason of great reproach to the cause of the advent doctrine that so much confusion and disorder have existed among believers in the advent near. But when we look at their circumstances we feel to pity rather than to blame. Coming out of the various churches where their testimony was rejected, and where they could not enjoy "the blessed hope" and enjoy church fellowship at the same time, they feared organization as evil and oppressive in its nature. And as most of them brought some of their denominational preferences with them, it was only by a compromise—often by dropping the strictness even of healthy discipline—that they were able to unite as a body. Also, leaving the wealthy churches with their costly houses of worship, too many of them the temples of fashion and of mammon, and being subjected to the necessity of meeting in private houses or in the groves, many lost their respect for good order and system. Some became restless and could not bear restraint. Freedom was scarcely distinguished from anarchy; their idea of Christian liberty was that of unrestrained individualism, where each was a law unto himself; where each could preach his own views without a question, however crude and fanatical they might be. And yet, however much they were worthy of pity, under their circumstances, those coming after them can scarcely escape blame for perpetuating this state of things.

Those who early embraced the third angel's message were mostly trained under these influences and subject to such feelings. But God, who ever has a care for the honor of his truth, soon moved the hearts of those whom he had called to lead in this work, to plead for order, and system, and organization. Reform in this respect was not easy to effect, for many good brethren had sincere scruples against every form of organization; some believers rejected it entirely, thinking that to organize a church or Conference, and to maintain discipline, was to endanger their salvation and subject themselves to the plagues of Babylon, according to Rev. 18. They chose to remain in confusion for fear of going into Babylon!

But truth triumphed and order was established. Churches were organized, and elders and deacons were chosen and ordained, and clerks elected. State Conferences were formed, composed of delegates from the churches; and a General Conference was formed of delegates from the State Conferences. Of the latter the President and two associates were constituted an Executive Committee, having the oversight of all below them, and especially of all mission fields and missionary work. And so well have these several organizations served their purposes that scarcely ever has a case of appeal gone up to a Conference.

System was also adopted in regard to raising funds to carry on the work, called by our people, "systematic benevolence," but properly *systematic beneficence*, and thus avoiding the fashionable but highly objectionable methods of church parties, fairs, and festivals. This has been turned into the channel of tithing, as taught in the Scriptures.

Now all this has received the unqualified condemnation of many Adventists who do not accept the third angel's message, known as "First-day Adventists;" and yet the more thoughtful among them have often expressed regret that they were not able to adopt the same methods and secure the same order and system in their work.

But we soon found that all this was not enough to secure the most efficiency in our work. A two-fold lack was encountered. Our preachers were very few, and most of them were undisciplined in regard to the best methods of presenting the truth. Therefore means must be devised to increase the force of laborers, and to increase the efficiency of our ministry. To meet these wants Tract and Missionary Societies were formed whereby to enlist the services of all our members, as far as possible, in the work of carrying forth the message. And a school was established, denominational in one sense, but not in its educational facilities, where our young people, and others, could obtain literary qualifications for the ministry, and also receive instruction in Biblical knowledge.

Both these instrumentalities have been eminently successful. By these means the light of present truth is spread a hundred-fold in extent beyond what it would now be without them. We believe that the organization of our Missionary Societies is as nearly complete as may be. Fears have been expressed, and with good reason, that some might lose sight of the spiritual part of the work by attention only to the organic or mechanical; but the same danger exists in regard to all religious observances. The power may be sacrificed to the form in prayer and praise; the minister may lose the spirit of the truth in studying the best method of presenting it. But that the power is sometimes sacrificed to the form is no good reason why the form should be rejected. That a minister sometimes loses the spirit in studying the best methods of presenting the word of God, is no reason why the best method should not be studied and adopted. Because individuals have made mistakes, we may not therefore reject the means and methods they have devised, for mistakes have been made in everything connected with the work of God. Mistakes have been made in both our publishing houses, but we shall not give up our publishing work on that account. It is not always a matter for blame that mistakes are made; the great fault is in repeating the same mistake when it is discovered and made manifest.

We deplore the existence of formalism; we also fear fanaticism. The former is indicated by the form without the power; the latter is an effort to manifest the power without the form—it is rejecting order and system, and following impressions, and moving by feelings or impulses. This invariably leads to anarchy and confusion.

There are always found some who choose to work in their own way rather than in that way adopted by the body and sanctioned by the authority of our General Conference. But invariably theirs has proved not to be the best way. If they give to the cause it is not "systematic," or by tithing, but according to their feelings; and their feelings being variable, their service is spasmodic, guided by by no certain standard, and therefore inefficient.

At a late missionary meeting in Oakland one point in this subject was considered quite thoroughly. One person reported work in the cause, but without regard to the rules adopted by the society; perhaps feeling more free to labor as the mind should lead for the time. But it was decided that this was not only not the best way, but, not a good way. For, if all followed this plan, or acted thus without a plan, the work would be poorly done, and it could not be known what is being done. Some parts of the city would be utterly neglected, while others might be visited so often or by so many that the people would think the workers intrusive, and thus a prejudice be created. The city is districted by the society and canvassers appointed for each district; and it was decided that all ought to act in concert and each who works have a certain work assigned to him. Work out of order may prove worse than no work at all.

We have had the same fact demonstrated to us in the work of the ministry. Our largest Conferences have found it advisable to district their territory, and to assign a certain minister to a certain district and to let him consider that his field. In it he is to see that the churches are in working order, and that all branches of the work are kept in progress. This is according to the same idea of increasing the efficiency of the ministers by complete order and system. And how is it that all this can be carried out? It is because both our ministers and people acknowledge the authority of those whom they have thought worthy to fill the offices in their Conferences, and especially of the General Conference, which is acknowledged as the highest earthly

authority amongst us. As long as this is the case we may hope to prosper; when this ceases to be the case we cannot prosper, for "God is not the author of confusion," and no good cause will ever prosper in the midst of confusion, for the blessing of God cannot then attend it.

A writer in a First-day Adventist paper recently said: "There has been too much individualism, or a desire to be head, manifested by certain ones who have a very high appreciation of their own ability. . . . A spirit of jealousy among the would-be leaders, which has created discord and confusion among the churches."

We do not copy this for the purpose of contrasting our position with theirs, but to "point a moral," and as a warning, that we may avoid the sands on which others have stranded.

In the *Bible Banner* of July 21, 1881, the editor comments upon the late Adventist "Ecumenical Council" held at Foreston, Ill., and points out, in well-timed remarks, the causes of failure among them, and said:—

"After 1843, the preachers of the Evangelical Advent class entered into an arrangement to study together for mutual improvement, and to-day, though few, they have a ministry who are a power in the world of intellectual and spiritual thought. So the S. D. Adventists have done, and they do not wait for the foreign nations to come here and preach what they believe to be the truth to them, as seemed to be the ambition at Foreston; they send their missionaries and tracts and papers at their homes in the other world across the ocean."

In the same paper we find a short article which we cannot refrain from publishing as an encouragement to our tract society workers, hoping that this "wise activity" may characterize them yet more and more:—

"A GOOD EXAMPLE OF WISE ACTIVITY."

"The Seventh-day Adventists are thoroughly organized for pushing their notions before the world. They have their tract and missionary society in every church, and are pledged to pay one-tenth of their income to scatter their publications and help their preachers to take the field.

"Besides this, they individually send their papers to as many persons as they can. To get names they use the correspondence of other papers. Then when they have sent a paper they follow it with a postal card quietly and genteelly asking people to pass them around and ask for more.

"The following is one of their cards sent to one of our subscribers:

"St. A.—K.—Co., ILL., June 20, 1881.

"Dear Friend:—I send you by to-day's mail a copy of *The Signs of the Times*—a prophetic paper—thinking it might be of interest to you. Please read it carefully and let me know how you like it. I will send you more numbers to read, if you desire them. After reading them carefully, please hand to some friend to read. See Prov. 9:9. Very Respectfully,
"B. R. N.—"

"Now these people's hearts are in their work—we do not sympathize in the least with the peculiar prophetic views which they hold, nor with their claims to gifts and visions, or their devoted attachment to seventh day keeping. But we do admire their wise and energetic way of extending the knowledge of what they believe, and wish our association and subscribers could be aroused to emulate them."

Such work as this, carried on, not only in all this country, but in every land where the English language is spoken, and in several other languages, could never be accomplished by so small a denomination without thorough organization—without a mutual interest and co-operation on the part of all the members of the body. The *N. Y. Independent*, among its notices of missionary work last winter, said that the S. D. Adventists have a better statistical knowledge of the work done in their missions than any other denomination. This is as it should be. A wise general will understand the condition of the work in the whole field; if he does not there will, as a matter of course, be weak, unprotected points, at the mercy of the enemy. We consider it a proof of the efficiency of our missionary organization that no part of the field within our ability to reach is neglected; or if a part is neglected that fact is easily known, so that the neglect may be remedied.

As we feel that the days of our active service in the field are past, we turn with increased interest and anxiety toward those upon whom the burden rests. Most of our life has been spent in the field of battle for the truth. In 1855, while on a visit to Michigan, we were requested by Brn. J. P. Kellogg, Cyrenius Smith, and D. R. Palmer to run the tent for the remainder of that season. Our answer was that if we could keep it in one place as long as we wished, we would do so. When asked how long that would be, our

reply was, Not less than four weeks. To this they could not consent, as the tent had never remained in one place longer than for a two-days' meeting. And when pointed to the fact that no appreciable fruit remained of the meetings so held, they were still unwilling, as the contemplated departure from all precedent was so great. But as circumstances would prevent the use of the tent if we did not take it, consent was finally given, and we pitched the tent in Parma, where it remained five weeks; and although the weather was very unfavorable, the meeting proved successful, and its influence is still felt upon the cause in the labors of those who then embraced the faith. It proved also to be the inauguration of a new system of tent labor. From that time forward for twenty years most of our summers were spent in tent labor, and it was not until 1878 that we decided never to hold another tent-meeting, but to leave that work to younger hands. We are aware of our infirmities, increasing with our age; we believe that the days of our efficiency as a preacher are in the past,—at least to labor as we were used to labor during the years of our ministry. Now we have no higher ambition than to stay up the hands and to strengthen the hearts of those who are striving to extend the knowledge of this precious truth. We can bring them good tidings, and encourage them with words of cheer. We entered upon the work when not only laborers, but friends, were few; and we have often proved the faithfulness of our God to support his people while engaged in his service. He has led in this work—he will lead in it to the end. And we shall rejoice in his glory as we now rejoice in his grace, if we hold fast that which we have that no man take our crown.

THE REVISED VERSION.

It was our intention to pass directly to the relation of the European and American Committees; but in our reading, some changes have specially attracted our attention which we wish to notice. One remark in the "Companion" is so worthy of remembrance that we are pleased to record it:—

"But whether the *true* readings be deemed improvements or not, they should always be welcomed simply on the ground of their genuineness. To find out what is true is the supreme object of Biblical science; and while, no doubt, there may often seem an artificial attractiveness about what is erroneous, there should always be felt a sovereign majesty in truth."

Matt. 6:34. "Take no thought for the morrow." This, says the "Companion," "has proved very hurtful in modern times. It was a faithful enough representation of the original two and a half centuries ago, for thought was then used in the sense of *anxiety*. But the word has now no such meaning, . . . it has been used by unbelievers as a charge against Christ's teaching, which, they affirm, encourages improvidence." The Scriptures should not needlessly be subjected to any such misapprehension.

Acts 21:15. "And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem." This conveys no just idea to the general reader. The companion well says: "The Bible is, above all other volumes, *the people's book*, and if possible, not a single expression should be left of it which is at all likely to stumble or perplex the plainest reader. 'We took up our *baggage*,' makes the meaning clear." And so in Acts 28:13, "we fetched a compass" is a very awkward way to express the idea, "we made a circuit," as it is in the Revised Version.

Luke 18:12. In this text a very important change is made, to which we call the special attention of our brethren. The reading of the Authorized Version has stumbled many an honest inquirer in the way of duty. "I give tithes of all that I *possess*." The Revision has it: "I give tithes of all that I *get*." The *Diaglott* renders it: "of all that I *acquire*." This is the true meaning of the word, and this rendering makes it consistent with the word of the Lord in all the Scriptures on this subject.

Rom. 7:6. Of this text the "Companion" says:—

"A reading was introduced by Beza into his third edition, which was a mere conjecture of his own, and is supported by not a single manuscript or version. It stands, however, in the common English Bible, which translates it, '*that being dead wherein we were held*,' instead of the true text as rendered in the Revised Version, '*having died to that wherein we were holden*.'"

Every scholar living knows that the common rendering is impossible as a translation, and that it has been

the means of misleading thousands in regard to a most important truth. The (practically) correct rendering was given in the margin of the Authorized Version; but how should the unlearned know that the marginal reading was the preferable one? And how should the readers of the millions of copies of the Bible which have no marginal readings ever learn what is the truth taught in this text? It was an offense against God, who gave the Scriptures to man, and against man, who needs the revelation of God's will, to have such a blemish as this stand in the Bible. We rejoice that all the world is now likely to see the truth of this text.

1 Cor. 4:4. For I know nothing *by myself*; yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." No reader of the present day would imagine, on reading this text, that the apostle declared that he knew nothing of which to *ac* use himself, but that he was not thereby justified, because God, the Judge, is all-knowing. The rendering of the Revised Version, "For I know nothing *against myself*," is consistent with the declaration of the preceeding sentence; but no one unacquainted with the original, or with the use of the English two centuries ago, could perceive any *necessity* for this rendering. The "Companion" gives an instance of old usage in this respect. "Cranmer says to Henry VIII., 'I am exceedingly sorry that such faults can be proved by the queen,' that is, against her."

2 Thess. 2:1. "Now we beseech you, brethren, *by* the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," etc. The Revised Version has it—"in regard of the coming," thus giving due prominence to "the coming" as the subject of his discourse. The *Diaglott* has it, "Concerning the coming." The common rendering is difficult to understand.

1 Tim. 3:16. On the change in this text we will only quote a few lines from the opening remarks of the "Companion":—

"The English reader will probably be startled to find that the familiar text, 'And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh,' has been exchanged in the Revised Version for the following: 'And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh.' A note in the margin states that 'the word *God*, in place of *He who*, rests on no sufficient ancient authority."

Those who are acquainted with the progress of critical knowledge of the Scriptures will not be startled by the change. They expected it. The reason given for it we have not room to insert.

Heb. 12:1. The sense of this text is obscured by the unfortunate position of "also," in the common Version. "Seeing we also are compassed about," implies that the persons before named were compassed about, as we are, with a cloud of witnesses; whereas they are the witnesses (not viewers, but testifiers) to whom reference is made.

This must close our notice of particular texts. The word "conversation," as in the A. V., always means *conduct*, except in Phil. 3:20, where the Revised Version has "citizenship." Most people were aware that this change *should* be made. It is well, therefore, to have it made. Of another word in our common translation the Companion says:—

"There are two words, both translated 'repent' in the Authorized Version, which it is most desirable to distinguish wherever that is possible. The one word means simply to 'rue' or 'regret,' a course which has been followed; the other implies that thorough change of mind which is implied in Christian repentance."

This information will be appreciated by many who have been perplexed over the subject. And now we have given to our readers some of the most important changes made by the revisers; enough to show that, at least in many respects, the Revised Version is an improvement on the "King James' Version." We invite all to read with care, and compare the two. It will be a profitable exercise, giving a better idea of the sacred text than they have ever had. For this purpose a "Comparative Edition" has been published, an advertisement of which will be seen in this paper. In this, wherever you open your New Testament the two Versions are presented together, on opposite pages, for ready comparison and study. And we rejoice that this revision is being the means of directing the minds of many to a closer study of the word of God. And we exhort all to read it, not in mere curiosity, but with a desire to be made "wise unto salvation," which can be accomplished only by the sanctifying truth of God. John 17:17.

THE TRUE THEME OF CHRIST'S MINISTERS.

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Cor. 4:5.

THIS text states very distinctly the true theme of discourse for those who are called to labor in the Christian ministry. It is for this reason worthy of attentive study. It tells us what Paul did not preach, and what he did preach; and, in this manner, shows what all other ministers of Christ should preach, and what they should refrain from preaching.

1. *Paul did not preach himself.* But, if any man might be excused for making himself the subject of his discourses, Paul was that man. His conversion is the most remarkable one upon record. His sacrifice in embracing Christ was as great as was ever made by any man who has served in the Christian ministry. His labors in the ministry were more abundant than those of any other apostle. 1 Cor. 15:10. In fact, they were unparalleled in the apostolic age, and we have no very near approach to them in the ages which followed. His example presents the most perfect pattern of the Christian minister and of the Christian disciple. His courage was undaunted, his fortitude unshaken, his patience almost inexhaustible—for it proved equal to his day—his love toward God and toward man such as he himself has indicated in his marvelous description of character in 1 Cor. 13. If others were ministers of Christ, he was even more than such in the ordinary sense of the term. In labors he was more abundant, and in stripes he was above the measure that others suffered. He was cast into prisons oftener than others, and oftener than others was in imminent peril of death. Five times was he whipped by the Jews; three times was he beaten with rods by the heathen; once was he stoned till even his persecutors believed that he was dead, and, for that reason, ceased their murderous assault upon him; before his voyage to Rome, he suffered a shipwreck in which he was in the deep a night and a day; he was exposed to perils of every kind; his life was spent in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; and through his entire ministry, he always bore about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 11:23-27; 4:7-11. Besides this, abundant and extraordinary revelations were given to him, and wonderful miracles were wrought through his instrumentality.

But though he had whereof to boast, he carefully refrained from doing it. The treasure committed to him he always distinguished from the earthen vessel that was the possessor of that treasure. He was conscious that wherein he differed from others, it was the gift of God that caused him to differ. He knew, also, that for all the light given he should one day have to render account. Whatever he possessed of divine grace he received from Christ. He was as a faint star compared to the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness. Christ could save sinners; Paul could not. Paul had himself needed pardon, and that pardon came to him through the Lord Jesus Christ. The excellencies of divine grace exhibited in the life and experience of Paul were as nothing compared to the life of Him through whom grace itself came to men. The sacrifice made by Paul, and the sufferings endured by him, were not worthy to be mentioned in connection with the sufferings and the sacrifice of the Son of God.

2. *Paul preached Christ to men.* The unsearchable riches of Christ were the theme of his discourse. He had found the Saviour of men. He had learned that there was efficacy in his blood to take away sin. He had experienced the saving power of his gospel. He knew that the law of God justly condemned men to death. He had felt the power of that condemnation. He knew that Christ had made a sacrifice for sin such as the law could accept. He knew that there was no other such sacrifice. He had partaken of the saving power of Christ. He knew that God had made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He knew that in Christ were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 2 Cor. 5:21; Col. 2:3. He well understood that the Father created all things by Jesus Christ, whether things in heaven or things in earth. Col. 1; Heb. 1.

He knew that Christ was the one of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write; that he was the Alpha and the Omega of the Scriptures, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever; that he is the source of revelation and its central object; that he was the promised seed of the woman; the angel of the covenant that led the people by Moses; that his Spirit inspired

the ancient prophets; that his birth gave occasion to the triumphant song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest;" that his life was an exact accomplishment of everything commanded in the moral law; that his death was for our offenses, and his resurrection for our justification; and that he ministers in the heavenly sanctuary till his priesthood is finished; and that then, becoming king, he shall return in infinite glory to our earth, and, having made his people immortal, and consumed his enemies, and cleansed the earth, he shall establish his throne and kingdom in this once revolted province, and reign gloriously under the whole heaven forever and ever.

The love of Christ constrained Paul. He had found salvation from sin. He saw the world under its power, and he longed to save others, or, rather, to lead others to Christ for salvation. He could have made his ministry the occasion of preaching himself. He could have shown his own greatness, he could have proclaimed his own goodness, and made himself the prominent subject of his preaching. But he knew something that was infinitely better than this. He had Christ to preach, and this theme inspired his heart with such precious and ravishing thoughts that self was forgotten, and Christ was all in all.

3. *Our preaching should be like Paul's.* Paul hid behind Christ. If Paul did this, how ought we, who are not worthy to be compared with Paul, carefully to act according to the example which he has set us. Let Christ and the truth fill all the foreground. Let ourselves, as the humble instruments through whom the truth is brought to perishing men, stand back out of sight. We have a message to men which is to determine their eternal destiny. If we make the delivery of this message the occasion of displaying self, it is the certain evidence that we have no just sense of the work we have undertaken. To form a just idea of the proper character of preaching, read the sermons of Christ in the gospels and of the apostles in the Acts. When men heard those sermons, they did not go away saying, "What a wonderful preacher! What a talented man! How eloquent was the speaker!" etc.; but they said, "Who then can be saved?" "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

It is generally a good test whether the preacher has preached Christ or preached himself, to mark whether the impression made upon the hearers is made by the man or by his subject. If the subject is lost sight of in the man, then the discourse has been a failure; if the man is lost in the subject, then there is reason to believe that the preacher sought the glory of his Master, and not his own. These are solemn thoughts. I fear that many preachers will be lost, not because they did not preach the truth, but because in doing it, they sought their own glory, and not that of Christ. The day of Judgment will reveal the motives of all hearts. No men will have a stricter account to render than ministers of the gospel. It will not be merely asked, "What have you done?" but, "What were your motives in doing what you did? Let us test ourselves in this most important matter now."

J. N. A.

SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE.

THE Annual Meeting of the Victoria Philosophical Institute of Great Britain took place at the House of the Society of Arts, London, on the 30th of June, the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., in the chair. The meeting was very fully attended. Prior to the delivery of the address, "On the Credibility of the Supernatural," by the Right Hon. the Lord O'Neill, the honorary Secretary, Captain F. Petrie, read the report, from which it appeared that the total number of members was now upwards of nine hundred, a greater number than usual, especially of colonial supporters, having joined in the past year, during which papers and short communications written in furtherance of the Society's objects,—namely, the investigation of philosophical and scientific questions, especially those said to militate against the truth of Revelation,—had been contributed by several leading men of science, including his Grace the Duke of Argyll, K.G., F.R.S., Sir J. Fyler, F.R.S., Professors Stokes, F.R.S., Boyd Dawkins, F.R.S., J. W. Dawson, F.R.S., Nicholson, F.R.S.E., Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., Mr. J. Bateman, F.R.S., and other Fellows of the Royal Society, besides Professor Hughes, Dr. Rassam, and others. The report closed with a special tribute to the newspaper press. The treasurer's report showed that a considerable advance had been made by the Institute. Amongst the speakers were Sir H. Barkly, K.C.B., G.C.M.G., F.R.S., Sir J. Fyler, K.C.S.I., F.R.S., who strongly urged that the Society's mode of fully and impartially investigating scientific questions was of special importance; the Christian philosopher need never fear for the results of investigations so conducted, for the Books of Nature and Revelation had the same author, and if the former were fairly and impartially inquired into, the result would not clash with the latter. Mr. J. E. Howard, F.R.S., Mr. A. McArthur, M.P., the Master of the Charterhouse, and others, having spoken, the meeting adjourned to the Museum, where refreshments were served.

The Missionary.

SYSTEM.

BY ELD. S. N. HASKELL.

As this work increases, the necessity of carrying out system is more and more apparent. One object of system is that there may be a uniformity of action, and thus the burden of labor be equalized in all parts of the field, and also that all parts of the field may bring their united strength to bear at the same time and in the same manner.

Our work is an aggressive one. It is to present the truth beyond our own limits. The field is the world. And the last message of mercy must reach all that are in danger of the wrath of God, which is all mankind; for all are embraced in the call, "Whosoever will, let him come." But to enter this work in a haphazard manner, without any definite object before us, or without any definite plan to accomplish that object, would be folly in the extreme. Our church organization answers well its end. The spread of this truth has been, and must ever be, largely by the scattering of publications, and therefore a system must be adopted whereby the influence of each individual can be felt in the advancement of this work. Where the tract organization is carried out, it answers the purpose well thus far. Those of the least influence, as well as those of great influence, can unite their strength in such a manner as to tell most effectually against the powers of Satan.

Shall the system adopted have the hearty support of all the members of the Tract Societies in the country? If so, the reporting system that pertains to each individual must be regarded. Will not every individual member of the Tract Societies feel a responsibility in this matter? Still greater moves are before us, and it is necessary that we so educate ourselves that we can work together and in harmony, if we would secure the blessing of God that will bring success.

THE TRUE MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

If I mistake not the calling of the true missionary, it is to do all the good he can, as a willing instrument in the hands of God in administering to the spiritual wants of his fellow-creatures, in preaching a crucified Saviour to a dying world; to herald forth the glad tidings of the speedy advent of the blessed Lord Jesus. The true missionary spirit is to love God with the whole heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. When we love God, we shall keep his commandments; for this is the love of God that we keep his commandments. When we love our neighbors, we shall, at least, be willing to impart that knowledge unto them which is able to make them wise unto salvation.

We want our hearts imbued with the true missionary spirit. We want to turn our back upon the world, and our face toward Mount Zion. We want and must have our works in conformity with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel is glad tidings of great joy, peace on earth, and good will towards all men. The missionary spirit is to declare these glad tidings to all men. Rev. 14: 9-12, is a portion of these glad tidings. And it is the business of all true missionaries to raise an alarm, to cry aloud and spare not, to show their relatives, friends, and neighbors, their transgressions of God's holy law, place the pure, unadulterated truth in their hands, and strive, by love and good works, to lead them to Christ. The true missionary spirit is to visit every habitable part of the globe, and sound an alarm that will gather a people prepared to meet their Lord when he shall come to be glorified in his saints. Jesus says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The missionary spirit is to carry this command into effect.

There are thousands and thousands of precious souls who have not yet heard the sound of the third angel's message. And God wants reader and writer to be willing to bear these soul-stirring truths to many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings. The honest-hearted will read, heed, and be saved in God's everlasting kingdom; while the murmuring, doubting, unbelievers, will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. Where is the Christian heart that can reflect unmoved upon the fact that in a few days millions of our fellow-creatures must

stumble over the high mountains of darkness and be lost forever? Surely no child of God can know this without feeling a strong desire to extend a helping hand, and exert himself as God's instrument in sending the advent message to the perishing sons and daughters of Adam.

Again our Saviour says, "Ye are the light of the world." The missionary spirit is to let this light shine into every part of the world, driving away moral darkness and imparting the glorious light and liberty of the gospel.

We find after our Saviour had commanded the apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, it is said that they went forth and preached everywhere. This is precisely what the true missionary spirit aims at in this day and time. It is said in the same verse that the Lord worked with them. So he does at present. He works with his missionary servants. He is directing them by his Holy Spirit. Go back to the primitive believers and take them for an example in missionary labor. See how laborious, persevering, and indefatigable, were God's dear people in visiting every nation, and kindred, and tribe of people, especially Paul the great apostle; or missionary to the Gentiles. The gospel breathes the very spirit of benevolence and religious missionary effort, and the true missionary spirit is the very spirit of the gospel.

M. Wood.

NOT DOING WHAT WE MIGHT.

AGAIN and again have these solemn words come home to my heart. The message does not say we have denied the truth and are living in open rebellion. It does not say we do not love it and are doing nothing. But who has put forth every effort in his power, and has done *all* he could? My own heart shrinks at this question, and I turn the pages of my past life with weeping to find recorded on many, "nothing done" here, and on others, "not one-twentieth of what I might."

It was not works to be wrought with human strength for which the Master called, but for more of the agonizing spirit—for the love of God in the heart.

Earnest appeals have been made. The Spirit of God hath spoken, and our condition is faithfully pointed out; but are we fully awake? He who said, "Go labor in my vineyard," as he sees carelessness in some, others burying their talent in the earth, and many more with an easy, satisfied spirit, says sadly, "You have not done one-twentieth of what you might have done."

Will those who have only partially done the work allotted in their gardens here be furnished with employment in the new-earth home? Will he who "judgeth righteously" and giveth to "every man according as his work shall be," place starry crowns upon the heads of any, saying, "They have not done one-twentieth of what they might."

Do we shrink when we look at ourselves, and, like Peter, begin to sink? Then let us flee to the promises, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness;" "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord;" "not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;" "ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Let us lay aside the blotted volume of our past lives, and begin anew to seek God.

Nearer my Saviour's side;
Strength I have none;
Therefore the Crucified,
I'll trust alone.

MARY MARTIN.

AN OLD PILGRIM'S TESTIMONY.

AN aged brother in Canada, writing to express his thanks for the SIGNS, and for the truth it contains, says:—

"My father belonged to the Irish Episcopal church; he believed in the millennial reign of Jesus. He died in 1822. I was then in my eleventh year. He said, though he would not live till Jesus would come, he believed some of his children would. I am yet in hope to see him come, though in my seventieth year. I was converted before I was twenty. I bless God that I find the Saviour still precious; and I bless his dear name that he gives me strength to keep all the commandments. I have trials and temptations, but, praise the Lord, he enables me to 'hold the fort.'"

CALIFORNIA T. AND M. SOCIETY REPORT
FOR THE QUARTER ENDING JUNE 30, 1881.

| Districts. | No. of Members. | No. Reports returned. | No. Members Added. | No. of Visits. | No. of Letters Written. | No. Signs taken in Clubs. | New Subscribers Obtained. | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------|--------------|--------------------|
| | | | | | | | Review. | Signs. | Good Health. | Other Periodicals. |
| No. 1. | 100 | 42 | 0 | 50 | 47 | 88 | | | | |
| " 2. | 96 | 24 | | 8 | 74 | 166 | | | | |
| " 3. | 62 | 33 | | 17 | 589 | 170 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| " 4. | 14 | 6 | | | 1 | 11 | | | | |
| " 5. | 107 | 45 | 1 | 72 | 138 | 166 | | | | |
| " 6. | 23 | 15 | | 34 | 26 | 56 | | | 1 | 11 |
| " 7. | 108 | 50 | 2 | 191 | 255 | 503 | 3 | 14 | | |
| " 8. | 66 | 31 | 3 | 75 | 32 | 103 | 3 | 5 | | |
| " 9. | | | | | | 10 | | | | |
| Ships. | | | | 79 | | 30 | | 1 | | |
| Total. | 576 | 246 | 6 | 526 | 1162 | 1422 | 10 | 26 | 3 | 14 |

| Districts. | No. of Pages of Reading Matter distributed. | Periodicals Distributed. | Annals Sold and given away. | Donations to Tract Fund and for Membership. | Cash Received. | | |
|------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|----------------|--------------|----------|
| | | | | | Sales. | Periodicals. | Total. |
| No. 1. | 14915 | 1886 | 30 | 13 10 | 22 20 | 55 65 | \$80 95 |
| " 2. | 10042 | 1055 | | 29 45 | 23 07 | 9 80 | 62 32 |
| " 3. | 10049 | 3783 | | 30 90 | 27 60 | 38 80 | 97 30 |
| " 4. | 1824 | 84 | | 8 30 | 5 00 | 4 10 | 17 40 |
| " 5. | 23425 | 2546 | | 39 96 | 15 18 | 80 20 | 135 34 |
| " 6. | 10496 | 728 | 11 | 8 40 | 14 85 | 20 85 | 44 10 |
| " 7. | 70360 | 4883 | 7 | 38 35 | 1 15 | 8 60 | 47 50 |
| " 8. | 13255 | 1555 | | | 3 45 | 29 90 | 32 45 |
| Ships. | 37505 | 5154 | 179 | | | | |
| Total. | 191874 | 21124 | 227 | \$168 46 | \$112 50 | \$246 40 | \$527 36 |

UPPER COLUMBIA T. AND M. SOCIETY.
REPORT FOR QUARTER ENDING JUNE 30, 1881.

| Districts. | No. of Members. | No. Reports returned. | No. Members Added. | No. of Visits. | No. of Letters Written. | No. Signs taken in Clubs. | New Subscribers. | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|--------|--------------|--------------------|
| | | | | | | | Review. | Signs. | Good Health. | Other Periodicals. |
| No. 1. | 32 | 16 | 5 | 5 | 21 | 32 | 4 | 3 | 1 | |
| " 2. | 25 | 16 | | 3 | 3 | 55 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| " 3. | 44 | 25 | 2 | 1 | 141 | 40 | 1 | 12 | | |
| Agents. | 3 | 3 | | 1 | 81 | 98 | 1 | | | |
| Totals. | 104 | 63 | 12 | 10 | 246 | 214 | 10 | 21 | 4 | 1 |

| Districts. | Pages Tracts and Pamphlets distributed. | Periodicals Distributed. | Annals Distributed. | Membership & Donations. | Sales. | Periodicals. | T. and M. Review Fund. | Total. | Collected on Other Funds. |
|------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|--------------|------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| No. 1. | 2327 | 222 | 8 | 6 50 | 8 25 | 25 05 | 8 00 | 39 80 | |
| " 2. | 2915 | 357 | | 8 65 | 23 86 | 28 66 | 2 00 | 29 50 | |
| " 3. | 4993 | 511 | | 6 00 | 70 24 | 10 50 | 5 50 | 36 30 | |
| Agents. | 150 | 116 | | 60 | 49 74 | 5 25 | | 56 59 | |
| Totals. | 10385 | 1206 | 2 | \$16 75 | \$50 69 | \$70 25 | \$13 50 | \$162 19 | |

CAL. STATE QUARTERLY MEETING.

THE State quarterly meeting was not held, as it was at a time when the directors of the districts could not well be present, and the sickness of the Secretary made it impossible for her to attend to the business necessary to be done. The report for the last quarter does not show as great an amount of work done as that of the previous one. We find by looking over the mailing list of the Signs that the number taken in clubs has increased nearly three hundred during the last quarter, but the number of periodicals distributed as reported does not show a corresponding gain.

We think there is a failure on the part of the members of the Society to report the labor performed. The number of the Signs taken in clubs would be, for a quarter, 17,186 papers, saying nothing of the clubs of the German paper taken, and other papers of foreign languages, besides the Signs, Review, Instructor, and Good Health taken by single subscriptions, many of which are used for missionary purposes.

From the periodicals taken, at least 20,000 must have been distributed during the last quarter, besides the number in the report of ship work. There is a falling off by the report, of 25,000 pages of reading matter distributed, and considerable in donations to the tract fund. Only about one-half the members of the Society have reported.

We regret very much that we cannot have a report from every member, of some labor performed in a cause that is of so much importance as that in which we profess to believe. If we continue to do as we have done shall we hear the "Well done, good and faithful servant," from the lips of the Master when he comes to reward the faithful? We are all members of a society organized for the purpose of extending the last message of warning and mercy to the world. Our names being on the list of membership will not alone answer. The record of what we have sacrificed and the labor performed will be the only evidence of our faith in, and love for, the cause of present truth, that will appear in the books from which

we are to be judged. Shall we not then be active members from this time forward? Let each one get a Member's Pass Book of the librarian, in which to keep an account of labor performed; then look over the list on the missionary report blank and you will find under the headings something that you can do to fill it out; and then go to work, and with the blessing of God, our next report will be larger than that of any previous quarter, and we shall be blessed in trying to do our duty, and the cause of God will be advanced by souls being brought to the knowledge of his truth.

M. C. ISRAEL, Vice Pres. T. and M. Society.

REPORT OF THE T. AND M. SOCIETY AT
ST. CLAIR, NEVADA.

NUMBER of members, 14; number of reports received, 12; letters written, 3; Signs taken in clubs, 10; new subscribers obtained for Signs, 7; subscribers for Review, 1; pages tracts and pamphlets distributed, 1,152; periodicals distributed, 558; cash received on periodicals, \$12.60.

WILLIAM HARMON, Director.

J. W. ALLEN, Secretary.

Temperance.

TOBACCO AND SCHOLARSHIP.

THE New York Tribune (daily), for May 4, 1880, is responsible for the following significant statement:—

"The anti-tobacco reformers may find encouragement to continue their crusade against the weed, in some statistics lately published concerning smoking at Yale. Each class is graded in divisions according to scholarship, the best scholars being in the first, and so on down to the fourth, where they are, in the slang of the campus, 'not too good' scholars, but 'just good enough' to keep hanging by the eyelids. In the Junior Class it was found that only 10 out of 40 in the first division were addicted to smoking; 18 out of 37 in the second; 20 out of 27 in the third; and 22 out of 26 in the fourth. The proportion of smokers, it will be observed, increases in regular ratio with the falling off in scholarship. The obvious inference is that fumigation does not promote education."

Parents, teachers, students, and all candid men who are tobacco users will do well to respect such facts. It is easy to turn away from them with a sneer, or to read them with indifference; but neither sneers nor indifference will change or avert the facts. When similar facts have been quoted as being shown by similar experiments in the schools of Europe, many men have affected to disbelieve them. "They were too far away to be true."

The above is too near home to be denied, and too important to be disregarded. That such facts are generally disregarded by those who are the victims of tobacco intoxication, is clear proof of the benumbing and blinding influence which the poison exerts on the mental faculties. It is equally well attested that the habit blunts the moral sense in a similar way. Alcohol, tobacco, and opium all hold their victims by inducing the delusion that they are harmless, or at least are necessary, and by blunting and benumbing the conscience that otherwise would rise up against them. In the opium habit, untruthfulness is a prominent symptom; in alcoholism, the characteristic symptom is an unreliable excitability; in tobacco, a quiet, but growing indifference.

These delusions render the work of reform doubly difficult. Being unconscious of the injury which he is constantly receiving, or only partly conscious, the tobacco-user is likely to consider the one who urges the reform either as a personal enemy, whose words are to be resented, or as a mistaken fanatic, whose warnings are to be disregarded, while he is pitied. The writer is not speaking wholly from theory. He remembers well when those who urged that he was doing a sinful thing in being constantly intoxicated with tobacco were deemed to be visionary and hyper-religious. It took some months for the oft repeated truth to reach his smoke-befogged conscience, and awake it to a just conception of the case. It seemed preposterous that anything which gave so much fancied comfort could be sinful.

There are thousands of men who are on the same ground of hesitation and debate. They are weary of their slavery; ashamed of the habit as indecent, they wince under the expensiveness of a habit so much worse than useless, and yet

continue the indulgence, dallying with the temptation, and growing weaker each day. The evidence that the better judgment of men condemns the practice, is seen also in the fact that users generally advise boys and the uninitiated not to form the habit. "I wish I had never used it," is the common expression of the smoker, as he lights his cigar for a new indulgence, and of the chewer who empties his much-abused mouth, that he may testify against himself. That many use it, does not lessen the wrong; it rather widens the evil. A father may say every day, "I wish I could stop; I know I ought to;" but this does not keep the poison from his blood and brain, nor prevent him from passing both the appetite and its deleterious effects down to his child by the law of transmission. Wishing for freedom does not bring it, and hoping does not manufacture moral stamina and backbone.

Meanwhile, facts are accumulating which will not be set aside. Germany forbids her boys under sixteen to smoke, under penalty, because it unfits them for military service. Paralysis, cancers, and sudden death bear testimony to the increase of the evil. We hope that there is some gain in the matter of reform, but the boys of to-day are sowing the seed of thorns, which will bring measureless evil to the coming generation. It is sad to know that we must wait in dumb endurance the growth and gathering of such harvests of mental and moral evil, when the grace of God and the clear grit of manhood doing what almost all acknowledge ought to be, would soon give freedom.—A. H. Lewis, in Sabbath Recorder.

WHO ARE SLAIN?

CANON FARRAR tells of four hundred miners who were killed by an explosion of fire-damp, caused by a smoker, who opened his safety lamp to light his pipe. To that pipe, he says, were sacrificed these precious lives. All England, he adds, is full of the fire-damp of intemperance, perilous and pestilential. The only safety is total abstinence. On the night of September 19, 1806, in the hospital ward of a London work-house, might have been seen the helpless, speechless form of a man who had been picked up in the street. As this dying man was unknown, an advertisement was inserted in the morning paper, stating that he was a tall gentleman, about forty-five years of age, in blue coat and dark pants, with a gold watch in his pocket, a note-book written chiefly in Greek and Latin, and an algebraic calculation. He was soon identified as Prof. Porson, regarded by the universities as the finest classical scholar of the age. He was taken to his home and died in the prime of life, another victim of intoxicating drink. "Yea, many strong men have been slain by her!" Yet the witty poet, Dr. Holmes, has said it is "the drunkard's shallow skull" rather than the silver cup which is to be feared. But the men of largest brain and noblest culture have sunk to the lowest level by first looking at the wine when red, touching and tasting till self-control is lost. A single county in Texas in one year spends \$3,000 for the support of the Gospel, \$100,000 for tobacco, and \$300,000 for whisky.—Sel.

A YOUNG man named Charles Van Iderstein received word and money from his mother, in New Jersey, to come home, and accordingly made arrangements to start Monday morning. Last night he and four others hired a buggy for a ride. They were intoxicated, and the horses became unmanageable and started to run away. Van Iderstein's foot caught in the step and the horses dragged him about four blocks, and then ran into the stable, the young man's head striking the door-post with such force as to fracture his skull. He died in a few hours, and his body will be sent to his mother Monday morning.

What comment can add force to the above? If liquor hurts only those who drink it, what is it hurts that disconsolate mother when she receives a corpse instead of a son?—Golden Censer.

"WITHIN half a century," says Dr. Dio Lewis, "no young man addicted to the use of tobacco has graduated at the head of his class in Hartford College, though five out of six of the students have used it. The chances, you see, were five in six that a smoker would graduate at the head of his class, if tobacco does no harm. But during half of a century not one victim of tobacco was able to come out ahead."—Letter on Hygiene of the Brain, p. 206.

The Home Circle.

DECREED.

INTO all lives some rain must fall,
 Into all eyes some teardrops start,
 Whether they fall as a gentle shower,
 Or fall like fire from an aching heart.
 INTO all hearts some sorrow must creep,
 Into all souls some doubting come,
 Lashing the waves of life's great deep
 From the dimpling water to seething foam.

Over all paths some clouds must lower,
 Under all feet some sharp thorns spring,
 Tearing the flesh to bitter wounds,
 Or entering the heart with their bitter sting.
 Upon all sorrows rough winds must blow,
 Over all shoulders a cross be laid,
 Bowing the form in its lofty height
 Down to the dust in its cruel pain.

Into all hands some duty thrust,
 Unto all arms some burdens given,
 Crushing the heart with its dreary weight,
 Or lifting the soul from earth to heaven.
 INTO all hearts and homes and lives,
 God's dear sunlight comes streaming down,
 Gilding the ruins of life's great plain,
 Weaving for all a golden crown.

THE PIECE THAT WAS LOST.

THERE was promise of a capital hay-day; so Silas Rogers decided as he stood in the back porch after milking, polishing his face with a coarse towel and noting the weather signs between the rubs. A capital hay-day; but a "spell of weather" might be expected soon; for did not the almanac say "About this time look out for storms?" So all hands were warned to be in readiness to mow the lower intervals in the morning and lose no time in getting at it, for the intervals were swampy after a rain.

The chores were done, the supper eaten; Silas, with his chair tilted against the wall, was sleeping the sleep of the just, while his good wife pattered about the kitchen setting her sponge, beating up some "riz griddle cakes" for breakfast, grinding the coffee, and, in a dozen provident ways, squeezing out of the tired day a little help for the morrow. Reuben went to the store for a new scythe snath; Abner, the hired man, hung over the barn-yard gate with his beloved pipe that tried the house-wife's soul, and pretty Mistress Hetty wrinkled her forehead and pricked her fingers over the new dress she was trying to make in the few leisure minutes snatched from house-work. She made a charming picture in the frame of the vine-wreathed window, her sleeves still rolled up above her plump elbows, the bright hair drawn back from her rosy face which was turned full to the lamp as she threaded her needle, or paused to flirt some poor deluded moth away from the dangerous flame that fascinated him. A charming picture, but no one to look at it; for the great Norway pine held up a screen of solid blackness between the window and the road, even if any belated traveler had chanced to pass that way, and only Hetty's white cat crept stealthily along the top of the garden-fence with murderous designs upon an untimely brood of chipping birds in the current bushes. Only this—ah, beware, Mistress Hetty! evil eyes are looking at you; eyes from which even a heathen mother would cover your face with her hands, and breathe a prayer to break the unholy spell they might cast upon you—a woman's eyes peering from the thick jungle of lilacs and syringas so near it seems as if Hetty must feel them. But Hetty feels nothing, sees nothing, but the troublesome dress; and as the perplexing ruffles are conquered one by one her heart grows light, the little frown smoothes away, and Hetty begins to sing. What a sweet voice she has! It reaches the tired mother's ear, and lightens her heart too. It wakens her father, and then lulls him pleasantly to sleep again. Now Abner hears it and draws his hickory shirt-sleeve across his eyes; and that watcher in the green tangle—who can guess what she thinks or feels as she sinks down with her chin upon her hands, and her face quite in the dark, and listened to the pathetic story of "The Ninety and Nine?" Hetty herself is not half conscious of the pathos with which she bewails the lost one,

"Away on the mountains bleak and bare,
 Away from the tender Shepherd's care,"

And goes on through the tender story to the final rejoicing when the Shepherd brings back his own. She is still humming it fitfully over and over when her mother opens the door of the keeping-room and bids her go to bed, and not ruin her eyes with sewing by lamp-light.

"Just a minute," says Hetty, "as soon as I finish this sleeve." And the minutes glide on and on, the sleeve is finished, held up and admired, and Mistress Hetty takes off her shoes and slips softly up-stairs to bed. She does not even close the window. What should come into the house unbidden, save the cat and the cool night-air? Everything is silent. The mother bird broods her little ones securely, unconscious of the cruel eyes near by, until Reuben comes whistling along the road, and, boy-like, stops to shy a stone at the tempting white mark on the garden fence; the prowler leaps away with long bounds over the wet grass, and a tragedy is averted with nothing to show for it but dirty tracks upon the piece of "factory" spread out to bleach. By and by there is a little stir in the lilac jungle; a woman comes cautiously out of her hiding, and steals away to the barn. The cows are lying here and there under the long shed, sleeping, perhaps, in a cow's uneasy fashion, but with a certain air of motherliness and content about them. They do not even wonder at the late comer as she threads her way among them, enters the barn, mounts the scaffold already filled with the sweet, new hay, and is soon asleep, hearing now and then a broken twitter from the restless swallows under the eaves, or perchance a faint, sweet voice singing, with lingering pity in its tone,

"Sick, and wounded, and ready to die."

Who can tell when the summer day begins? One instant a dusky silence, cool, moist, and fragrant, hanging over the hills, the next a burst of song from some tree-top, caught up from a hundred green coverts, swelled and repeated and prolonged in a mad chorus that presently settles again into silence. Then the slow stir of life awakening, the bustle among the poultry, the lowing of some impatient cow, or the steady sound of her companions nipping the short juicy grass, the unwilling creak of a rheumatic pump-handle, and here and there the dull thud of an improvident ax preparing the kindlings for the kitchen fire.

The day was well under way in Silas Roger's household before the majority of his neighbors had reached this point. The cows were milked and turned into the green lane to make their own way to the pasture, the steady "c-r-r-r-r" of the grindstone and the sharp ring of steel told that the moments before breakfast were being made the most of, and even at the table there were few words spoken, and no useless lingering. But after breakfast Silas Rogers took down the leather-covered Bible that had been his old mother's daily companion for eighty years, and all the family sat reverently down to worship. The golden moments might speed as they would, but no day in that household began without its portion from the Bible. It might have been a lingering recollection of Hetty's song, it might have been one of those celestial providences which we call chance, which lead him to read from the gospels the story of the wandering sheep and the lost piece of silver. It is doubtful if any of them were very deeply touched by it. It was a familiar story to the good wife, and she could not keep her thoughts from straying anxiously to the loaves rising perilously in the pans, while Hetty glanced at the clock and secretly hoped her father had not chanced upon a long chapter. The reading came abruptly to an end with the heavenly rejoicing over one sinner that repenteth, and with an earnest though homely prayer the service was ended. Abner and Reuben almost stumbled over a woman sitting absorbed in the doorway. Silas looked at her but did not stay to question, and when they were gone she rose and said abruptly, "Will you give me some breakfast?"

Mrs. Rogers looked at her. She saw a tall and not uncomely woman of about thirty, but with something indefinably evil about her face. The hard mouth, the bold, defiant eyes repelled her, yet seemed at any instant they might break into scornful tears.

"Who are you?" asked the good wife, coming nearer with her pan of bread in her hand. Again the face lightened and darkened, grew hard then yielding, with the sudden declaration:—

"I am the piece that was lost."

Martha Rogers had not a particle of poetry in her nature, but she had the most profound reverence for the Scripture, therefore the words both puzzled and shocked her. But she was not a woman to refuse bread to the hungry, so she placed food upon the table and motioned the woman to a chair, with a brief, "Set up and eat."

All the time the woman was eating, and she did not hasten, her eyes followed the mistress and Hetty, until Martha Rogers grew nervous and sent Hetty to "red up the chambers."

As soon as she was gone the woman turned abruptly from her breakfast.

"Will you give me work to do?" she demanded rather than asked.

"Who are you?" asked Mrs. Rogers again, simply to gain time.

"I thought you knew. I am Moll Pritchett; they have turned me out of my house; burned it over my head," and the eyes grew lurid with evil.

"What can you do?" asked Mrs. Rogers feebly.

"Anything that a woman can do, or a man. I can work in the field with the best of them; I have done it many a time; but I should like to do what—to be like other women."

"Are you a good woman?"

The question came straight and strong, without any faltering. She had heard of this Moll Pritchett, a woman who lived alone in an old tumble-down hut below the saw-mill, and won a meager living by weaving rag-carpets, picking berries for sale, and it was suspected in less reputable ways; but Martha Rogers took no stock in idle rumors. If she had not divine compassion she had something very like divine justice, which is altogether a sweeter thing in its remembering of our frame than the tender mercies of the wicked.

The woman looked at her curiously. At first with a mocking smile, then with a sullen, and at last with a defiant expression.

"Is it likely?" she said fiercely. "A good woman! How should I be a good woman? I tell you I'm 'the piece that was lost,' and nobody ever looked for me. If I was a good woman do you suppose I should be where I be—only twenty-eight years old, well and hearty, and every door in the world shut in my face? I tell you the man that wrote that story didn't know women; they don't hunt for the piece that's lost; they just let it go. There's enough on 'em that don't get lost."

Poor Martha Rogers was sorely perplexed, all the more that her way had lain so smooth and plain before her that she might have walked in it blindfolded. If this was a lost piece of silver it was not she who lost it; but what if it were the Master's, precious to his heart, and a careless hand had dropped it, and left it to lie in the dust? And what if he bade her seek it, and find it, for him? Should she dare refuse? On this very day, when she needed so sorely the help which she had looked for in vain, had not this woman been sent to her very door, and was it not a plain leading of Providence? It is a blessed thing for us that we are usually driven to act first and theorize afterward, even though the after-thought sometimes brings repentance. The bread was ready for the oven and the wood-box was empty.

"You may fetch in some wood," said Martha Rogers, and the woman promptly obeyed, filling the box with one load of her sinewy arms, and then stood dumbly waiting. Hetty came into the kitchen and began to clear the table, but her mother took the dishes from her hands.

"Go up stairs and fetch a big apron and one of your sweeping caps, and then you may get at your sewing and see if you can finish up your dress."

Away went Hetty, her light heart bounding with the unexpected release, and her mother turned again to the woman, furnishing her with a coarse towel and sent her to the wash-house for a thorough purification. Half an hour afterwards, with her hair hidden in the muslin cap, her whole figure enveloped in the clean calico apron, a comely woman was silently engaged in household tasks, doing her work with such rapid skill that the critical house-wife drew a sigh of relief.

"There's a han'ful of towels and coarse clothes left from the ironing; you might put the irons on, Mary, and smooth 'em out."

The woman turned a startled face upon her, and then went quickly for the clothes, but something—was it a tear?—rolled down the swarthy cheek, and mingled with the bright drops she sprinkled over them. When had she ever been called Mary? When had she heard any name but Moll? Not since away among New Hampshire hills a pale woman had laid her hand upon the tangled curls of her little daughter, and prayed that from the strange world to which she was speeding, she might be allowed to watch over

these wayward feet lest they should go astray. Had she watched? Did she know? Moll hoped not; it made her shudder to think of it. What would Heaven be worth if she could see and know? and yet, what did she hear about joy in Heaven over one sinner that repented? If there was joy it must be that they knew; or perhaps only good news was carried there.

That night Hetty sang again at her sewing by the lamp, and from the attic window, far above her head, the wanderer leaned out in the dark to listen. The little chamber was bare of ornament; there was not a picture on the cleanly white-washed walls, and the straight curtain was for decency, not drapery; but it seemed to this lost one a very chamber of peace. The great Norway pine almost brushed her cheek with its resinous plumes, balmy with the moist night air; and a bird, hidden somewhere among its branches, sent out a startled, half-awake cry, and then dropped off to sleep again. There was a pale young moon low in the western sky, with black clouds scudding across it, and the dull, steady sound of the river, pouring over the great dam in the valley, seemed to come nearer and nearer, like the tramp of feet. Martha Rogers went out to the milk-room and stood for a moment in the door, shading the flickering candle in her hand. She was only taking a house-wifely observation upon the gathering storm, but it seemed to the wanderer that she might well be the woman who had lighted a candle to search for the lost piece of silver, and with a dim comprehension of love on earth and joy in Heaven, she tried to pray, and fell asleep.

Silas Rogers listened to the day's story as he sat mending a bit of harness with clumsy fingers. He may be forgiven if his thoughts sometimes wandered to the hay so fortunately secured from the storm, or ran over the grist to be sent to the mill in the morning if it proved a wet day, or speculated curiously on the superhuman knowledge of almanac men; but, on the whole, he was tolerably attentive, and certainly grasped the idea that his wife had secured a valuable and much needed helper.

"It seems a risk to run," said Martha, anxiously; "and I don't know but it's presumptuous; there's Hetty, and there's Reuben—"

"And there's the Lord," said Silas, stopping to open his knife.

"Yes," said Martha, with a little start, "and I can't quite get rid of what she said about the piece that was lost; though, to be sure, the woman that lost it ought to hunt it."

"She never does; folks are always losing things for somebody else to find; 'tain't many of 'em can say, 'those that thou hast given me have I kept,' right straight along."

"But if you lose your own piece looking after other folks'—"

Silas cut off his waxed end and gave the harness an experimental pull before he answered.

"Well, there's risks, as you say, but I'd rather take a risk for the Lord than agin him."

Martha Rogers took the risk for the Lord, and he abundantly justified and rewarded her faith. For the piece that was lost becomes *my* piece to the heart that finds it and lays it again in the Master's hand; and locking the story of the wanderer in her own breast it was only to the angels that she said, "Rejoice with me."

And when, years afterward, the woman herself said, before the committee of the church, "I am a woman over whom there is great joy in Heaven," there were not wanting those who thought she was presumptuously claiming to be a saint.—*Emily Huntington Miller, in Christian Union.*

ITEMS OF NEWS.

—Fresh outrages against the Jews in Prussia and Austria are reported.

—Lieutenant Schwatka, the distinguished Arctic explorer is a teetotaler.

—Justice Clifford, of the U. S. Supreme Court, died at Cornish, Maine, July 25.

—From some unknown cause the fish in Donner Lake are dying in great numbers.

—Hon. John J. Bagley, ex-Governor of Michigan, died in San Francisco, July 27.

—The President's recovery is now considered by his physicians as absolutely certain.

—The Governor of Arkansas has placed Perry county under martial law, because of desperadoes.

A mother and six children living near Lacrosse, Wis., were carried away by the flood in a recent storm.

—The Japanese Colony in Paris are about to have a pagoda built in which to perform their devotions.

—Sixty-three persons in eleven fishing boats from the Shetland Islands, perished in a gale, recently.

—The emigration returns from Bremen, show that 77,303 persons left there for America, in the first half of 1881.

—Prof. Eastman of the naval observatory, Washington, D. C., discovered another comet on the morning of July 25.

—A lighted cigar stump thrown into a wheat field near Petaluma, Cal., recently, caused the loss of fifty acres of wheat.

—The cotton crop for 1880 was fourteen and a half million acres, which yielded five million seven hundred thousand bales of cotton.

—A chair of diplomacy has been established in Michigan University. Instruction in political economy and international law will be given by President Angell.

—Bishop E. O. Haven, of the M. E. church has had a serious relapse, and is now lying dangerously ill at Salem, Oregon. His physicians think his recovery doubtful.

—July 30, an explosion occurred in a distillery in Peoria, Ill., scalding sixty men, ten of them fatally. Unlike Samson, the number killed at the close of its existence was less than at any other time.

—Midhat Pasha and the others convicted of the murder of the late Sultan, except the two actual assassins and Izzet Pasha and Slyd Pasha, who were implicated in the crime have been exiled for life to El Hedjaz in Arabia.

—A New Orleans dispatch says that the steamer *Cornie Brandon*, loaded with railroad iron and supplies for the Northern Pacific Railway, sunk on Monday evening, July 25, near Cotton Point, and will, it is thought, prove a total loss.

—The *Deseret News*, the Mormon paper at Salt Lake City, states that the praying circle of the Mormon church is praying unceasingly for the death of President Garfield. And this because in his inaugural address the President condemned their vicious practices.

—The Ameer of Afghanistan has been completely defeated by the forces under Ayoub Khan. The telegraph says the defeat of the Ameer of Afghanistan implies the complete overthrow of the only remaining representative of British influence in Afghanistan.

—The German Government quite recently informed the Russian Government, that another plot to assassinate the Emperor was known to be on foot among the officers of the household, and reminded Russia that Germany had vainly given a similar warning just before the explosion in the winter palace.

—A dispatch from Tucson, Arizona, July 26, says:—"A flood occurred here this morning, doing many thousands of dollars' worth of damage. Several houses were washed away. The mud roofs peculiar to this town, let the water through like sieves. Several wash-outs on the railroad are reported, and the trains necessarily are considerably delayed." At Tombstone all the mill-dams in the San Pedro river were carried away. Many miles of the Southern Pacific railroad have been washed out.

—Lord Granville has stated to the French ambassador, that in view of the unquestioned incorporation of Tripoli in the Turkish Empire as well as its proximity to Egypt, the English Government could not regard any interference with it on the part of France in the same manner as they viewed the occurrence in Tunis. In return, the French foreign minister stated that France regarded Tripoli as an indisputable part of the Ottoman Empire and had no intention whatever of invading it.

—Now that France has captured her treasure in Africa, the trouble is to hold it. A telegram from Tunis says that the Arabs can be seen within four miles of Tunis. Great alarm continues and many shops are closed. Crowds of fugitives are coming in from the direction where the Arabs have been seen. At Sfax the French are only masters of the ground they stand on. It is unsafe to venture outside of the gates. The French commander in Algeria sent a confidential report to Paris that a serious insurrection might be expected to break out in September.

—The Cardinal and Arch-bishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain, in his letter, read in every church of his diocese, has most violently attacked the Italian people and Government, including all the Catholics—even princes, statesmen, politicians, and journalists—urging them to combine, and if necessary, use force of arms to restore the independence and temporal power of the Pope in Italy. The Italian Minister at Madrid immediately protested, and the Spanish Cabinet declared that it severely blamed the Primate's language, and would cause a strong remonstrance to be made to him.

—On a recent Sunday, at the church of the Immaculate Conception, in Oakland, Rev. Father King gave notice to his parishioners that he would deny absolution and admission to the Sunday-school to all the children of his parish who attended the public schools instead of the Roman Catholic school recently built upon the corner of Grove and Seventh streets. The announcement has caused a considerable stir among the Catholics of Oakland, all of whom are sending their children to public schools. Father King says in explanation, that he is simply acting in accordance with the Pope's encyclical letter.

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The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, AUGUST 4, 1881.

CAMP-MEETINGS FOR 1881.

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| OHIO, Plymouth, | August 10-16 |
| CANADA, Magog, P. Q., | " 10-16 |
| VERMONT, Morrisville, | " 18-23 |
| MAINE, | " 25-30 |
| ILLINOIS, Bloomington, | Aug. 31 to Sept. 6 |
| NEW ENGLAND, | September 1-6 |
| NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA, | " 9-19 |
| INDIANA, | " 21-27 |
| NEBRASKA, | " 21-27 |
| MICHIGAN, | Sept. 27 to Oct. 3 |
| MISSOURI, | " " " " |
| KENTUCKY, | October 5-11 |
| CALIFORNIA, | " 6-18 |
| TENNESSEE, | " 13-18 |

CAMP-MEETING NOTICE.

LAST year it was voted, on the Alameda camp-ground, that we have a camp-meeting this year three weeks in length. We confidently believe that, if preparation had been made for it, the brethren would willingly have remained on the ground a week longer. But the Committee do not feel authorized to appoint for so long a time without the present consent of the churches. Therefore all are requested to inform us, at this office, as soon as possible, of their will in the matter. It will be necessary to have it decided soon, that arrangements may be made in good season with the railroads, and in other particulars.

Elder Haskell will be here to take charge of the meeting; and we think all who attended the meetings at Healdsburg and Alameda will feel assured that he will arrange so as to keep up the interest of the meeting during the entire time for which they may see fit to appoint. Only make up your minds to attend the full time which may be appointed. We look for good things at this meeting.

STATE OF THE CAUSE.

HAVING had an opportunity to view the field quite largely on this side of the Rocky Mountains, we are prepared to give a favorable report. When Bro. Colcord went to the Upper Columbia there had been little or no labor bestowed there for some time, and it could not be expected that the cause would be in a flourishing condition. But he has taken hold with a will; he has trained a goodly number into the missionary work; vigilant missionary societies have been and are being formed; the temperance work is carried on by the formation of clubs; the Sabbath-school interest is not neglected. And the brethren seem disposed to sustain their President in his efforts. They are doing well according to the means which they possess. We only wish that they had facilities to occupy the field according to the increase of population. May God help them to do with their might, and with all diligence, what they find to do.

We have written somewhat fully of the North Pacific Conference. In their present condition they have an experimental work on their hands. We fully join with them in the wish that the arrangement made by the General Conference Committee under the advice of wisdom given from above had been carried out. We have great confidence in the integrity and love of the truth of those who are bearing the burdens in this Conference. And we shall ever remember with loving interest the band of young people with whom we became acquainted at Cornelius. If they retain their anxiety to work for God, and wait upon him in humility, the way will open before them.

Bro. Healey reports that they are not only likely to organize a church in Los Angeles, but to build a meeting-house. This, we hope, may be the beginning of a healthy and permanent work in Southern California. Bro. H. has had good workers to assist him, and there is reason to feel hopeful for that field. The last report from Bro. Briggs in the north is also favorable.

The church in Oakland was re-districted immediately after the Alameda camp-meeting, since which time it has been steadily progressing. It is in better condition now than we ever saw it before. And the same may be said of the church in San Francisco. Two difficulties weighed down this church: a want of zeal on the part of most of those who might have been efficient workers, and a general indifference, or even opposition, to discipline. But seeming at length to realize their condition, they have taken hold to right up wrongs and to disci-

pline wrong-doers, and the church has been revived and confidence restored as a consequence. We feel much encouraged for San Francisco.

A feeling of some discouragement rested upon some of the churches who looked for labor with them, when they learned that Bro. Corliss was obliged to leave this State on account of the condition of his health. But Bro. Van Horn will spend some time here for the benefit of his wife's health, and he and Bro. Israel expect to visit most of the churches before the camp-meeting. We are looking for a good camp-meeting, and as we know of no difficulty now existing in the churches to hinder the work, we think we shall not be disappointed in the meeting.

SMITH'S BIBLE DICTIONARY.

It is unfortunate for the reputation of this book that there are so many cheap copies in circulation. We secured a copy of a good edition some years since, and never regretted the outlay. The "Pacific Press" has for sale Appleton's edition (1880), which we can recommend to students and ministers. Those who have found that the American Tract Society's Bible Dictionary is too brief and incomplete to answer their purpose, will do well to secure this.

BISHOP HAVEN'S SICKNESS.

THE sickness of Bishop E. O. Haven, in Salem, Oregon, has been announced in our news columns. He so far recovered as to be out of danger, to all appearance. But the latest intelligence before our going to press is of a relapse, and there are fears now that he will not recover. It is not alone in the church in which he holds the highest office that a deep anxiety is felt for the safety of the life of this eminent Christian educator.

DEATH OF ELDER S. DAVISON.

ELDER SAMUEL DAVISON died near Pardee, Kansas, June 5. He was born in England in 1802; united with the Baptist church at the age of 16, and early in life entered the ministry. He united with the Seventh-day Baptists in New Jersey, in 1843. We shall never forget the impression made on our mind by his tract entitled, "The True Sabbath Embraced and Observed," which we received from Eld. O. P. Hull on the occasion of a visit to us soon after we commenced the observance of the Sabbath, in 1853. Eld. Davison was a firm believer in the hope of life through Jesus and the resurrection. In his later years, he embraced certain views of the prophecies, which we could not endorse; but of his integrity and conscientious regard for the truth we think there could be no question.

CONDITION OF THE EUROPEAN SUNDAY.

BRO. W. M. JONES, of the Sabbath Memorial, London, can hardly be outdone in the way of giving a happy hit. Witness the following in the July number:—

"A Clergyman in the United States writes to us for information respecting the condition of the European Sunday: We believe it is far from being healthy, and indeed its condition never has been entirely satisfactory. Doctors have for centuries frequently felt its pulse, but always with the same result—a shake of the head, and the forefinger of the right hand on the lips to indicate silence. Some of the faculty have been so indiscreet as to administer Scripture, but, as ought to have been expected, the patient has sensibly declined under that sort of treatment. Even the civil law has long since failed to revive its passive condition, and now flattering titles, human reason, and anecdotes, are tried, but all in vain. Nothing does Sunday so much good as a hard day's work. One item will serve as an illustration of what is going on: On that cold Sunday, the 14th of January last, the skaters, sliders, and on-lookers, on the various waters, in the parks of London alone, numbered between 250,000 and 300,000."

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