

The Signs of the Times.

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

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The Signs of the Times.

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THE LORD SHALL GUIDE.

BY MRS. L. D. A. STUTTLE.

His hand shall guide thee, O my soul;
Fear not life's thorny path to tread;
Though tempests rage, and billows roll,
And lightnings flash above thy head;
He cares for thee—his hand shall guide,
And angels journey by thy side.

Sometimes the friends of other days,
Those whom thy heart believed were true,
Have left thee in life's 'wildered maze,
Their friendship vanished like the dew.
Thy cries for aid they heeded not,
Their vows of friendship all forgot.

But he will not forget, I know,
My blessed Master and my friend,
False though I've proven all below,
He'll guide me to my journey's end;
And o'er life's rough and dangerous sea,
His loving arms encircle me.

And though I'm called to lay me down,
And close my weary eyes in death,
If I may wear the victor's crown,
I'll gladly yield my faltering breath.
I will not heed the breakers' roar,
For Christ hath passed this way before.

And should my worthless life be spared,
Till he my glorious Lord shall come,
He whom my every toil hath shared,
Shall bear me to my Eden home;
Then shall these "light afflictions" seem
E'en like a cloud,—a passing dream.

Vernon, Mich.

General Articles.

Evil Angels—Their Influence and Mission.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

THE existence of Satan and the agency of evil spirits are facts fully established by both the Old and the New Testament. From the days of Adam to Moses, and through all the succeeding ages to John, the latest gospel writer, Satan is recognized as an active, personal agent, the originator of evil, the enemy of God and man. It is true that imagination and superstition have given their own coloring to these facts, and have linked them with legends and traditions of heathen, Jewish, and even Christian nations; but as revealed in the word of God they are of the utmost solemnity and importance. The connection of the visible with the invisible world, the ministration of angels of God, and the agency of evil angels, are inseparably interwoven with human history. We are told of the fall of the angels from their purity, of Lucifer their leader, the instigator of rebellion, of their confederacy and government, of their various orders, of their great intelligence and subtlety, and of their malicious designs against the innocence and happiness of men. We are told of One mightier than the

fallen foe,—One by whose authority Satan's power is limited and controlled; and we are told, also, of the punishment prepared for the originator of iniquity.

During the time when Christ was upon the earth, evil spirits manifested their power in a most striking manner. And why was this?—Christ had come to enter upon the plan devised for man's redemption, and Satan therefore determined to assert his right to control the world. He had succeeded in establishing idolatry in every part of the earth except the land of Palestine. To the only land that had not fully yielded to the tempter's sway, Christ came to shed upon the people the light of Heaven. Here two rival powers claimed supremacy. Jesus was stretching out his arms of love, inviting all who would to find pardon and peace in him. The hosts of darkness understood that if his mission should be successful, their rule was soon to end. Satan raged like a chained lion, and defiantly exhibited his power over the bodies as well as the souls of men.

The fact that men have been possessed with demons is clearly stated in the New Testament. The persons thus afflicted were not merely suffering with disease from natural causes. Christ had perfect understanding of that with which he was dealing, and he recognized the direct presence and agency of evil spirits.

A striking example of their number, power, and malignity, and also of the power and mercy of Christ, is given in the Scripture account of the healing of the demoniacs at Gadara. Those wretched maniacs, spurning all restraint, writhing, foaming, raging, were filling the air with their cries, doing violence to themselves, and endangering all who should approach them. Their bleeding and disfigured bodies and distracted minds presented a spectacle well-pleasing to the prince of darkness. One of the demons controlling the sufferers declared, "My name is Legion; for we are many." In the Roman army a legion consisted of from three to five thousand men. Satan's hosts also are marshaled into companies, and the single company to which these demons belonged numbered no less than a legion.

At the command of Jesus, the evil spirits departed from their victims, leaving them calmly sitting at the Saviour's feet, subdued, intelligent, and gentle. But the demons were permitted to sweep a herd of swine into the sea; and to the dwellers of Gadara their loss outweighed the blessings which Christ had bestowed, and the divine Healer was entreated to depart. This was the result which Satan designed to secure. By casting the blame upon Jesus, he aroused the selfish fears of the people, and prevented them from listening to his words. Satan is constantly accusing Christians as the cause of loss, misfortune, and suffering, instead of allowing the reproach to fall where it belongs, upon himself and his agents.

But the purposes of Christ were not thwarted. He allowed the evil spirits to destroy the herd of swine as a rebuke to those Jews, who, by raising these unclean beasts for the sake of gain, had transgressed the command of God. Had not Christ restrained the demons, they would have plunged into the sea, not only the swine, but also their keepers and owners. The preservation of both the keepers and the owners was due alone to his merciful interposition for their deliverance. Furthermore, this scene was

permitted to take place that the disciples might witness the cruel power of Satan upon both man and beast. The Saviour desired his followers to have a knowledge of the foe whom they were to meet, that they might not be deceived and overcome by his devices. It was also his will that the people of that region should behold his power to break the bondage of Satan and release his captives. And though Jesus himself departed, the men so marvelously delivered remained to declare the mercy of their Benefactor.

Other instances of a similar nature are recorded in the Scriptures. The daughter of the Syrophenician woman was grievously vexed with a devil, whom Jesus cast out by his word. One "possessed with a devil, blind and dumb," a youth who had a dumb spirit, that oft-times "cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him," the maniac, who, tormented by "a spirit of an unclean devil," disturbed the Sabbath quiet of the synagogue at Capernaum, were all healed by the compassionate Saviour. In nearly every instance, Christ addressed the demon as an intelligent entity, commanding him to come out of his victim and to torment him no more. The worshippers at Capernaum, beholding his mighty power, "were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out."

Those possessed with devils are usually represented as being in a condition of great suffering; yet there were exceptions to this rule. For the sake of obtaining supernatural power, some welcomed the Satanic influence. These of course had no conflict with the demons. Of this class were those who possessed the spirit of divination,—Simon Magus, Elymas the sorcerer, and the damsel who followed Paul and Silas at Philippi.

None are in greater danger from the influence of evil spirits than are those who, notwithstanding the direct and ample testimony of the Scriptures, deny the existence and agency of the devil and his angels. So long as we are ignorant of their wiles, they have almost inconceivable advantage; many give heed to their suggestions while they suppose themselves to be following the dictates of their own wisdom. This is why, as we approach the close of time, when Satan is to work with greatest power to deceive and destroy, he spreads everywhere the belief that he does not exist. It is his policy to conceal himself and his manner of working.

There is nothing that the great deceiver fears so much as that we shall become acquainted with his devices. The better to disguise his real character and purposes, he has caused himself to be so represented as to excite no stronger emotion than ridicule or contempt. He is well pleased to be painted as a ludicrous or loathsome object, misshapen, half animal and half human. He is pleased to hear his name used in sport and mockery by those who consider themselves intelligent and well-informed.

It is because he has masked himself with consummate skill that the question is so widely asked, "Does such a being really exist?" It is an evidence of his success that theories giving the lie to the plainest testimony of the Scriptures are so generally received in the religious world. And it is because Satan can most readily control the minds of those who are uncon-

scious of his influence that the word of God gives us so many examples of his malignant work, unveiling before us his secret forces, and thus placing us on our guard against his assaults.

The power and malice of Satan and his host might justly alarm us, were it not that we may find shelter and deliverance in the superior power of our Redeemer. We carefully secure our houses with bolts and locks to protect our property and our lives from evil men; but we seldom think of the evil angels who are constantly seeking access to us, and against whose attacks we have no method of defense. If permitted, they can distract our minds, disorder, torment our bodies, destroy our possessions and our lives. Their only delight is in misery and destruction. Fearful is the condition of those who resist the divine claims and yield to Satan's temptations until God gives them up to the control of evil spirits. But those who follow Christ are ever safe under his watchcare. Angels that excel in strength are sent from Heaven to protect them. The wicked one cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about his people.

The Spread of the Gospel.

God might have commissioned the angels to preach the gospel to the world had he seen fit to do so. But he who knows altogether the needs of fallen man, ordered it otherwise, as we may believe for the best of reasons. Knowing what we do of man's natural tendencies, it is easy to see that such an arrangement, instead of ennobling man, would have confirmed in him every trait of his naturally selfish character. Besides, it is difficult to understand how man could have been led to fully appreciate gospel privileges, on the principle that whatever costs little or nothing, is generally (and quite correctly too) estimated according to the sacrifice required to obtain it.

A sinner cannot purchase his own pardon at any cost, yet in order to secure the gift of God through Jesus Christ, one must comply with the conditions upon which that pardon is granted. These conditions are a forsaking of former ways and associates, and a yielding of the will to the will of God. The peace and joy received in return are considered worth more than that which the world bestows, because of the prospect of eternal life which they afford. But no one can afford to rest satisfied with the first pleasurable sensations of this new relationship. As soon as one is really adopted into the family of God, the interests of the Father's household become his interests, and it will be his delight to follow in the footsteps of him who said, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." John 5:30.

To accomplish God's will it was necessary for Christ to suffer and die, because the will of God is that "all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. 3:9. We perform God's will when we cease to do evil and learn to do well, because that is a step to our salvation, which is the will of God, and which Christ said he came to do. See John 6:38-40. But by fulfilling these conditions, even, we do not purchase our pardon. Christ's own blood alone can do that; but by observing these stipulations we do become co-laborers with him in his work and thus cultivate his character. His love for fallen humanity made him suffer and die, and if we partake of the same spirit which caused him to sacrifice for us, we, too, will cultivate a love for others, and have that desire for their salvation that will engage us to sacrifice somewhat to that end.

Had the gospel commission been committed solely to the angels, man could have had no such interest in the salvation of his fellow-men, but as soon as he should have tasted the sweets of pardoning love, he would there and then have settled down satisfied in the thought that his own sins were canceled, and he had nothing

further to do. What object could one have under such circumstances to attend prayer-meeting? He would have nothing to do with encouraging others to be steadfast. Or what would he care about attending public services, except to receive a personal benefit? Such a religion would be selfish in the extreme, and just the opposite of what the Bible recommends.

If such would be a false religion, then the true must be just the opposite, and will lead its possessor to interest himself in behalf of those who have not yet yielded to the call of the gospel. In other words the gift of pardon bestowed will cause the recipient to feel an obligation to help others to see and feel what he himself has experienced. It may be true that some never have such impressions, but those who get proper views of the work of Christ, and their relation to him, through a profession of faith, cannot fail to have some yearning in this direction. It is true that all are not, and some, for certain reasons, never can be qualified to teach the gospel in a public manner. But though they may lack in this qualification, they may become assistants to such laborers in various ways. And the most profitable way for each to engage in the work will be made manifest to them, if, while constantly asking, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" they daily assist through the avenues that open to them.

In writing his epistle to the Romans, Paul expressed this sentiment when he said (chap. 1:14, 15): "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." This was not a mere matter of choice with the apostle, a means of livelihood in preference to some other calling. He says in 1 Cor. 9:16: "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Since he had the talent to do so, the apostle well knew that he could not refuse to carry to others the message of good tidings that had blessed his own heart, and freed him from his sins.

It was the same spirit that actuated Whitefield and his coadjutors in their extended labors. Wesley, with his comprehensive view of gospel work, announced: "The world is my parish." Dr. Adoniram Judson, also, felt these longings to an intense degree. In all these cases the men were held up in their work by the consolation that their lives were being given for others' salvation. On some occasions, when the thought came to them that they were not seeing accomplished what they desired to see, their anxiety was almost unbearable.

Especially was this the case with Mr. Judson. It is said that at one time he conceived a strong desire to preach the gospel to the Jews. But though he looked for the way to open, and even prayed to that end, his desire was never gratified. All through his life he lamented the circumstances that forbade him carrying out his cherished desire. But one day near the close of his eventful life, when he was feeling much depressed at the thought of his supposed failures, Mrs. Judson read to him a letter from a missionary near Constantinople. This letter stated that a little book had been published in Germany giving an account of Dr. Judson's life and labors; that it had fallen into the hands of some Jews, and had been the means of their conversion; that a Jew had translated it for a community of Jews on the borders of the Euxine, and that a message had arrived in Constantinople asking that a teacher might be sent to show them the way of life. When Dr. Judson heard this his eyes were filled with tears; a look of almost unearthly solemnity came over him, and, clinging fast to his wife's hand, as if to assure himself of being really in the world, he said, "Love, this frightens me. I do not know what to make of it." "To

make of what!" said Mrs. Judson. "Why, what you have just been reading. I never was deeply interested in any object, I never prayed sincerely and earnestly for anything, but it came; at some time—no matter how distant the day—somehow, in some shape, probably the last I should have devised, it came!"

And thus died that good man, with the thought that his desires in behalf of the Jews were being granted. Though he could not himself go among them, his life was an example that God made the means of conversion to them. Thus it may be with every one who loves God. Though he may not be able to do that kind of labor he would prefer, he may labor for the advancement of God's cause and the salvation of souls in another way, and, if faithful, God is able to bring about the desired object in a way that was only known to him who is the disposer of events. Let each, then, work in his sphere with godly zeal. If his part is to only contribute to the finances of the cause, let him do that cheerfully, knowing it is an essential part of the great work. But if any are privileged to do more (though this part may not be neglected), let them rejoice inasmuch as greater opportunities are offered them to bring souls to a saving knowledge of the truth, and thus bring to themselves more of the joy of Christ. J. O. CORLISS.

Two Kinds of Knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE of what is, is one thing; and knowledge of what people think about that which is, is another and a very different thing. A true system of education will admit a due proportion of both kinds of knowledge—knowledge of the thing itself, and knowledge of the range of opinion concerning that thing. There is nothing mutually antagonistic in these two kinds of knowledge; and yet, as human methods go, they are often made to face each other from hostile camps. Here we have a good old minister—a scholar after the old fashion—who is thoroughly familiar with the text of the Pentateuch, and who neither knows, nor cares to know, what the modern critics think of the books of Moses. There, on the other side, is a young student who is weak in his knowledge of the original text, but who can tell you, roughly, the opinions of each of the modern critics concerning the Pentateuch, from Astruc to Kuenen. As a matter of real knowledge, the old minister's acquaintanceship with the Pentateuch must take a higher rank than that of the young student; yet in the practical world, the latter may pass for a brilliant scholar who has a right to have an opinion of his own in biblical criticism, while the former may be reckoned simply as an old fogey. This is not as it should be. Where a choice must be made, knowledge of the thing itself is to be preferred before knowledge of opinions concerning that thing. The first, without the second, is a real knowledge, though an incomplete knowledge; the second, without the first, is a mere parrot show of knowledge. And this affords a practical hint. When next you meet a loud-voiced young man who proclaims to all hearers his disbelief in the Mosaic writings, on account of his profound knowledge of modern criticism, just take him into a quiet corner of the room, and propound to him softly this question: "My dear young friend, when did you last read the Pentateuch in the original Hebrew?"—*S. S. Times.*

A BUFFALO church takes a regular annual collection for the "pastor's library." The practice seems profoundly wise and should be followed by more than one church. Congregations should understand that pastors cannot maintain their efficiency on a meager literary diet, and that a little liberality in this direction will gladden the pastor's heart and give him added strength. —*New Star, Nova Scotia.*

The One Great Hope.

CHRIST shall so come in like manner as he went into heaven. Acts 1:9-11. Again shall the summons ring out. Again shall he come arrayed in flashing brightness, and the visible robes of his imperial Majesty. Again shall he appear mighty in battle, when "in righteousness he shall judge and make war." For a Christian one great memory fills the past—Christ has come; and one great hope brightens the else waste future—Christ shall come. That hope has been far too much left to be cherished only by those who hold a particular opinion as to the chronology of unfulfilled prophecy. But it should be to every Christian heart "the blessed hope," even the appearing of the glory of him who has come in the past. He is with and in us, in the present. He will come in the future "in his glory, and shall sit upon the throne of his glory." All our pardon and hope of God's love depends upon that great fact in the past, that "the Lord was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory." Our purity which will fit us to dwell with God, our present blessedness, all our power for daily strife, and our companionship in daily loneliness, depend on the present fact that he dwells in our hearts by faith, the seed of all good, and the conquering antagonist of every evil. And the one light that fills the future with hope, peaceful because assured, streams from that most sure promise that he will come again, sweeping from the highest heavens, on his head the many crowns of universal monarchy, in his hand the weapons of all conquering power, and none shall need to ask, "Who is this King of glory?" for every eye shall know him, the Judge upon his throne, to be the Christ of the cross. Open the doors of your hearts to him, as he sues for entrance now in the meekness of his patient love, that on you may fall in that day of the coming of the King, the blessing of the servants "who wait for their returning Lord," that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.—*Rev. Alexander Maclaren, D. D.*

No Religion to Spare.

A QUIANT old city missionary, speaking in charitableness of a starveling Christian in a flock he tended, said: "Well, I think he's got enough religion to save himself; but he hasn't a bit to spare." And that phrasing was an unconscious parallel with Jeremy Taylor's statement: "A man of an ordinary piety is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks, but it could not water a poor man's garden." A Christian of that sort bears about the same relation to a man of God who is "complete, furnished completely unto every good work," that a penniless tramp bears to a well-to-do citizen in the community at large. Even if a Christian tramp has barely enough of the bread of life to keep himself from starving, he will do better by sharing that scanty portion with others than by consuming it all himself. It was when the widow of Zarephath had only enough for one more meal, which she purposed to eat and then die, that the call came to her to give—not of her abundance, but out of her poverty, to another. Had she sought only to *live*, she would have died; but deciding to *give*, she was enabled to live through all the famine season. Go thou and do likewise.—*S. S. Times.*

THE orthodoxy of to-day is such a gentle, blushing, gracious, what-would-you-have-good-sir, sort of a body, that it is down-right cruelty to slap it in the face. It is so inspired with the spirit of conciliation, that almost anything you ask it will gracefully give. Ask it to give up the divine authority of all the Bible, except "the most spiritually instructive and elevating" parts and it will.

Ask it to give up the Genesis account of the creation, as an historic record, and with smiling blandness and a bow, it will say it must insist no more on the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch; and it will straightway cease to insist.

Command it to cancel from its hymns and sermons such sanguinary expressions as the saved in Heaven sing: "To him who washed us from our sins in his own blood," and it will quickly take the wink from Germany, and do as you desire.

Bid it hush harsh words, descriptive of the destiny of those dying impenitent, and in meek humility it will put *hades* for hell; and send so much gospel to *hades*, that one is put to it to say which he would prefer to use as the world in which he will repent—this or that.—*Plymouth Rock, in Christian at Work.*

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain
Has left the dead and lives again.
He walks—the brand is on his brow—
"Am I my brother's keeper?" now?

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Pray
May he not travel his own way?
What care I which way he may choose—
A Heaven to gain, or *all* to lose?

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Is
My money *mine*, or is it *his*?
The God who gives me meat and bread
Might have given to him instead.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Still
The query comes, and come it will;
It will not "*down*" nor let me rest,
Until the truth I have confessed.

I *am* my brother's keeper! God
Has given voice even to the *sod*.
My brother's blood is on my hand
How *dare* I in his presence stand?

God's children are my brothers—all
Who hail me with imploring call:
"Save, or I perish!" "Lend your hand
Again to set me on the land!"

I will not wear the brand of Cain,
But from my soul erase the stain.
Lord, all I have is thine. Oh, take
And use it for my brother's sake!

—Woodland Democrat.

The Test.

It is a mistake to think that Christ's doctrine of separation from the world means to withdraw one's self from common everyday life or from intercourse with reputable society. The key to Christian living and conduct is, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." We may go safely wherever we can maintain the spirit of Christ; and we do well to stop and consider whether Christ, if he were here, as he was once in Palestine, would accompany us. And this is neither an unnatural nor misleading test. For the question is not how the world, nor indeed how the church, or our fellow Christians, will look upon us, but how it appears to Christ, to whom we have pledged allegiance.

It is the spirit of this world against which we are to guard. A spirit, let it be remembered, that finds its way into churches, and even takes possession of the services of religion. It was especially this that was offensive to Christ when he was among men. The spirit that paraded its virtues even in its prayers, that sought the chief places in ecclesiastical gatherings, that recounted its gifts and zeal and devotion, to obtain the praise of men rather than of God. Let no one deceive himself on so important a matter as conformity to the world. To be in this world and not to be of it is the test of a Christian life—Christ's test, not the world's.—*Central Christian Advocate.*

A MAN may go to Heaven without friends, without honor, without wealth, but he cannot go without Christ.

Do as They Say, Not as They Do.

"THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not." Matt. 23:1-3.

It is safe to follow the teachings of the various Christian sects, in regard to the common practical duties of life. Even that church which all Protestants accuse of corruption teaches morals that none can object to. For example, on the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," the Catholic church teaches as follows:—

"Question. What is forbidden by this commandment?

"Answer. All unjust taking away or keeping what belongs to others.

"Q. What else?

"A. All manner of cheating in buying or selling, or any other way of wronging our neighbors.

"Q. Must we restore ill-gotten goods?

"A. Yes; if we are able, or else the sin will not be forgiven; we must also pay our debts."

This is but a sample of its doctrines on the ten commandments. Who teaches any purer doctrine? Yet Protestants inveigh against the corruptions of this church; and we do not object; we protest too. It is safe, however, to practice sound doctrine. We should do as they say, if it harmonizes with the teachings of God. The Jewish church was corrupt. The scribes and Pharisees taught right; but they did not practice so well as they taught. And is not this the case with the mass of Christian teachers of the present day? All of the most popular churches, calling themselves orthodox and evangelical, teach the perpetuity and obligation of the ten commandments as the moral law of God. But do they keep the Sabbath day pointed out and described in the fourth commandment? They do not. The commandment requires the observance of the seventh day, the day on which God rested from the work of creation. They keep another day and for another reason. The word of God is set at naught, and a tradition of men is kept in its stead.

Still it is right and safe to do as they say, and keep the commandments of God as they are. The rest day and the resurrection day are two days—"the Sabbath day, according to the commandment," is followed by "the first day of the week." Luke 23:56; 24:1. The same commandment, without the least alteration, could not oblige the Jews to keep one day and Christians another; the one for the reason that the Creator rested on it, the other for the reason that Christ rose from the dead on it. And Jesus affirmed the unchangeableness of the entire code, in every jot and tittle—letter and mark. Matt. 5:17-19.

But we are told, by way of excuse and self-justification, that any one day of rest after six of labor fully answers the demand of the law. If this is so, it is certainly safe to keep that one day which is mentioned in the commandment and described as the Sabbath of the Lord, the day on which he rested from his work. This was not only one day in seven, but the seventh of the seven. Men may deceive themselves by their sophistry, but God is not deceived; neither is it safe to mock him. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." Let those who would please God do as these teachers say, but not as they do.

R. F. COTTRELL.

THAT SETTLES ALL.—I like that old Scotchman's word, when he was puzzled about a matter of duty and wanted to end the debate—"Reach me yon Bible. That settles all."

EVERY duty we omit obscures some truth we should have known.—*Ruskin.*

Constantine.—V.

Of the story of Constantine having seen the cross in the sky, Milman says:—

"The silence not only of all contemporary history, but of Eusebius himself, in his Ecclesiastical History, gives a most dangerous advantage to those who altogether reject the story."—*History*, p. 287.

Neander takes the same view of the case that is given by Whelpley above:—

"But the supposition of a miracle here, is one which has in itself nothing to recommend it, especially when we consider that the *conversion, as it is called*, of the Roman emperor, such as it really was, could in no wise possess the same significance in the sight of God, who respected not the person, but looked upon the heart alone, as an acceptable sacrifice, as it had in the eyes of men dazzled and deceived by outward show. In this particular way it is scarcely possible to conceive that a change of heart, which is the only change which deserves to be called a conversion, could have been wrought. Much rather might we presume that, in this way, the emperor would be misled to combine pagan superstition with a mere coloring of Christianity. And were we to judge of the end which this miracle was designed to subserve, by the general consequences of the emperor's conversion on the Christian church within the Roman empire, it might be questioned whether these consequences were really so benign in their influence on the progress of the kingdom of God, as they were imagined to be, by those persons who, dazzled by outward show, saw in the external power and splendor of the Christian church a triumph of Christianity."

And in this connection he gives an additional fact which is of great importance, namely, that the story was varied to suit the different tastes of the different classes in his army:—

"Pagans saw, in this case, the gods of the eternal city engaged to deliver them from the disgraceful yoke. Among them, accordingly, was circulated the legend of a heavenly army, seen in the air, and sent by the gods to the succor of Constantine. Among the Christians, on the other hand, the story was propagated of an appearance of the cross."—*Neander*, vol. 2, p. 9.

This proves that it was not an appearance which the soldiers professed to see, but merely the story of an appearance, varied to suit the various superstitions of the parties and to give them confidence in their leader in battle.

Waddington gives a view of the question as comprehensive as it is concise:—

"In the first place, the story which we have shortly given, is related by no contemporary author except Eusebius; next it is related in his 'Life of Constantine,' and not in his 'Ecclesiastical History;' it is related in the year 338, or six and twenty years after the supposed appearance; it is related on the authority of Constantine alone, though it must have been witnessed by his whole army, and notorious throughout his whole empire; and lastly it was published after the death of Constantine. In an age wherein pious frauds had already acquired some honor; by a writer, who, respectable as he undoubtedly is, and faithful in most of his historical records, does not even profess those rigid rules of veracity which command universal credit; in a book which rather wears the character of a partial panegyric than of exact and scrupulous history—a flattering fable might be published and believed; but it can claim no place among the authentic records of history; and by writers whose only object is truth, it may very safely be consigned to contempt and oblivion."—*Church History*, pp. 82, 83.

It should be noted that the influence of "Eusebius, the great church historian," is brought to bear in favor of the story, but it is not related by Eusebius in his history, but only in his

eulogy of Constantine, which is generally regarded as not worthy of credit.

Dr. Dowling, whose subject led him to a careful examination of this and other events in connection with Constantine's career, says:—

"For my part I have no hesitation in regarding the whole as a fable. It was not till many years after it was said to have occurred, that Constantine related the story to Eusebius, and, in all probability, he did it then by the instigation of his superstitious mother, Helena, the celebrated discoverer of the wood of the true cross (?) at Jerusalem, some 250 years after the destruction of that city, and all that it contained, and the disappearance of the identity of its very foundations, under the plowshare of the Roman conqueror, Vespasian. The subsequent life of Constantine furnished no evidence that he was a peculiar favorite of Heaven; and the results of his patronage of the church, eventually so disastrous to its purity and spirituality, are sufficient to prove that God would never work a miracle to accomplish such a purpose."—*History of Romanism*, p. 31.

The story of the vision of the cross not only rests on the authority of Constantine alone, and was varied to suit different parties, but he said the vision was seen by his army, which is beyond all question a fabrication. No writer ever mentions such a thing; it was not a matter of current report, as says Mosheim:—

"For though Constantine says that his soldiers saw what he saw, yet Eusebius derived his information solely from the emperor, and he names no other witness. In his Ecclesiastical History, which afforded the fairest opportunity for introducing so important a matter, there is no mention of it whatever. This shows that when he wrote his history, that is, prior to the year 324, he was ignorant on the subject; and that it was not then generally a subject of conversation. Again, in his 'Life of Constantine,' he frankly acknowledges that this prodigy seems almost incredible; but that it would be wrong to question the emperor's veracity, which is as much as saying, 'I believe the facts were as I have stated, because my most gracious lord bids me believe them; but if another person had told them to me, I would not believe them.'"—*Hist. Com.*, p. 475.

Eusebius professed to receive it from the emperor accompanied by an oath which Stanley does not consider of sufficient weight to prove it true:—

"That the emperor attested it on oath, as the historian tells us, is indeed no additional guarantee for the emperor's veracity; because, like princes professing piety in modern times, he appears to have been in the constant habit of adding an oath to almost every asseveration."

That the estimate which Stanley put upon Constantine's oath is just, is shown by the following: He gave his solemn promise, and confirmed it by an oath, that if Licinius would resign his claims to the purple, he should be permitted to pass the remainder of his life in peace. And this promise and this oath were made not alone to Licinius, but also to his wife, Constantine's own sister, in behalf of her husband. Yet for all this, only a little while after Licinius reached Thessalonica, the place appointed for his abode, he was foully murdered by Constantine's order. And the crime was aggravated in its cruelty and perfidy by the circumstance that Licinius had already reached the allotted three score and ten years of age.—*See Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, chapter 14, paragraph 38; and *Encyc. Brit.*, art. Constantine.

And Mosheim further informs us that the artifice of inspiring the soldiers with confidence by means of pretended prodigies, was not peculiar to Constantine. Thus he says:—

"At the time the cross is said to have appeared to him, Constantine's great solicitude most certainly was not to establish and extend the Christian religion, but to vanquish Maxentius. Besides, Constantine was not then himself

a Christian; and he used this vision, not to aid the Christians, but to animate the soldiers."

That it was "a military wile or stratagem," he says, "receives some countenance from the example of a similar artifice employed by Licinius, for soon afterwards, when Licinius was about to engage in battle with Maximin, he pretended that an angel appeared to him by night and taught him a form of prayer, which, if his soldiers would repeat it, they would certainly gain the victory."—*Hist. Com.*, p. 473.

There is great question among authors as to whether there was any foundation at all for the story; some, willing to spare the reputation of Constantine and Eusebius, think that a dream or freak of a disordered imagination might have given rise to the report of the vision. Thus Mosheim:—

"Constantine was a vain man, and greedy of praise and glory, as his conduct shows; nor do his friends wholly deny it. I therefore think it will not be temerity to suppose he added somewhat to the truth; and perhaps he changed a mental and nocturnal vision into a day vision with the bodily eyes, for the sake of appearing great and favored of God in the estimation of the citizens, and particularly the bishops."—*Hist. Com.*, p. 476.

Socrates, who gives some credit to Eusebius, for it was easy to palm off such things in that age of "pious frauds," states that Constantine was in great perplexity of mind when the vision was received:—

"While his mind was occupied on this subject, and he was hesitating what divinity's aid he would invoke for the successful conduct of the war, it occurred to him that Diocletian had profited but little by the pagan deities, whom he had so sedulously sought to propitiate; but that his own father, Constantius, who had renounced the idolatrous worship of the Greeks, had passed through life far more prosperously. In this state of uncertainty, a preternatural vision, which transcends all description, appeared to him."—*Socrates' Eccl. Hist.*, p. 3.

This statement of Socrates certainly gives an air of probability to the suggestion of Mosheim, in which others have concurred, that in his trouble and uncertainty the emperor had a dream, or that he was so highly wrought upon that the cross which the Christians so highly regarded was presented to his imagination as the means of triumph. And we can only reconcile the statements of historians with the supposition that a dream, which was supposed to be supernaturally given, was afterward converted into a miraculous vision. Thus Sozomen speaks as follows:—

"He regarded the cross with peculiar reverence, on account both of the power which it conveyed to him in war, and also of the divine manner in which the symbol had appeared to him."—*Sozomen History*, p. 16.

These words are quite consistent with the idea that the cross was presented in a dream, which was supposed to be specially given of the Lord to lead him to reverence that cross. And on no other supposition can we understand the following testimonies:—

"Eusebius gives the narration on the sole authority of Constantine, who imagined that he had seen this cross; it was natural that in the troubled sleep of the emperor, on the eve of so eventful a battle, his dreams should be vivid, and their impression strong; but it is remarkable that Eusebius gives no evidence from the thousands of persons in the army, who must have seen it if it were really a miraculous display of divine power; neither Sozomen nor Rufin, who wrote so soon after, make any mention of it. And it has been thought that Eusebius, hearing the emperor narrate his dream, mistook him as narrating a fact, for Constantine always stated that he was influenced by a dream, in making use of the sign of the cross in his army."—*Foxe's Acts and Movements of the Church*, note, p. 59.

EDITOR.

The Sunday Law Agitation.

Not long since, the pastor of a church in Oakland, Cal., delivered a discourse on the "Sabbath Question." Some of his frank admissions, as compared with the demands of Sunday law advocates, place that class in a rather anomalous position. But such considerations have very little weight in a fanatical clamor; a law is wanted, whether there be any reason for it or not.

The speaker said that the Sabbath (Sunday) question is rapidly coming to the front in California; that it has been trodden under foot and remanded to the rear; but it cannot be kept in the rear, because it is the very foundation of good society. God has raised it up, and it cannot, by man, be put down with impunity. All over the State there is a restlessness, not merely among religious people, but among people who have respect for good society. There is a feeling that a mistake has been made in putting down *our* Sabbath (referring to the repeal of the Sunday law), and that "the State should send after *her* Sabbath and bring it back."

Now, if the foregoing asseverations be true, the query arises, Wherefore so much effort on the part of the Ministerial Union of San Francisco and Oakland, and appeals to all the pastors in the State, to agitate the subject, in order to "create a sentiment"? If there already exists such a "restlessness" not only amongst religious people, but amongst all lovers of good society, to have the Sunday observed, wherein lies the urgent necessity of "creating a sentiment" in its favor? Why is it not observed? It would seem, from the positions above assumed, that the people are very anxious to do their religious duty with regard to Sunday, but cannot until there be a law enacted compelling them to do so. Surely such a state of affairs would be "restlessness" indeed.

But the speaker gravely claimed that the position of those who sought a Sunday law is not one of coercion, but of protection; and, furthermore, that it was not protection for the *day*, but for themselves. He admitted that "the day is not holy, nor better than any other day, only as we set it apart for holy use;" and argued that God's requirement was a seventh part of time.

Another query: If the Sunday law agitators do not want coercion, wherefore a penal law? There is a law already in force which gives ample protection to religious worship. But their action only a little more than two years ago, just before the repeal of the Sunday law, shows how much sincerity there is in that plea. Their determined aim then was to arrest and punish every one who did not close his business on Sundays, whether he interfered with any other person's privilege or not. At that time, their practical definition of "protection" was coercion to the full extent of the law, upon every class that the law would reach, without exception. That this is still the covert idea, was manifested in the language of the minister's prayer, on the occasion hereinbefore mentioned, that we might have a restoration of the Sunday law, "and even a more stringent one."

The admission that "the day is not holy, nor better than any other day," comes in strange contrast with the assertion that God has raised it up. We have on record but one account of God having set apart a day for a weekly Sabbath, and on that occasion he made the day holy—better than any of the other days; he "sanctified" it, he "hallowed" it, he "blessed" it. But the peculiarity of the Sunday is that it is no "better than any other day, only as we set it apart for a holy use." According to this logic, God has raised up an unhallowed day in opposition to his own "hallowed" and "sanctified" one, and calls upon man to compel himself, by a human law, to observe it. Verily man has "sought out many inventions." "Who hath required this at your hands?"

It was also claimed that "a large proportion

of the people" want to be protected in the privileges of the Sabbath (Sunday); and the patriotic declaration was made that the poor man shall have a right to his Sabbath, and the State that denies that right is an oppressor. In this glow of sympathetic eloquence, the speaker made the exaggerated statement that the workmen of California are in a state of worse slavery than ever existed in the Southern States. From this imaginary state of affairs, it was argued that "we must have certain laws;" and in a community of five persons two of them have inherent rights which must be protected against the opposition of the three.

"Must have law." "Shall have right to the Sabbath" (Sunday). Mark these expressions. When the claims of the seventh day—the Sabbath of the Lord—are presented, these Sunday preachers are shocked at the idea of law. They claim that God abolished *his* law and *his* Sabbath because they were "burdensome," a "yoke of bondage," etc., which no man could bear. What shall we say, then, that God failed in his effort to establish a Sabbath and a Sabbath law, and was obliged to delegate man to accomplish the purpose? God forbid! "Shall mortal man be more just than God?"

"God requires the seventh part of time." "The day is not holy." Mark these expressions also, for in them lies a specimen of man's justice. God plainly specified which seventh part he required, namely, the seventh day. Under the Sunday law, as history and experience has shown, that seventh part of time must be on the first day of the week, although the day be not holy. The advocates of this law claim that they do not want to coerce any one, but if any man wants to keep a seventh part of time upon the day that God appointed, he must do so at a cost of another seventh part in deference to an opposition institution. "No man can serve two masters." Again, if two persons in a community of five want to keep Sunday, the other three must do so too. But if the three want to observe the Sabbath of the Lord, they must pay tribute of another day for the "protection" of their two Sunday-keeping neighbors. "Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?"

The speaker congratulated Californians on the growing favor toward Sunday observance in the State, and said that "time must elapse before we can have *our* Sabbath as highly respected as it is in other States; but we have made good progress." He then added: "It is hard to be patient; but we must wait, but not long."

Wait for what? for the sentiment of the people to fully develop, which was represented as fairly gushing throughout the State in one grand demand for Sunday observance? No, not for that; for in another strain he sharply reprimanded his own people for *their* abuse of the day, and that, too, right here in Oakland, where it was admitted that "we have perfect quiet" so far as opposition is concerned. And judging from the tone of his appeal for their reformation in respect to the "very foundation of good society," the anticipated good time would seem to be a good way off, if approaching by that route. In fact these two positions of the speaker are decidedly hard to harmonize. We are therefore shut up to the conclusion that the matter regarding which "it is hard to be patient," and for which we are not long to wait, is the "more stringent law" for which prayer was so earnestly offered.

Just where lies the harm of treating as other days a day that is confessedly not holy, nor better than any other, is a problem which is at present hard to solve; but we may expect more light on the subject when the State shall "send after *her* Sabbath and bring it back." That event will supply a want that has been keenly felt in this State, namely, a pretext for Sunday-keeping.

W. N. GLENN.

"My Words."

TO REJECT the words of Jesus is to reject him. There are two ways of rejecting his words. One is to deny that he is the Son of God, and treat his words as those of a common man. The other is to say, "Lord, Lord," and then pervert his words so as to make them teach what he never taught. To thus pervert his teachings, is to make of him another Jesus, a rival of himself. He who perverts the words of Jesus in order to uphold "my church," denies him as positively as does the professed infidel.

"For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of *my words*, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9: 26. "And if any man hear *my words*, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not *my words*, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12: 47, 48. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep *my words*. . . . He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." John 14: 23, 24. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6: 46.

These scriptures are too plain to be misunderstood. To reject the words of Jesus is to reject him. To say unto him, "Lord, Lord," as thousands are now doing, does not make men disciples. A disciple is a learner, and he who refuses to learn an unpopular truth has denied Jesus and his words. His saying, "Lord, Lord," does not help him.

EPSILON.

Christian Servitude.

LIFE is not only the time to save our souls, but also the time to serve the Lord. Salvation and service should go together. Every saved soul should be a serving soul. When Christ healed Peter's mother-in-law, she "arose and ministered unto him"—she at once began to serve him. And so should every one who is saved from his sins by the power of Christ. He should at once enter his service, and become an active worker in his vineyard. If Christ had nothing for men to do in the world after their conversion, he would at once take them to Heaven. But God contemplates more in the conversion of a sinner than simply the salvation of that one soul. He designs that he shall be a co-worker with him in the salvation of others. His command to every saved soul is, "Go work to-day in my vineyard." Begin at once. Do not put it off till to-morrow. There is work for every saved soul to do, that he can do better than any one else, and Christ requires him to do it. He will not recognize as his those who idle away their time, and do nothing to promote his glory and the advancement of his cause. A man may be converted, but if he does not begin at once to work for God, he will soon lose his sense of divine favor, and his interest in the cause of Christ.—*Methodist Recorder*.

THE minister's remark that he always shouted loudest when he had the least to say was illustrative of much that we see in life—outside the ministry as well as in it. The consciousness of weakness and inefficiency produces in men a kind of frenzy that expends itself in explosives. The ruder people esteem it as a sign of greatness, but the more thoughtful observers know better. The still, small voice is often strongest—the one that has most of God in it.—*Bible Banner*.

It was two and fifty years ago that Thomas Carlyle wrote in his journal that "a Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty were the usefulest of all societies, could it take effect." Some people are of the same opinion to-day.

The Sabbath-School.

LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST—APRIL 15

Inheritance of the Saints.

PROMISES TO ABRAHAM.

1. When did the Lord first appear to Abraham?

"And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken: The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran." Acts. 7:2.

2. What did he then say to him?

"And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee." Acts. 7:3.

3. To what place did Abraham go from Mesopotamia?

"Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell." Acts. 7:4.

4. How long did Abraham stay in Charran (Haran)? *Ib.*

5. After the death of his father, where did he go? *Ib.*

6. Locate, as nearly as possible, all these places on the map.

7. Where do you find the record of these events of which Stephen speaks? Gen. 12:1-5.

8. How old was Abram when he went into the land of Canaan?

"So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." Gen. 12:4.

9. How old was he when his father died?

10. When the Lord told Abram to leave his native country, what promise did he make?

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 12:2, 3.

11. What expression shows that this promise was not merely a local affair?

12. How extensive was it?

13. What will be the condition of the world when this promise meets its fulfillment?

14. Who are they who are blessed?

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Ps. 1:1, 2.

15. Then what will all the world do when this promise is fulfilled?

16. And when God's will is thus perfectly performed, what will be on this earth?

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven." Matt. 6:10.

THE answer to question 9 will be readily seen by those who connect Gen. 12:4 with Acts 7:4. He went out of Charran [or Haran] into Canaan when his father was dead, says Stephen. Moses says that he was seventy-five years old when he went into Canaan. So he was seventy-five years old when his father died.

FROM a single expression in the promise contained in Gen. 12:2, 3, we know that it was not a local affair. That expression is this: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." It embraces all the inhabitants of the earth. But it is not fulfilled until all the inhabitants of the earth are *blessed*. That condition does not now exist, and has never yet existed. Now we learn in Ps. 1:1, 2 who are blessed,—those

who love and obey the law of God. Of course; if the curse came because of *sin*, the blessing will come only when there is obedience. Therefore, when this promise is fulfilled, every inhabitant of the earth will be delighting in the law of the Lord. In harmony with this are the words of Christ in his prayer (Matt. 6:10), showing that such a state exists only when the kingdom of God exists on earth. E. J. W.

NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

APRIL 12—ACTS 27:27-44.

Paul's Shipwreck.

AFTER they had drifted fourteen days, tossed up and down on the heaving waves of Adria, a weltering plaything for the gale, suddenly on the fourteenth night the sailors, amid the sounds of the long-continued storm, fancied that they heard the roar of breakers through the midnight darkness. Suspecting that they were nearing some land, and perhaps even detecting that white phosphorescent gleam of a surf-beat shore which is visible so far through even the blackest night, they dropped the lead and found that they were in twenty-fathom water. Sounding again, they found that they were in fifteen fathoms. Their suspicions and fears were now turned to certainty, and here was the fresh danger of having their desolate hulk driven irresistibly upon some iron coast. In the face of this fresh peril the only thing to be done was to drop anchor. Having done this, they could only yearn with intense desire for the dawn of day.

All through the remaining hours of that long wintry night, they stood face to face with the agony of death. In its present condition, the leak constantly gaining on them, the waves constantly deluging them with spray, the vessel might at any moment sink, even if the anchors held. But they did not know, what we know, that those anchors had dropped into clay of extraordinary tenacity, which, indeed, was the sole circumstance between them and hopeless wreck. Gradually through the murky atmosphere of rain and tempest, the grim day began to dawn upon the miserable crew. Almost as soon as they could see the dim outlines of their own faces, haggard and ghastly with so much privation and so many fears, they observed that they were anchored off a low point, over which the sea was curling with a huge and most furious surf. Ignorant that this was Point Koura, on the northeast side of Malta, and not recognizing a single landmark on the featureless shore, the only thought of the selfish heathen sailors was to abandon the hulk and crew to their fate, while they saved themselves in the boat which they had with such trouble and danger hoisted on board.

Pretending, therefore, that they could steady the pitching of the ship, and therefore make her hold together for a longer time, if they used more anchors, and laid them out at full length of the cables instead of merely dropping them from the prow, they began to unlash the boat and lower her into the sea. Had they succeeded in their plot, they would probably have been swamped in the surf upon the point, and all on board would inevitably have perished from inability to handle the sinking vessel. From this danger alike the crew and the sailors were once more saved by the prompt energy and courage of St. Paul. Seeing through the base design, he quietly observed to Julius, who was the person of most authority on board, "If these sailors do not stay in the ship, *ye* cannot be saved." He says "ye," not "we." Strong in God's promise, he had no shadow of doubt respecting his own preservation, but the promise of safety to all the crew was conditional on their own performance of duty.

The soldiers, crowded together in the vessel with their prisoners, heard the remark of Paul,

and—since he alone at that wild moment of peril had kept calm, and was therefore the virtual captain—without the smallest scruple drew their swords and cut through the boat's ropes, letting her fall away in the trough of the sea. But the daylight had now increased, and the hour was approaching in which everything would depend upon their skill and promptitude, and on the presence of mind of all on board. Once more, therefore, the apostle encouraged them, and urged them all to take some food. "This is the fourteenth day," he said, "on which you are continuing foodless, in constant anxiety and vigilance, without taking anything. I entreat you, then, all to join in a meal, which is indeed essential to that preservation, of which I assure you with confidence, for not a hair of the head of any one of you shall perish."

And having given them this encouragement, he himself set the example. Making of the simplest necessity of life a religious and eucharistic act, he took bread, gave thanks to God in the presence of them all, broke it, and began to eat. Catching the contagion of his cheerful trust, the drenched, miserable throng of two hundred and seventy-six souls, who had so long been huddled together in their unspeakable wretchedness and discomfort, as their shattered vessel lay rolling and tossing under the dismal clouds, took fresh courage, and shared with him in a hearty meal. Knowing that this was the last meal they could ever take in the dismasted vessel, and also that it would be impossible to save the cargo, they lightened and righted the vessel by flinging overboard the wheat, which in the long drift of four hundred and seventy-six miles from Claudia in the storm must have shifted much to one side and made the vessel heel over in a dangerous manner.

When the full daylight enabled them to examine the shore, they saw no recognizable landmark—since the present Valetta, the harbor of Malta, at which ships often touched, was seven miles E.S.E. of the point where they were wrecked; but they saw a bay, at one extremity of which the cliffs sank down into a flat beach, and the only thing which they could hope to do was to thrust the ship out of her direct course, and strand her at this spot. They therefore cut away the anchors, letting the ropes drop into the sea, unlashed and let down the paddle-rudders, hoisted the foresail to the wind, and steered straight for the beach. But their maneuver was a failure.

They had unconsciously anchored off Ras el Koura. The opposite point looked like another promontory, but was in reality the island of Salmonetta, separated from the mainland by a deep, narrow, and precipitous channel. Through this channel, about a hundred yards in width, ran a current, and in the stormy race where the waters of this current met the waters of the bay, the vessel would not answer to the helm, and all they could do was to run her ashore. Happily for them she drove, not upon a rock, but deep into a bank of mud, such as still exists at that very spot. Here the prow stuck immovably fast, while the stern was free. The crew rushed to the prow, while the waves, which broke with fury over the unsupported stern, began instantly to batter it to pieces.

Here, even at this extremity, there rose for Paul and the other prisoners a new, unexpected, and yet more terrible danger. It was the duty of the soldiers to be responsible with their own lives for their prisoners. The Roman law was stern, rigid, and unbending, nor did it admit of any extenuating plea. So long as death seemed imminent, and every hand on board might be useful in averting it, the prisoners must have been left unchained; but in such a crisis as this, what was there to prevent any one of them from taking a dive into the sea, and so escaping? It would have been a horrible thing that blood and butchery should stain the planks of a ship-

wrecked vessel at the very moment when safety seemed within reach, and that this human sacrifice of lives which God had rescued should be the only thanksgiving of the survivors.

From this peril the prisoners were again indirectly saved by him whose counsel and encouragement had all along been the direct source of their preservation. If the prisoners were to be killed, equal justice, or injustice, must be dealt to all of them alike, and Julius felt that it would be dastardly ingratitude to butcher the man to whom, under God's providence, they all owed their rescued lives. He therefore forbade the design of the soldiers, and gave orders that every one who could swim should first fling himself overboard, and get to land. The rest seized hold of planks and other fragments of the fast-dissolving wreck.

The wind threw them landwards, and at last by the aid of the swimmers all were saved, and—at a spot which, owing to the accurate fidelity of the narrative, can still be exactly identified—a motley group of nearly three hundred drenched, and shivering, and weather-beaten sailors and soldiers, and prisoners and passengers, stood on that chill and stormy November morning upon the desolate and surf-beat shore of the island of Malta. Some, we are sure, there were who joined with Paul in hearty thanks to the God who, though he had not made the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof were still, had yet brought them safe to land, through all the perils of that tempestuous month.—*Farrar's Life of Paul.*

A Mistake to Exclude the Old Testament from the Sabbath-School.

It is my opinion that it would be a serious mistake to exclude the Old Testament from Sabbath-school instruction or to disparage it as a factor in that instruction. Because—

1. It is a part of the inspired word of God, which has not been abolished nor superseded by the New Testament; and as such it is pronounced by the apostle "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Even its typical rites and institutions, which have ceased to be obligatory as outward forms, point as directly as ever to their great Antitype, and in their substantial meaning are of permanent force and value.

2. The New Testament is based upon the Old, and the knowledge of the latter is essential to a correct understanding of the former.

3. The elementary and preliminary character of the Old Testament adapts it in a remarkable degree for the instruction of the young, for whom its narratives have a special attraction, while its facts and institutions serve as object-lessons under proper teaching, and convey the truth more widely even than didactic statements.

4. The prevalent disposition to undervalue the Old Testament, and even to set aside its authority and historical character, will be best counteracted by its more diligent and thorough study. The truth of God and his revelation is one in all ages and under both dispensations; his church is one; true religion is the same, and the method of salvation is the same. And it is very important that this unity should be perceived and the whole Bible be recognized as the standard of faith and the rule of duty.

5. Many prevalent errors and misconceptions are traceable to an undue neglect of the Old Testament. False views of the nature of salvation and an inadequate sense of man's absolute need of a divine Saviour and his absolute dependence on divine grace result from a failure to emphasize the fall of man and the consequent corruption of the race as set forth in the Old Testament. The mercy and love of God are set in a false light by him who fails to insist upon the law and justice of God dwelt upon in the Old Testament.—*W. Henry Green, in Old Testament Student.*

Sabbath-School Hints.

THAT the Sabbath-school, when properly conducted, is a valuable accessory to the church, its past history has fully attested. It has also shown that when carried on carelessly or without any particular object in view, the tendency has been not only to discourage the young in the work of the Sabbath-school, but to lessen their interest in religious services generally, and to make the Sabbath a dull and tiresome day. As a result, they soon become wayward, and are finally lost to the cause. This, however, is not necessary. Children are very much like grown people. That which is not made attractive, soon ceases to interest them. Truth should be made plain and interesting to the children, and then it is food for them the same as it is to us; the Bible and Sabbath-school become attractive, and the Sabbath itself the best day of the seven, to which they will continually look forward with delight.

There is one other consideration which yields consolation here and the promise of joy hereafter. Children that have been well trained in the Sabbath-school almost invariably at the proper age present themselves for baptism, and become valuable members of the church. A prominent Baptist minister once said that during a pastorate of twenty years over one church, he baptized two hundred and twenty-eight pupils from its Sabbath-school, from whom only seventeen had been disfellowshipped. Corresponding steadfastness would no doubt be seen among young converts in all churches were Sabbath-schools faithfully sustained in their midst.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Some of the older ones may say, "What can I do to bring about such a state of things? I have no gift, no talent, to do anything in that direction. I only wish I had." There are none who cannot do something in the interest of the Sabbath-school. First be sure to attend the school regularly, and do not excuse yourself from taking an active part in the exercises because you are "too old" or "too dull" to learn the lessons. Of course you "don't know the lesson" if you have not looked at it during the week. Study it at home, and help the children to understand it. They may have learned the answers to the questions, and still may not fully understand them. Sit down and "go over" the lesson with them, asking questions and making suggestions that will lead their minds through a wider range, and stimulate a more thorough research.

Be punctual to a minute. Have a zeal that the frost of winter will not blight, the heat of summer wilt, nor the prospect of rain dissolve. Talk of the school in the prayer-meetings, and pray for it. Consider the Sabbath-school in the business meetings, and take measures to aid it. This course on the part of each member of the church, cannot fail to produce a "live" Sabbath-school, one the influence of which will be felt continually in the spiritual advancement of the church itself.

THE TEACHERS AND OFFICERS.

These should be chosen with reference to their adaptability to the work, rather than to their position in the church or society. A superintendent is needed. Who shall fill the place? Well, there is Bro. A; he is an influential citizen, besides he is one of our oldest members. His good standing in the community and long connection with the church certainly entitle him to our consideration. And there is Bro. B; he is well acquainted with the truth, as is well attested by his many victories, when "contending for the faith" on the street-corners and in other public places. Then there is Bro. C, who once thought he had a call to preach, but his sermons were so long and so dull that his congregation all left him and never came back again. A superintendent must do a great

deal of talking any way, and why would not this be just the place for Bro. C to exercise his gift? The children could not run away till school was out, for you know it would not be allowed.

Such men are not the ones for the place. There are other things to be considered besides age, learning, or fluency; and in the absence of these qualifications, place one in the position of superintendent (if he can be found) who has the peculiar faculty of teaching and of attracting all, old, young, and little children, and making them feel that they are working with, rather than under him. Old or young, rich or poor, it matters not; if devoted, let him take the place because he is qualified to fill it.

J. O. CORLISS.

CONCRETE teaching is the best on morals, the most interesting to men and children alike, and the best suited especially to little minds. Human minds can comprehend without any refinements more of the blessedness of Christianity before they are in their teens than they can learn in the next twenty years. The lesson of prayer in trouble, of turning to God in anxiety, of speaking to him in secret by the way or at work, the habits of daily religious duty, of kind thinking, of generous sharing, of discretion and loyalty in Christian behavior, are all absorbed by seven-year-old girls and boys, and can be taken in to last. The perfume of goodness is very fresh and sweet when it is in children's minds; and it is a pity their elders do not look for it and cherish it oftener in them. There was something exquisite in the rapt smile with which a little boy used to repeat the verse, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," as if he knew its secret, and the first notion of his God was in those tender words. Children may not understand our words or our notions, but they can understand God's words quite as well as their elders can.—*Sel.*

"WHETHER the class consist of children or adults, it is usually a great mistake for the Sabbath-school teacher to allow the time to be spent on incidental matters not directly connected with the lesson. Such matters must come up, but they should be disposed of briefly. The time for the lesson is short, and, in order to encourage a careful study of the lesson, it should be understood by all that no one in the class can turn it aside from the main points involved in the text for the day. We have known the whole time to be spent on some unimportant matter in the first few verses, thus not allowing the most vital and interesting things to be reached at all, though they may have received careful study. This may be an excellent way to discourage any thorough preparation, but as a rule it answers no good purpose, and the less there is of it the better."—*Congregationalist.*

"TO HAVE always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men." A religion that is not good for seven days in the week, all the year round, is not worth much at any time. A great many people try to have a clear conscience while they are in sickness or other danger, or when they are at church and prayer-meeting, who are not so particular while in health and safety, and at active business. "Toward God and men." The two tables of duties cannot fairly be separated. No man truly loves God who fails to love his fellows. And he who refuses love to God has no love for man which is worth speaking of.—*H. Clay Trumbull.*

THE world obeys positive men. Other things being equal, the man who knows will be heard in preference to the man who believes. He who believes will be heard before him who doubts. A skeptical pulpit is a floating island. The popular faith can anchor nothing to it.

The Signs of the Times.

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

J. H. WAGGONER, EDITOR.
E. J. WAGGONER, ASSISTANT EDITOR.
URIAH SMITH, CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, MARCH 26, 1885.

The Church. No. 6.

IN treating of the qualifications of church elders we have made frequent reference to evangelists or ministers, because their duties are so nearly alike in many respects. A local elder need not necessarily preach, yet he must be "apt to teach," because he will find abundant need for this gift, not only in meetings, but in his associations with the members. Their qualifications are much alike.

And we shall find also that the

QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

Are, in several respects, the same as those of the elders. The deacon must also be

A *monogamist*, the husband of one wife; not a polygamist. Not *double-tongued*. This word is not elsewhere used in the New Testament and of course is not contained in the rules concerning elders. They should be frank, not speaking ambiguously, but plainly just what they mean. It inculcates fair dealing in everything.

"Not given to much wine." This is the same as the eighth point in regard to elders, but the word "much" is inserted. Wine beclouds the mind, and weakens the judgment; a sufficient reason why they who bear responsibilities in the church should not use it. And so the order was given to Aaron the priest: "Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations; and that ye may put difference between the holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them." This plainly implies that he who drinks wine cannot discern sacred things; cannot properly put a difference between the holy and the unholy; and is not qualified to teach the statutes of Jehovah. Wine drinking has no place among the servants of God.

Not greedy of gain. It is fully as necessary that the deacon be free from the love of money, or gain, as the elder. Indeed, his danger in this respect is greater; because, as Judas, he often has to handle church funds, and he will be subject to peculiar temptations in this respect. Few people well consider the fact, which is a fact, that *the possession of money is dangerous*. The bare possession, without the ownership, has ruined thousands. Very many have borne spotless reputations for honesty until they were placed in trust of large sums of money, and they were reported as "defaulters," when, in plain language, they had become thieves. A sumptuous repast is not more pleasing to the gourmand, than the act of handling and counting his gold is pleasing to the miser. Few are greedy of gain all manner of crimes are committed. As the deacon has to do with the temporalities of the church, he must be a man as free as possible from danger of temptation in this respect.

It may, indeed, be said that our deacons have so little money to handle, our church funds are so small, that there is no great need to be so strongly guarded on this point. But that is not so. We have known church officers to use *the small sums* which the churches placed in their hands, for their own business use or benefit, and fail to have the money when it was needed. *Of course* they intended to return it whenever it was needed; but that is exactly the

excuse of all "defaulters." The money is not theirs, and they have no right to its use. The point needs to be strongly guarded; for many have found that the temptation is not small even in handling small sums.

As the elder, so must the deacon have his children in subjection. The *reason* is not just the same, as the deacon has not the same care for the church. But the *influence* is much the same in both cases; hence, the requirement.

Not a novice; he also must be proved. The responsibilities of a deacon are altogether too great, and too important, to be intrusted to inexperienced hands. Not only proved in regard to his integrity, but to his soundness in the faith; for the apostle adds: "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith." A good degree—good rank, or standing, in the church, and boldness, or strength, assurance, in the faith.

These words indicate that, although the deacon's office pertains specially to temporalities, he is not to be chosen with reference to his business qualifications only. The apostles said, when the first deacons were chosen: "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Great wisdom and prudence is required on their part. The first deacons were chosen because of complaints in the congregation of the neglect of certain widows. And it will be found, even unto this day, that there are no matters with which it is more difficult to deal, than with those pertaining to the needy. Some men are easily swayed; their judgments are moved by a plausible story, without their having knowledge of the facts. Such should not hold the office of deacon; because the most unworthy are the most assuming, and most ready to plead their own cause, and, therefore, they would impose upon such an officer, and lead him to act unjustly. The really deserving are generally unassuming, and diffident to speak of their own wants. Hence the deacon should be able to adopt the language of Job: "I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out." Job 29:16. The worthy poor are sensitive; to them it is a painful necessity to receive the liberalities of the church, and it requires a man "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" to deal with them so prudently that their hearts shall not be wounded, and the cause not be dishonored. Moreover, he must have such discretion in business matters that he can decide when the poor should receive help from the funds of the church, and when the way should be opened for them to help themselves. Of a truth, he who uses the important office of a deacon well purchases to himself "a good degree." He proves himself well worthy of the high respect of the church.

It is not our intention to indulge in criticisms which cannot be for the edification of the reader. Our attention has been called to the statement of a recent writer that in Acts 6 the officers elected to "serve tables," are not called deacons. The original is used with considerable latitude, literally signifying one who serves, a servant. The Cyclopaedia of M'Clintock & Strong says: "The later church officer (Phil. 1; 1 Tim. 3) developed itself from the office in Acts 6, and may be traced back to it." And this is so evidently true that judicious commentators and critics, in their remarks on Acts 6, do not hesitate to call them deacons. Their duty was to serve the church in matters of a nature too secular to engage the time and attention of the apostles. And such was the office and duty of the deacons in the early Christian church.

An important point to consider is that of the *jurisdiction* of the officers of the church. In order that our remarks on that subject may be connected, we reserve them for another number.

Christ's Second Coming.

THE following is a brief editorial which appeared in the *Christian Cynosure* of Jan. 8, 1885:—

"Christ's second coming is not a Scriptural phrase. The Bible is full of his 'comings.' In Eden, to Abraham, to Solomon, to Moses, when he 'came down to deliver' the Israelites, at Bethlehem as a babe, etc., etc., and in the last chapter of the Bible he says, 'Behold I come quickly;' and in the reckoning of eternity 'quickly' may mean a million years.

"Doubtless every one of his predicted comings will be fulfilled, and we shall know when they are so. And our proper posture is to be 'looking for and hastening to' his coming which may not be five minutes ahead; and it will seem so when he gets here. One would like to know how long to Moses and Elias in the mount the 1,500 years seemed since they had toiled and suffered here. But we must not conjure with his advent or make a sect out of it."

The *Cynosure* should be the last paper in the world to speak against making a sect of any one Bible doctrine, for it is most intensely sectarian, and its sectarian creed is the narrowest of all of which we have any knowledge. Opposition to secret societies is its only "stock in trade;" without this hobby it would have no calling. We have not a word to say in behalf of secret societies; we believe they often injure a good cause by appealing to people's curiosity, or to their love of the marvelous, instead of their love of principle. We have no high regard for the tinsel and trappings of show. But most of all we object to them when they are made, as they sometimes are, substitutes for the Christian religion. But whether it is better to "conjure" with, or to "make a sect" out of that opposition, than to put forward and earnestly preach the Bible doctrine which Paul calls "that blessed hope," is a question which it does not take us long to determine.

But the *Cynosure* is quite technical in its criticism. It takes pains to impress the supposed fact that "Christ's second coming is not a Scriptural phrase." "Human probation" is not found in the Scriptures. "Free moral agency" is an expression never found in the Scriptures. "Antimasonry" is not found in the Scriptures, yet the *Cynosure* does not abate one jot of its antimasonic zeal on that account. We hardly think that it would take its stand on the declaration that nothing is of importance which we cannot find in the exact language of the Scriptures.

But we have a charge to press more closely against the *Cynosure*. Its theology is erroneous; it misrepresents the Scriptures. The Bible is *not* "full of his comings." The language of the Bible forbids that the manifestations of God's grace and power in Eden, to Abraham, to Moses, etc., may be called "comings of Christ." They are not, and never have been, so considered by the Christian world. When writers on Bible doctrines and Bible facts speak of Christ's first advent, or first coming, do they ever refer that first coming to Eden, to Abraham, to Moses, or to any kindred time or event? Never; the *Cynosure* cannot point to one instance in the literature of the Christian church where the phrase is so applied. If there is an instance it has escaped our notice or our memory. It is always referred to the advent of Christ at his birth "in the days of Herod the king."

When Jesus told his disciples that he was going to leave them and return unto his Father, they were filled with sorrow; but he comforted them with the words, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come *again*, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." To suit the theory of the *Cynosure* he should have promised to come *again and again*, until he had *gradually* taken them all unto himself. But no such idea is contained in his promise, or elsewhere found in the Bible. In 2 Thess. 2, Paul teaches that at the coming of Christ, the saints will be gathered together unto him. In 1 Cor. 15 he says that "the trumpet

shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Verse 52. In his first letter to the Thessalonians he tells exactly when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead awake to immortality, and the living be changed or translated. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [*phthasomen*, anticipate, precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. 4:15-18.

Every reader must note the parallel between this text and John 14:1-3. Both were given to comfort and console the disciples of Christ; both say that the Lord—the Lord himself—shall come again; both say that the object of his coming is to gather or take his people unto himself. And this the Lord Jesus calls his coming "again." We think the *Cynosure*, notwithstanding its looseness of statement on this subject, will hardly affirm that the Bible is full of such comings as this. And it is noteworthy that in its enumeration of the many "comings" of the Lord it did not refer to this one! Yet this is the only event to which the Scriptures refer when they speak of the coming of Christ.

The disciples asked the Saviour. "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3. They did not say, "of one of thy comings." And Jesus proceeded to lead their minds down to the same event spoken of in 1 Cor. 15, and 1 Thess. 4. Also, in John 21:22 the Lord said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" The brethren thought he meant that he should tarry till he comes, and therefore a saying went abroad among them that that disciple should not die. Why did this saying arise? Because the disciples understood, as Paul afterward wrote, that the followers of Christ will not all sleep; some will be alive and remain unto his coming, and they will be translated—not die. This shows that they had no such loose ideas of the coming of Christ as the *Cynosure* expresses.

But most decisive of all is Paul's testimony in Heb. 9:28. Taking the enumeration of the *Cynosure*, and let each "etc." cover but one coming, and add his appearing to Paul, at his conversion, and we have eight comings. Of course we could swell the list to scores, if each particular interposition of Providence is the coming of Christ. But providing for these eight alone, then the apostle should have said that unto them that look for him he shall appear the ninth time. But he did not. He said that "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." This shows the statement of the *Cynosure* to be a positive contradiction of the Scriptures. None of the events of which it speaks are presented in the Bible as the coming of Christ, except that of his birth at Bethlehem, which was his first appearing. The second is now near to come.

The scriptures which we have already noticed sufficiently show the importance of the subject. And many others are in accord with these. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:4. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter 5:4. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13. Literally—appearing of the glory of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. This is exactly parallel to the Saviour's own statement in Matt. 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Fa-

ther, with his holy angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." And again: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. And the apostle further says, "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels." 2 Thess. 1:6, 7.

All these scriptures point to that one time and one event, when Christ shall appear the second time, unto them that look for him, without sin unto salvation. We might extend the proofs by quoting many other texts, but we will close by noticing one point. It is unto "them that look for him" that his second appearing will be unto salvation. This is easy of solution, if any query be raised. The Saviour gave "signs" whereby we are to know, yes, commanded to know, that his coming is near, even at the doors. And he says it will be as fatal not to know as it was to turn away from the warning of the coming flood in the days of Noah. Matt. 24. And Paul speaks of those who see the day approaching Heb. 10:25; compare 9:28; 10:36-38. Therefore it is a good thing to look for him. And Paul says, when he charges his faithful fellow-servant before the Lord Jesus who shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:7, 8. We have seen that Peter also says that the crown of glory will be received "when the chief Shepherd shall appear." And therefore it is a very desirable thing to "love his appearing."

But the Lord Jesus said there will be some looking for him and sounding the alarm (Joel 2:1), when his coming is near, even at the doors, and that when the faithful servants are giving meat in due season there will be some who smite the servants who are more watchful than themselves, and they will say, "My Lord delayeth his coming." They have no faith in preaching the advent doctrine, and they will be cut asunder and appointed their portion with the hypocrites. And this notwithstanding they claim him as their Lord. And some will derisively ask, "Where is the promise of his coming?" The promise is plain, and the prophecies of both Testaments show that his coming will be looked for according to the promise and to the signs which are given and the many prophecies fulfilled. But they cannot see it. They are as blind to his second appearing as the editor of the *Cynosure*! But Peter gives them a hard name which we will not repeat in this connection. 2 Peter 3:3, 4.

Why is the preaching of "that blessed hope" so unpopular even in the churches? It was foretold that it would be so "in the last days;" but why is it? Surely, "an enemy hath done this."

AMONG other things the *Congregationalist* asks Sunday-school superintendents and teachers, "How many of your pupils can repeat the . . . ten commandments," and says, "this is a fair question to ask." Yes, that is a fair question, and there is another which we are sure is just as fair. Suppose that next Sunday the pupils should repeat the ten commandments correctly; and having repeated the word of God, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," &c., should they ask this "fair question," "Why do we not keep the seventh day? what would be the superintendents' and teachers' answer? What would be the *Congregationalist's* answer? If the answer should be, as we have often heard, "It has been changed," would that be a fair answer? If so, then is it fair to have the children learn in the very words of the Lord that "the seventh day is the Sabbath," and then have them unlearn it as soon as repeated? These are "fair questions to ask" every one who teaches Sunday-keeping.

"Let Us Be Sober."

IN 1 Thess. 4:15-17, Paul sets forth the coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the righteous dead, and the righteous living caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. Then in the next chapter he proceeds thus: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you." This being written to the "brethren," and to those too who are to be alive on the earth when the Lord comes, he says, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief;" but that these are "all the children of the light and the children of the day;" and that thus they know "perfectly" in regard to the "times and the seasons," and that therefore it is not necessary for him to write of these. Although these are so much the children of the light that they know these things perfectly, yet to any one who will read carefully this fifth chapter of first Thessalonians clear through it will appear very plain that the apostle did not think that there was no need that he should write unto them in regard to the duties that would devolve upon them, in view of the times and the seasons which they would know so perfectly.

One of these important duties which he would specially impress upon us is to be sober. "Let us who are of the day be sober;" "let us watch and be sober." In his letter to Titus also Paul insists upon this. He commands that Titus shall teach "that the aged men be sober;" "the aged women likewise;" "that they may teach the young women to be sober;" "young men likewise exhort to be sober minded;" "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2. Thus he calls upon aged men and aged women, young men and young women, all to be sober. Nor is it simply soberness as opposed to drunkenness, upon which the apostle insists; but sober-mindedness. The mind must be so inclined to soberness that the whole life will be but the expression of it. Webster says that "sober is opposed to flighty." That upon which the Scriptures insist therefore, is a character and demeanor that might be described, in other words, as stanch, solid, not puffed up, but built up.

Remember that these exhortations to sobriety are written to those who will be alive when the Lord comes; it is in view of that important event that he writes; and for the further reason that the Scriptures show plainly that lightness and trifling will be characteristic of this very time. And Paul in reasoning out of the Scriptures saw this and therefore set up this standard against it. Notice in 1 Thess. 5:3 he says: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them; . . . and they shall not escape." Now turn to Jer. 23:16—, and read: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you." Here is pointed out the very cry of "Peace and safety" which Paul names, and here follows too the very destruction to which Paul refers, "Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart; in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly."

Here then are the very sentiments of Paul's argument. "Peace"—"ye shall have peace," and "safety"—"no evil shall come upon you;" and this at the very time when the anger of the Lord is to

fall grievously on the head of the wicked; Paul expresses it, "sudden destruction cometh upon them;" Jeremiah says it shall be in the latter days; Paul says, just before the coming of the Lord. It is impossible to read the two passages together without reaching the conclusion that it was to this very passage in Jeremiah that Paul had reference when he wrote that in 1 Thess. 5. This is made sure when we read in Jer. 25:15-33, and find that this "whirlwind" is that which marks the culmination of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture in the seven last plagues (Rev. 16), when that "great voice" is heard from "the temple of Heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." And this assurance is made doubly sure when we read onward in Jeremiah 23 to verse 32 and find there: "Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." The apostle reading this scripture saw how that "lightness" and trifling would characterize the "peace and safety" prophets, and, knowing the "times and the seasons," he impresses upon all, the important words, "Let us watch, and be sober," and thus he would, and he would have us, lift up a standard against the lightness and trifling that will prevail even in the pulpit.

Jeremiah is not the only one of the prophets that points this out. Zephaniah says, "Her prophets are light and treacherous persons; . . . they have done violence to the law." Zeph. 3:4. But all this is because "like people like priest" (Hos. 4:9), and because the "people love to have it so" (Jer. 5:31); therefore Isaiah says: "Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever [margin, the latter day]; that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord; which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits; get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." Isa. 30:8-11. Paul's comment on this passage is, "The time will come [it has come] when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4:3, 4. The "sound doctrine" which they will not endure, is, according to Isaiah, the law of God; "children that will not hear the law of the Lord." Of these it may be said as of Ephraim of old, "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted a strange thing." Hos. 8:12. And because that they will thus not receive the love of the truth that they may be saved, "Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in fraud [margin] and perverseness, and stay thereon; therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant." Isa. 30:12, 13.

The Lord therefore not only calls us to be sober-minded, but he directs us to that which, if given a place in the mind, will create staidness and solidity of character; to that which will not puff up, but which will build up, that is, the law of God. At the time when they will not hear the law of the Lord, he sends a loud cry to all the world, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." At the very time when their disposition is to "despise this word," he declares, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word." May we all who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, come humbly to him praying the prayer, "Open thou

mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." May he put his law in our minds, and write it in our hearts. And knowing the times and the seasons, let us "watch;" knowing the lightness and the trifling, let us be "sober;" knowing the willfulness and the rebellion, let us be "willing and obedient;" knowing how the word of the Lord is despised, let us honor it; knowing how the law of God is cast down, let us exalt it.

A. T. JONES.

The Missionary.

Influence of Wycliffe's Writings on Bohemia.

THE light of truth did not all emanate from one man or one nation. God selects his instruments irrespective of nationalities or persons. "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

Wycliffe was born in 1324, forty-nine years before Huss. His influence was felt in different parts of England, especially in the university of Oxford. About the same time that the university at Prague was established, certain doctrines taught by Wycliffe were traversing Europe, and there attracted much attention at Prague. Especially was this true of a work in which he attacked the doctrine of transubstantiation. The Princess Anne, who married Richard II., was religiously inclined, and became a devoted reader of the Scriptures, a copy of which in each of three different languages she carried to England. She possessed a liberal spirit, which seemed natural to her native country. She was thus prepared to receive and cherish the doctrines of Wycliffe, which were agitating all Europe. She was the first of the illustrious band of princesses who were the nursing mothers of the Reformation.

In 1394 Queen Anne died, and her attendants, returning to Bohemia, carried with them some of Wycliffe's writings. So strong was the attachment between this royal couple that the bereaved king devised and had erected a monument upon which his own image and that of the queen were carved, with the hands of the two clasped together. It also represented the sympathy existing between England and Bohemia, which gave great strength to the Reformation. Another circumstance which aided the Reformation in Bohemia was the fact that many of the Waldenses found an asylum there from the fierce persecution which was then raging against them in their own country. The influence which they exerted was felt in the university at Prague.

It was also at this time that the forty years' schism existed in Rome, when two popes contended for the supremacy, each claiming to be the true infallible pope, Christ's vicegerent on earth. One had his court in Avignon, France; the other had his in Rome. The Italian pope, Urban IV., was acknowledged in Bohemia. He died about the year 1389, and the French pope, Clement VI., continued as before. This contention unsettled the minds of many. While claiming infallibility, each hurled dreadful anathemas at the other. Each excommunicated the other, and denounced him as the son of Belial, anti-Christ, heretic, thief, despot, and traitor. History says that they were not far out of the way in their representations. Parties were formed everywhere. Kings and queens took sides and changed sides as their interests dictated. Thoughtful men saw plainly that some higher power than the pope was necessary to bring unity to the faith.

Huss became an ardent admirer of Wycliffe's writings, and yet he did not recognize in the

Englishman a brother reformer, but the more he read, the more he approved. One of his associate collegians, observing him perusing a work of Wycliffe, remarked that by a decree of the council, that man's soul had been sent to hell. Huss replied, "I only wish that my soul, when it leaves this body, may reach the place where that of this excellent Briton now dwells." Huss had many bosom friends at this time, who were equally outspoken in behalf of Wycliffe and his work, some of whom afterwards became his bitter enemies and accusers. Persecution tried them and found them wanting. At a critical time in the history of the Reformation they abandoned it; but not so with Huss. In reply to one of his former friends who had turned back on account of persecution, Huss said: "Though Wycliffe, or an angel from Heaven, taught otherwise than the Scriptures teach, I could not follow him. I disobey the perverse mandates of my superiors, because Scripture teaches me to obey God rather than man."

S. N. HASKELL.

Chicago Mission.

SINCE our report made to the SIGNS in August last, twenty-five persons have been added to our numbers here. This result has been accomplished wholly by Bible-readings and meetings in private houses. We feel satisfied that the blessing of God attends this manner of getting the truth before the people. Persons become interested in a Bible-reading who have not sufficient interest to read either papers or tracts. Several of our workers have been young ladies who have had little or no experience in any branch of missionary work in the past. The good results upon the workers themselves have not been the least of the blessings which have followed their work.

We have lately divided our Sabbath-school and Sabbath meetings, which were formerly held in our mission hall, into four smaller meetings held at private houses in different parts of the city. This saves traveling long distances on the Sabbath, and gives a better opportunity to invite the neighbors of those who are embracing the truth to attend the meetings. The number in regular attendance was increased from an average of about forty to over seventy by this change. In addition to these regular meetings we have a monthly meeting at our mission hall the last Sabbath afternoon in each month, for the purpose of gathering these various companies together and uniting our interest throughout the city.

There are now quite a number of persons interested, with whom regular readings are being held. Several missionaries of other denominations and persons of real piety and reputation as such are regular readers of the SIGNS, and speak of its precious teachings in commendable terms.

GEO. B. STARR.

THE following is a sample of many letters received from our canvassers and colporters:—

"WINONA, Minn., March 3, 1885.

"DEAR SIGNS: It may be some encouragement to those who wish to enter the field to canvass for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to hear of the progress of the canvassing work in this part of the country.

"I commenced work in Fargo, Cass Co., Dakota, and in a short time took one hundred and sixty orders for 'Sunshine' and the SIGNS, and twenty subscriptions for the paper alone.

"I have just commenced work here, and so far have taken thirty orders for 'Sunshine' and the SIGNS. I would say to all who wish to do a good work for the Master, try your hand at canvassing; it will pay now, and I trust, in eternity."

Let all who desire to engage in canvassing write to the State agents, as they have something to say to them about the SIGNS and "Great Controversy, Vol. IV."

FREELY GIVE.

SHALL I keep my precious jewels?
 Shall I, can I yet withhold
 From that living, loving Saviour,
 Aught of silver or of gold—
 Gold so needed, that *his gospel*
 May be known from sea to sea?
 Can I know Christ's service lacketh,
 Yet forget his "unto me"?

No; I lay them down, my jewels,
 Freely on the altar now;
 Stay, I see a vision passing
 Of a gem-encircled brow;
 Heavenly treasure, worn by Jesus,
 Souls won through my gift outpoured;
 Freely, gladly will I offer
 Jewels thus to crown my Lord.

—Sel.

To Every Man His Work.

In a parable (Mark 13:34), our Lord sets forth what he expected of his servants during his absence in Heaven, where he has gone to prepare a place for us, and get a kingdom. Presently he will return, to reckon with his servants, and set up his kingdom. It is a matter of no little importance for us to look closely and carefully into our charge, and see whether we are faithfully carrying out his will and doing his work. "To every man his work" seems to include us all.

There is a growing tendency on the part of the majority of church members to throw all responsibility and work upon the church officers, and among church officers there is a growing tendency to shoulder the work of the church off onto the pastor, and leave him to enlist such as he may be able to do in the work of the Lord. The bulk of Christians who come within our observation seem to act upon the principle that churches are organized and maintained for the sole purpose of providing them with a comfortable place in which to worship God, when they feel so disposed. For this they are willing to pay a reasonable pew rental to cover running expenses and provide a moderate salary for the minister. Having done this, it is assumed that they have fairly commuted for all work and responsibility.

We are sorry to have to put the point of our pen into these sore spots in our church life; but "necessity is laid upon us." Our observation and information is that but a very small proportion of those church members who have both the time and ability to do so, are engaged in any definite work for the Lord. As for those who say they have no time to do any specific work for Christ, it might be well to ask whether that very fact is not a condemnation of them. What right has any Christian to become so absorbed in his own business that he has no time to attend in any degree to his Master's business, nor take part in any of the active work of his kingdom. Moreover, it cannot be true of any one that, between the home and the store or office, there never occurs an opportunity for doing some work, or leaving some little witness for him who loved us and gave himself for us, and who has chosen us to be a people for his possession, "zealous of good works." Jesus won a soul and started a testimony which stirred a whole city and made many believers, while he was "resting thus on a well," being weary with a fatiguing journey. John 4:6.

Ought we not to learn something of the importance and advantage of utilizing chance opportunities like this, always occurring in the midst of the days? Might there not be a moment spared from the perusal of the morning or evening paper, while on the way from home or store, to say a word for Christ, or at least pass a tract which might commend him? Might not a little of the time consumed in political discussion be diverted in favor of another "Candidate," who is seeking the love and trust of sinners? One of the ablest and most useful Christians in a neighboring large city said, in

answer to the question, "What led you to become a Christian?" "A half-pound pressure on my coat button for five minutes." By this he referred to the fact that, after consulting his lawyer, who was a Christian man, upon some matters of business, the lawyer gently laid hold on his coat button, and kindly asked him about his soul, and commended Christ to him. This seasonable word was used of the Holy Ghost to awaken his soul to its need of salvation. Have you no such opportunity? Some work for Christ is within the reach of every man, woman, and child, who are disciples of his. Else would he not have said, "To every man his work."

What that work is which Christ has for you to do, is a matter which you ought to find out. There are many who say, I do not know what there is for me to do. We are sure that where there is first a readiness of mind and heart to do something for the Master there will not be long wanting a spiritual knowledge as to what there is to be done. Nor is it a mark of healthy condition to wait for your pastor to find something for you to do. If you are in real earnest to serve God and Christ you will be enabled to find your own work. We would despise a young man who stood about with his hands in his pockets saying he did not know what to do. We lose patience almost with some others, who are always wanting some one else to look up work for them. Find something to do. Do the first thing that comes. Do not stop to pick and choose work. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do that with your might. Do it well and honestly and as unto the Lord, and he will give you more and better work to do. But do something; do anything rather than do nothing.

If you can do no more, go and take care of some tired mother's children, and let her go to church. (This if you are a woman.) Go and hunt up some absent and careless member of your church, and find out what "ails him." Go and call upon some sick neighbor and take a flower with you, and give it in the name of Christ. Write a note and invite some neighbor, whom you know does not go to church, to go with you and tell him that you will call for him. Go and make a call upon the last family that came into the church and give them a hearty welcome, and thus make them feel at home. They will thank God and bless you for it. There are a hundred things to do, both small and great, lying at the door of every man and woman in the church, if only they had the eyes to see them; and they would have the eyes to see if they had the heart and will to do after seeing.

Oh! the idlers and drones in Zion. If a man with means should come to church year after year, never hire a seat, and never give a penny to support the gospel, he would be universally regarded as a mean, covetous man. A committee would wait on him and labor with him. But there are hundreds of men and women who come and go to church year after year who never lift their hand to do any service for Christ, and they still retain their standing and the good opinion of their brethren and of the church. It is high time that we should awaken out of our sleep, and every man and woman find their work, and then do the work they find to do.—*Independent*.

GREELY EXPEDITION.—If the sufferings, heroism and endurance of the Greely party, in uninhabited Arctic regions, to get two miles nearer the north pole, had been exhibited in carrying the gospel to the degraded of Africa, or to the cannibals of New Guinea and other islands of the ocean, how much more honorable to humanity, while promotive of the highest well-being of man and the glory of God!—*Missionary Review*.

If a man is faithful to truth, truth will be faithful to him. He need have no fears. His success is a question of time.—*Prof. Phelps*.

THE great need of the church to-day is a competent and faithful ministry. Very much depends upon the character of the men who fill the sacred desk, and who dispense the word of life to the people. To a very great extent they give direction to the efforts of the church, and their influence is largely felt in moulding its spiritual character. An incompetent ministry cannot build up the church, because it lacks the ability—the essential qualifications—necessary to that end. A blind man is not a safe guide. A man who does not know the way himself, cannot safely be trusted to conduct others therein. This is eminently true of the ministry. Paul presents this subject in a very clear light in his second letter to Timothy. He says, "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." In order to be a minister, it is not enough that a man be a good man—a faithful man—he must also be able to teach others, and instruct them in the saving truths of the gospel. No man can impart to others what he does not possess himself—can teach others what he does not know. Admitting the most that can be claimed for the aid of the divine Spirit, it must be admitted that in this as well as in other things, God requires us to employ the talents that he has given us, and he does not directly impart to us knowledge which may be obtained by diligent study and research. If men would be ministers of the gospel, they must qualify themselves by proper application and study for the duties of the sacred office. They must be able to teach others, as the result of having learned themselves. From a child Timothy had known the holy Scriptures, and he had no doubt strictly observed the requirement of the apostle, and given attention to reading and study. But even knowledge is not enough. To this must be added faithfulness. Ministers, above all others, should be faithful men. Not only the interests of time, but the interests of eternity—the salvation of souls—depend upon their labors. By faithfulness they may honor the Master, advance the interests of his cause, and save their own souls and them that hear them. But if they are unfaithful, and bury their talents, or neglect or refuse to labor faithfully in the vineyard of the Master, and the blood of souls is found in their skirts, how fearful their responsibility! We need competent and faithful men in the ministry. The harvest is great and the laborers are few. Let the church pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into his harvest.—*Methodist Recorder*.

THE methods we employ in the attempt to reach and aid those in whose welfare we are interested, have much to do with our success. Expenditure of time and strength is not a test of the worth of service. The teacher who thoughtfully seeks to come into sympathetic relation with the child, and studies, with patient solicitude, to discover the way of access to mind and soul, has found one of the great secrets of helpful influence. In Christian work, the touch of the heart must be guided by a wise consideration of time, person, and circumstances, that is always loyal to the truth. The tactful spirit is indeed a savor of life. "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."—*Sel*.

CHOSEN in the furnace of affliction, the people of God are a sorrowing people. Chastisement is their badge of sonship, and great tribulation their appointed discipline. The pilgrim's pathway has been sprinkled with tears, and from the cradle to the grave his life is one continual struggle. With the poet he can truly say, "No tranquil joys on earth I know;" with the psalmist, "My tears have been my meat day and night."

The Home Circle.

INTERCHANGE.

O FRIEND, if you would only share with me
Your cup of joy that never yet was full,
If you would only break with me your bread,
Nor large, nor light enough to fill your soul,
I think your half-filled cup would soon o'erflow,
Sweet, leavened loaves your scanty food would grow.

For, if I had a well-spring bubbling up,
I still should thirst for drops that you could give;
My heart would ache with all its weight of joy,
Could I not give to you and see you live
A fuller, richer life. 'Tis our great need,
This interchange of thought, and word, and deed.

Even had I only dregs to give to you,
And had you only tears to give to me,
We need each other's bitterness of grief,
To gauge our blessings and less selfish be,
To grow more Christ-like as we learn to weep,
O'er others' buried joys fond vigils keep.

We say, "Our Father"—let us live it more;
God means you as his messenger to me;
He bids me be his minister to you;
Not cheerfully obey? I cannot see
Another way our lives may be complete,
Rounded and ripe, and for the Master meet.

—Miss A. C. Scammell, in *Christian at Work*.

Standing up for God.

"You'll not forget your mother's words to you, Jimmy."

"No, I won't, Aunt Ruth."

"What were they, my boy?"

"Never to go to sleep without saying my prayers, and to read my Bible whenever I have a chance."

"Don't let her words slip away from you, Jimmy, and don't let folks make you feel ashamed of doing what is right. It's easy enough at home where you've always been encouraged, but you'll find it far different when you get amongst folks who don't think as you've been taught to think. And don't you let 'em laugh you out of doing your duty."

With the remembrance of his mother's last words and her newly made grave, Jim thought there was little danger of his failing to keep her words in mind. He was going away from everything he called home and friends, to work in a large factory town, and was fully resolved in his own mind to be steadfast in the performance of his Christian duties. He fully expected to meet with many who might ridicule him, but felt quite sure that he would take a manly stand against it and never yield a jot of his firmly fixed principles.

He found work in a noisy room full of whirling, humming machinery, which at first made him dizzy, in a great mill in which were hundreds of boys, the most of them older and a few younger than himself. They took but little notice of him during the hours of work or at the long table in the boarding-house where he took his meals, for everybody seemed too hungry to spend any time in talking.

But at night, when the tired workers sought their place of rest, Jim found himself in a large room which he was to share with a number of boys of various ages. Rough jokes and loud talk and laughter were going on all about him, led on by one who seemed older than any of the others, a young man whom they called Van. The boy from the country felt a little more in awe of him than of any one else.

And now he felt his courage melting away like snow before the sun of an August day. How could he kneel down and pray before this careless crowd? He could easily tell as he looked from one face to another and listened to coarse remarks, with here and there an oath, that not one of those about him could be in the least degree in sympathy with all he had been taught to hold most dear and sacred.

It was a very trying position for a boy to be

placed in, but if poor Jim had come out of it with triumph, we may be sure he would have rejoiced over it all his life. It may be that his heavenly Master, looking down in tender kindness upon the weak ones of his fold, had seen that our boy needed to be shown how weak were his best resolves.

"How can I?" he said to himself in great perplexity. "If I kneel down now these boys will never let me alone about it. And any way" (how carefully the evil one watches at the door of our poor hearts to slip in his crafty suggestions!) "it's no time to pray in all this noise. It wouldn't do me a bit of good."

"Come, youngster," shouted Van, as he sat on the side of his bed, hoping they would soon be quiet and put out the light, "ain't you goin' to turn in?"

"Yes," said Jim hesitatingly.

"What you waitin' for?" Van eyed him curiously.

"Nothing." Jim undressed himself and lay down, feeling more wretched and lonely than he had even by the side of his mother's grave. When all was quiet, he got up and prayed, but lay down again feeling that he had placed a distance between himself and the Saviour whom he had failed in confessing before men.

When the next night came, he wished he had begun right the night before, for it seemed harder than it had seemed then. But he knelt down as before in the dark after being quite certain that all those about him were sleeping.

Sunday came and he found his way alone to a little church in which he listened to words which seemed to carry him back to the days when it had never been so hard to do right. He had almost begun to excuse himself, but as he now listened his cheek reddened with shame at the thought of his cowardice.

Taking his Bible in his pocket, he took a long walk in the afternoon, not stopping until the green grass was beneath his feet, grand old forest trees arching above his head, and no sound in his ears except the whispering of the soft wind and the song of the birds among the branches. Here he settled the matter for life with his own conscience. With tears of sincere repentance he laid his burden before the mercy-seat, exchanging it for the burden of earnest resolution manfully to fight the good fight of faith, and feeling sure he would never find it so heavy to carry as the other had been.

That night he drew near the tallow candle which lighted the room, and took out his Bible. There was a hush as keen eyes followed his movements, for the sight of any book among them was a novelty. Then a hum arose as one or two peeped over his shoulder.

"Hello, boys, here's a saint among us!"

"Hi! a preacher. Give us a text, parson."

"Can't you let a fellow read, boys?" said Jim, good-naturedly, as hands were held before his face and his book was rudely jerked. "This is a free country, you know."

Stockings were rolled up and flung into his face. Shoes followed, amid a hubbub which grew and increased, and his light was thrown over and put out just as he had caught sight of the dreaded Van coming towards him.

"Quit this fuss, all of you," said Van, angrily relighting the candle. "What you up to any way?"

"It's the parson's doin's. He's gettin' ready to preach. Make ready, boys."

"You're that sort of a chap, are you?" said Van, looking at the book. "And you've been getting up these nights to pray, ain't you?"

"Yes," said Jim, in a low voice.

"I wasn't asleep. I used to be where they did that kind o' thing, and p'raps I'd a' done better if I'd a' stuck to it. Why did you wait till we was all asleep, hey?"

Jim's only answer was in his reddening cheeks. Van sat down on a low bed near him and rested his chin on his hands.

"Seems to me," he went on, "you Christian

folks makes believe you've got the best master there is a-goin', don't you?"

"Yes," said Jim; "and it's true."

"And that he's a-goin' to stand your friend all your life and never go back on you, and no matter what other folks does he'll stick like a burr; and no matter how mean you treat him, he's ready to shake hands and forget it all the moment you're ready to turn 'round and begin again, hey?"

Jim bowed his head.

"And that one o' these days he's a-goin' to take you to his own house and keep you there, and give you all you want, and never turn you out, and that he couldn't do all this till he'd died for you. You see I've heard 'em talk it all over. Is that the kind o' thing you believe in?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, then," Van gave a stamp with his foot to emphasize his words, and spoke slowly, "if anybody was a-goin' to do all that for me. I'd think I was the meanest, sneakekest, cowardliest cur that ever breathed the breath o' life if I wasn't ready to stand up true and honest for him, instid o' crawlin' 'round in the dark when I wanted to have a word with him. What you think o' that, now?"

If Jim's cheeks had tingled before, how they burned now in shame at the criticisms of the rough fellow from whom he had feared things so very different. He looked humbly up at Van.

"If you know so much about him, why don't you take him for your master?" he ventured to ask.

"Why," said Van, with a keen but a good-natured look at his questioner, "I'd rather not do it at all, you see, than do it and then be afraid to own him."

Poor Jim felt that his lesson was a very bitter one, as he crept into bed with the fear in his heart that the course he had taken would always stand in the way of any good which he might try to do to these boys.

"Look a-here, now, all of you," said Van, raising his voice, "you let this chap alone, or you'll settle it with me. Keep it up, Jim. A bad beginning makes a good endin', you know."

This gave Jim a little courage to mix with his firm resolve to wipe out as far as lay in his power the reproach which he had cast on his best friend. Quietly he stood his ground; in time he was able, as Van and others came to inquire more of what was in the Bible he loved, to lead others in the way of life.—*New York Observer*.

HANNAH MORE had a good way of managing tale-bearers. It is said that when she was told anything derogatory to another her invariable reply was, "Come, we will go and ask if it be true." The effect was sometimes ludicrously painful. The tale-bearer was taken aback, stammered out a qualification, or begged that no notice be taken of the statement, but the good lady was inexorable; off she took the scandal-monger to the scandalized, to make inquiry and compare accounts. It is not likely that anybody ever a second time ventured to repeat a gossip story to Hannah More. One would think her method of treatment would be a sure cure for scandal.—*Sel.*

It is a very common thing to protest against the one-man power, in political, or in social, or in religious communities; yet, after all, there is no other power in this world worth mentioning, except the one-man power. The real cause of trouble, when complaint is made of the one-man power, is not that it is *one* man, but that it is *that* man, whose power is felt and recognized, just now and here.—*S. S. Times*.

"THE last word" is the most dangerous of infernal machines, and the husband and wife should no more fight to get it than they would struggle for the possession of a lighted bomb-shell.—*Douglas Jerrold*.

Prose and Poetry of Funerals.

THEY had the poor woman in a fifty-dollar coffin. The beautiful bunch of white roses in the one hand that was exposed did not conceal the marks of toil on her fingers, the calloused places, the distended joints, and the rough skin. Her iron-gray hair was neatly brushed down on the sides of her wrinkled forehead, and the black silk gown, folded so gracefully about her, was full of luster, new, and evidently expensive. There were ten hacks for friends of the family, and the hearse was driven by a man in livery, and had eight costly plumes on top.

"How natural she looked, and what a lovely funeral," said a woman who had known the family.

"How unnatural she looked, and what an inhuman thing that funeral was," said a male cynic who accompanied her.

"Why?"

"Because. There was a good woman, a hard-working wife and mother, who never had a ride in a hack, whose fingers never pressed a flower, and who never wore silk. She didn't have any time and didn't have money. Now look at her. Flowers rare and sweet in her dead hands, lots of carriages following her hearse, and a costly shroud for a body which in life was deemed none too good for a thirty-cent worsted. A queer world this, which ignores fashion in life and falls a blind votary to it in death."

She lay in her lonely coffin,
With her wasted fingers pressed
Over the fair, full roses
They had placed upon her breast;
And the head, that ached no longer,
And the pitiful, haggard face,
They had pillowed with gleaming satin,
Had shaded with costly lace.
Then I said—and my heart was heavy,
Recalling her life forlorn—
"Let none lay a rose on my bosom
Who have planted my life with thorn."

—Sel.

The Four Trials

THERE was once an old monk walking through the forest with a little scholar by his side. The old man suddenly stopped and pointed to four plants close at hand. The first was beginning to peep above the ground; the second had rooted itself pretty well into the earth; the third was a small shrub; whilst the fourth and last was a full-sized tree. Then the old monk said to his young companion:—

"Pull up the first."

The youth easily pulled it up with his fingers.

"Now pull the second."

The youth obeyed, but not so easily.

"And the third."

But the boy had to put forth all his strength, and use both arms, before he succeeded in uprooting it.

"And now," said the master, "try your hand upon the fourth."

But lo! the trunk of the tall tree (grasped in the arms of the youth) scarcely shook its leaves; and the little fellow found it impossible to tear its roots from the earth.

Then the wise old monk explained to his scholar the meaning of the four trials.

"This, my son, is just what happens with our passions. When they are young and weak, one may, by a little watchfulness over self, and the help of a little self-denial, easily tear them up; but if we let them cast their roots deep down into our souls, then no human power can uproot them, the almighty hand of the Creator alone can pluck them out.

For this reason, my child, watch well over the first movements of your soul, and study by acts of virtue to keep your passions well in check."

"TREASURES of wickedness profit nothing; but righteousness delivereth from death."

Health and Temperance.

The Logic of Pain.

THE advantages of pain are most obvious in case of injury. When a joint is sprained, the pain caused by movement in it compels the rest which is essential to repair. If there were no pain produced by motion, the parts would almost certainly be exercised, to the detriment and to the delay of the reparative processes. So too in broken bones, the agony caused by motion is such that a fixed position is maintained for weeks, with the result that the part, being kept in absolute rest, is thus permitted to recover as speedily as may be. The pale, bloodless creature who is the prey of facial neuralgia, or that pain in the intercostal nerves which is felt below the heart (and commonly referred to that organ), is compelled thereby to desist from exhausting efforts, and to seek in rest and good food that relief which is so imperatively demanded by the pain. Here pain is the protector of the system generally, and its expressive though inarticulate tones attract attention to the requirements of the organism. If not attended to, the call becomes more urgent in its reiterated and sharper demands.

Headaches often alone can secure that rest which the brain requires; and the headache of exhaustion is as marked as is that pain at the top of the head which tells us that the brain is insufficiently supplied with blood. The headache after a day of exertion, excitement, or enjoyment, so commonly met with in ladies, secures a day of complete quiet, during which the system regains its tone.—Sel.

Which Liquor Kills Most.

THE superintendent of the Massachusetts reformatory prison has compiled some startling and instructive statistics in regard to the drinking habits of the female prisoners in that institution. It appears that, out of 200 degraded women, 128 began their ruinous career with beer, 37 with whisky, 20 with wine, 8 with gin. Ninety-one began at the house of friends, 64 in saloons. Sixty-seven were Irish, 52 Irish-Americans, 7 negroes. Many of these women began drinking while employed at the mills, in the neighboring dram-shops. Beer had been the most common drink at first, but 181 had got to use whisky as their favorite, and some added chloroform to make the whisky hotter. One strong point brought out in the recitals of these wretched women was the sense of utter hopelessness as long as they were compelled to meet the ceaseless enticements of the bar-room and gin palace.

The statements of these women showed what an appalling amount of tippling goes on even where there are no overt signs of actual intoxication. This tippling is practiced by great numbers of women. What many affect to think a mere harmless indulgence is the prolific source of the more developed evils. In a recent article in the London *Lancet* this noteworthy statement is made:—

"Alongside of all the teetotalism that exists, there is an appalling amount of tippling that does not distinctly intoxicate, but saturates the principal organs and destroys them more quickly than would an occasional debauch."—N. Y. Observer.

A WRITER in a school journal finds a cause for the frequent failure in health of lady teachers, in a poorly supplied lunch-basket. We heartily concur with the following observations on the subject:—

"If many of our lady teachers are not unhealthy, it is due more to good luck than good management. They starve themselves. No

wonder they lose their plumpness, and no wonder their blood is thin, eyes either droopy or vacant. It is almost a miracle that they are not tortured with *tic-douloureux* and neuralgia. Blotched faces, smoked complexions, and shriveled skin, should not be complained of, because they came in obedience to their bidding. All these are the result of starvation.

"The interior of the average teacher's lunch-basket is a curiosity. There are a few cookies, a piece of pie, a slice of cake, a taste of cheese, and an apple or orange. There may be half a dozen pea-nuts and a few caramels, but this is only on special occasions, such as the day after having been at the opera. Anything would grow sickly, thin, and pimply on such a diet. There is scarcely any nourishment in it, particularly of the kind necessary to repair nerve waste. There being no food for the teeth, they become full of bone-colored spots, which sooner or later turn black."

Prohibition Successful.

PROHIBITION is successful wherever it has been fairly tried. The *Toronto Globe*, some five years ago, sent a correspondent to Maine to investigate the result of the Maine law. His letters testified that although known drinkers could get liquor in some places, practically it had made drinking impossible to the great mass of the people, and that a generation was growing up in Maine who knew neither the sight nor taste nor smell of intoxicating beverages. The editor of the *Toledo Blade* (Petroleum V. Nasby) one year ago made personal investigation, with the same result. A member of the Standing Temperance Committee of the Presbyterian General Assembly, about the same time, sought for liquor on sale while on a visit to Maine and could find none.

The following figures are repeated from their place in the article of the Rev. D. C. Babcock, in the *Statesman*, of February 5: "Kansas has a population of 1,000,000; Nebraska, of 453,000. Kansas, in 1884, paid \$64,635.92, tax on spirits, and \$27,672.43 on fermented liquors. Nebraska, during the same time, paid \$1,364,850.38 on spirits, and \$95,725.38 on fermented liquors. In Kansas the share of tax, for each man, woman and child, was 6½ cents on spirits, and 2¼ cents on fermented liquors. In Nebraska the share was \$3.01 on spirits and 21 cents on fermented liquors. In Kansas the total tax on account of the grog-shop was 8¼ cents per head; in Nebraska it was \$3.22 a head. Kansas is under prohibition. Nebraska is one of the highest of high license States." In other words, prohibition under all its disadvantages in Kansas has proved itself thirty-six times as effectual in restraining the traffic as high license has in Nebraska.—*Christian Statesman*.

THE following is from Mrs. E. E. Kellogg's notes on the New Orleans Exposition, which appeared in the March number of *Good Health*:—

"Prominent among the attractions of the Woman's Booth is the beautiful pavilion of the National W. C. T. U., with its comfortable seats and inviting fountain, where the weary and thirsty may find rest and a drink of pure water, the only place upon the grounds, we were told, where nature's beverage is obtainable, though beer gardens and ale stands are plentiful enough. [Since the above was written, the managers have insisted upon the removal of the fountain, and will not allow the ladies of the W. C. T. U. to supply water to visitors, even at their own expense, as the privilege of furnishing drinks has been sold for a liberal sum to beer and whisky venders, who are now in full possession, and virtually prohibit the use of any drink upon the ground, except such as they delight to dispense.]"

"AND eat ye that which is good," Isa. 55:2

Adulteration.

PROBABLY no people in the world suffer so much from adulteration as do the Americans. Our food, our clothing, our medicines—everything we eat, drink, and wear—is so adulterated that we can have no confidence in the purity of anything we buy. There is here and there a State that has laws for the punishment of this crime, but most of the people throughout the nation are unprotected and absolutely at the mercy of unscrupulous manufacturers and unprincipled dealers. The adulteration of articles of food is the worst phase of this lamentable business. Were this confined entirely, as it is only partially, to the introduction of harmless ingredients, it would not be so bad, though even this is an offense against the public and should be treated as such. But when ingredients are used that are positively injurious, as is often the case, the offense becomes criminal in the highest degree, and the perpetrators deserve no consideration. There can be no question as to our being an easy-going and long-suffering people. Were we not so, this condition of things would not be tolerated for a moment. The people have the remedy in their own hands, and the day will come when, provoked to action, they will force their representatives to pass laws for the punishment of this crime. In the meantime we who recognize and deplore the evil should agitate the question, work up public opinion in relation to it, and so hasten the time of our relief. We commend the subject to the *Challenge*, the *Voice*, and all other organs of the Prohibitionists, as quite as worthy of their advocacy as the measure they have most at heart; and we earnestly hope that the press of the country generally will take this subject up, and insist upon proper legislative action. The proposed bill in the Colorado Legislature concerning spurious butter is in the right direction, but we need a general law applying to all adulteration.—*Western Churchman*.

Smoking Again.

It is simply astonishing that people who seem to be gentlemanly in every other respect will consent to turn themselves into a nuisance by means of smoking. True, they sometimes ask, Is smoking offensive? But a man who is a gentleman and not a bore, might about as well expect to get a frank answer to the question, Is my presence disagreeable? Is it not a marvel that on the street a man who would scorn to do an ungentlemanly thing will yet puff away, sending a sickening smoke necessarily into the faces of others, or that he will take a seat at your side when saturated with smoke? Here is the experience of one of our readers:—

A gentleman was expected at my house and was to be with us overnight. He is intelligent, cultured, very interesting in conversation, and a prominent writer for the press. I went to the station to meet him, and as I watched the car platform for his appearance, I was astonished to see him come upon the opposite platform from the smoking-car, with a crowd of men of emphatically the baser sort. I am sure that no other thing but bondage to tobacco would lead that man to choose such companions in traveling. We passed the evening most enjoyably. It was quite late when he went to his room. He had been there but a few moments when an extremely pungent and offensive odor began to fill the house. It was not a good cigar. That would have been comparatively enjoyable. It was more pungent and nauseating than any I ever smelled about a railroad gravel train.

We had to open doors and windows on a cold winter's night to air the house, before we could go to our rooms without nausea, and it was several days before the odor left the house.—*Congregationalist*.

News and Notes.

RELIGIOUS.

—The M. E. Church has three Conferences in India.

—There are twenty-eight Unitarian Churches in Boston.

—Moody expresses himself as opposed to roller skating-rinks.

—The American Province of the Moravian Church numbers 10,181 communicants.

—T. S. Arthur, of the *Home Magazine*, who died recently, was a Swedenborgian.

—The membership of the Brooklyn Tabernacle (Dr. Talmage's) Church is 2,395.

—In Newfoundland there are about 100,000 Protestants, and about 65,000 Catholics.

—There are about 100 Young Men's Christian Associations in the State of New York.

—Mrs. Garfield presided at a missionary meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, a short time ago.

—The Colored Baptists of Kentucky have 45,000 members, and a college with more than 200 students.

—Sunday, March 8, Dr. C. A. Bartol completed the forty-eighth year of his pastorate of the West Church, Boston.

—In Chicago there is one "evangelical" church to 4,117 people; besides this there are forty-six churches not counted evangelical, and fourteen synagogues.

—The *Congregationalist* says: "The church of Christ is on every side yielding to the pressure of a Christless world. It is adopting the customs and habits of a thoroughly worldly society."

—In the Dominion House of Commons, Canada, a bill "for the better observance of the Sabbath" was declared by the Dominion Premier, Sir John A. McDonald, to be beyond their jurisdiction.

—Sixteen years ago the island of Anima—one of the New Hebrides group—was the abode of cannibals. In eight years all had become Christians, and family worship was observed in every house. They contribute about \$50 a year for missions.

—Miss Black, who recently started for China under the auspices of the Women's Missionary Association of the English Presbyterian Church, is the fifth daughter that has gone out from one manse to the foreign field—a fact unique in the history of missions.

—The Young Women's Christian Association of Boston, has erected a building that was estimated to cost \$120,000, for about \$10,000 less than the estimates. Would it not be a fine thing if some of the men's associations would get the women to manage their expenditures?

—The Convocation of the church of England, while recognizing that the Salvation Army has promoted temperance among the masses, condemned it as having "caused religion to be lightly esteemed, and done mischief by confounding religion with unnatural excitement."

SECULAR.

—France is making overtures for peace with China.

—The Bank of England covers three acres of ground.

—President Cleveland was forty-eight years old March 18.

—The British army, volunteer and regular, now numbers 392,200.

—Attorney-General Gray, of Delaware, succeeds Bayard in the U. S. Senate.

—The frost in the ground is nearly three feet deep in the vicinity of Boston.

—James N. Berry, of Arkansas, succeeds Secretary Garland in the U. S. Senate.

—Emperor William, of Germany, was eighty-eight years of age last Sunday.

—The damage caused by the recent dynamite explosions in London was only \$43,000.

—There are about 100,000 Jews in New York City, and they have over thirty synagogues.

—A large portion of the New Jersey capitol building was destroyed by fire March 21.

—Reports from all parts of the country agree that a colder March never had existence. The suffering is terrible.

—The ice in the Mississippi is nearly two feet thick, and is causing gorges and floods.

—The schools in Montreal have been nearly stripped of pupils by an epidemic of measles.

—March 16, the city of Panama was attacked by a party of 250 revolutionists, but they were repulsed.

—The Samoan Parliament has passed an act for the annexation of the Samoan Islands to New Zealand.

—The Oriental Hotel at Seattle, W. T., was burned March 19, and in it two men were burned to death.

—St Joseph's Academy at Emmetsburg, Md., one of the finest Catholic structures in the country, was burned March 20.

—Great damage has been done by a gorge and overflow of the Missouri River at Waverly, Mo., and about a dozen persons have perished.

—The Supreme Court of Iowa has declared the Iowa prohibition law constitutional, and maintains the abatement of saloons as nuisances.

—The president has nominated and the Senate has confirmed Joseph S. Miller, of West Virginia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

—There are over fifty penitentiaries and 2,400 jails in the United States. They contain 50,000 criminals, and their estimated cost is \$500,000,000.

—March 6, an explosion occurred in a colliery in Austrian Silesia, where 147 men were at work. We have not learned whether any at all were rescued.

—An Indian Industrial School is to be opened at Santa Fe, New Mexico, about the first of April. That city has given 100 acres of land to the school.

—Near Reading, Pa., are several communities of Hungarians, who have aroused the hostility of the neighboring farmers by eating up all the dogs they can get hold of.

—A freight train on the Pennsylvania Railroad was derailed near Carpenter's Station, March 16. A brakeman and four tramps were killed and twenty cars demolished.

—Secretary Lamar has ordered the public sale of all horses, carriages and equipments which belong to the Interior Department, except those used for trucking purposes.

—Further severe shocks of earthquake were felt last week at Granada, Loje, and Alhama, Spain. A number of houses in those places were destroyed, and several lives lost.

—March 18, 217 miners were shut in by an explosion of fire-damp in a colliery at Camphausen, near Saarbruck, in Rhenish Prussia. Only seventeen were taken out alive.

—A terrific explosion occurred in the Usworth Colliery at Sunderland, England, on the 3d inst. Twenty-seven persons were killed. The explosion is said to have been caused by fire-damp.

—Iron bridges are sent from this country to Brazil now at the rate of about four a month. They are shipped in sections, and when they reach Brazil, are put up in place of wooden bridges on the Brazilian highways.

—Large quantities of barbed wire for fencing purposes are now being shipped from this country to Brazil and to Central America. A short time ago a vessel sailed for Honduras with barbed wire as one-third of her cargo.

—During December, January, and February, five persons died in Otsego Co., N. Y., who were one hundred years old and upward. All but one died of pneumonia, and all were in good health till a short time before death.

—In the United States, during the month of February there were 203 fires, each causing a loss of \$10,000 or over, the total loss being \$10,000,000. For the two months of January and February the loss was \$18,500,000.

—A horse named "Old Turk," died at the county farm, Richmond County, N. Y., March 6, that was within a few days of being fifty years old. His color was bay when he was young, but turned white as snow in his old age.

—The whisky-sellers of Iowa, are sending up a most doleful howl at the late decision of the Supreme Court. They claim that the enforcement of prohibition in that State has destroyed \$16,000,000 of their property, and the industry by which thousands of laborers and their families were supported, has fallen to ruin under the hand of fanaticism. Good. We only wish the heaven would hasten to work its way to every part of the world, and starve out the vile traffic.

—The Lick Trustees have received a letter from the East stating that a perfect crown-glass disc for the great telescope at Mount Hamilton, California, has at last been made. More than twenty of such attempts have hitherto proved unsuccessful.

—Mrs. E. B. Crocker, of California, has given to the California Museum Association, a building and contents, valued at nearly \$300,000, to be used for "science, art collections, and schools," provided the association will raise \$100,000 for an endowment fund.

—A petition against woman suffrage, numerous signed by the most fashionable and wealthy women of New York City, has been presented to the State Senate. "They told Senator Otis that it seemed to them that every year the women suffragists get more and more attention, simply because they are persistent, while the great mass of women have refrained from making themselves heard."

—It has been discovered, says the *Paper World*, that in order to get the benefit of the low rate of postage in the United States, Canadian merchants and manufacturers who have a very large correspondence, send their letters in large bundles by express to the nearest post-office in the United States, where they are mailed at two-cent letter rate, whereas they would have to pay three cents if mailed in Canada.

Appointments.

OAKLAND.—House of worship, northeast corner of Clay and Thirteenth Streets. Sabbath-school every Sabbath at 9:30 A. M. Preaching at 11 A. M. Prayer and missionary meeting every Tuesday evening at 7:00. Seats free. Preaching every Sunday evening at 7:30.

SAN FRANCISCO.—House of worship, 912 Laguna Street, between McAllister and Tyler Streets. Sabbath-school every Sabbath at 9:45 A. M. Preaching at 11 A. M. Prayer and missionary meeting every Wednesday evening at 7:45. Preaching every Sunday evening at 7:30. Mission Reading-rooms at the church.

California T. and M. Society.

THE State Quarterly Meeting of the California T. and M. Society will be held in connection with the General Meeting in Oakland, April 24-30, 1885. The President, Elder Haskell, will be present at this meeting, and important matters in connection with the missionary work, will be considered. It is very desirable that the districts be generally represented.

WM. INGS, *Vice-Pres.*

Annual Meeting.

THE regular annual meeting of the society of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Oakland, will be held at the house of worship, on Wednesday, April 1, 1885, at 7:30 o'clock P. M., for the purpose of electing a board of five trustees, and transacting such other business as may come before the meeting. A general attendance will be necessary, in order that the proceedings may be in accordance with the law. By order of the President,

W. N. GLENN, *Sec'y.*

Take Notice.

I WISH to call the attention of all isolated Seventh-day Adventists in Oregon or Washington Territory, east of the Cascade Mountains, to the fact that I am now located in the Upper Columbia Conference, and expect to remain here. I wish to labor in the most favorable places. In order to assist me in the proper selection of fields, I request all who know of favorable openings in their vicinity to write me at Walla Walla, W. T. Please give me all particulars that you think will help me in deciding where to direct my efforts, to the best advantage.

H. W. DECKER.

Obituary.

BELL.—Died, at Los Angeles, Cal., March 17, 1885, of spinal disease, Georgiana, infant daughter of Brother and Sister Bell, aged nearly six months. The bereaved parents expect to meet their lost one in the glorious resurrection morn soon to dawn. I spoke words of comfort from Jer. 31:15-17.

H. A. ST. JOHN.

Publishers' Department.

OUR GENERAL AGENTS.

Michigan—Miss Hattie House, care *Review and Herald*, Battle Creek, Mich.

New England—Mrs. E. T. Palmer, N. E. Tract Repository, South Lancaster, Mass.

North Pacific—Mrs. C. L. Boyd, East Portland, Oregon.

England—*The Present Truth*, 72 Heneage Street, Great Grimsby, Eng.

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Timely Notice.

ON May 1 we will drop from our subscription lists all names whose time expires previous to that date. All subscriptions are payable in advance. Those whose time runs out in April or May will please renew immediately and thus prevent the liability of missing any copy of the paper. Some have considered it a privilege to help the cause by paying two or three years in advance. All such favors will be thankfully received.

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The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, MARCH 26, 1885.

WILL the Ladies' Silk Culture Society of California please give us its address?

S. B., Myrtle Creek, Oregon.—If you will observe the marginal reference in the inscription of Psalms 73, you will see that there is ground for attributing that psalm to David.

To J. C. F.—Gesenius does not give "holy" as a definition of the word so rendered in Ps. 86:2. He defines it thus: "1. Kind, merciful, benevolent. 2. Pious towards God, godly. 3. Of God, kind, merciful, gracious." The verbal root he defines: "To be zealous towards any one, *i. e.*, to feel desire, kindness, love towards him." Dr. Clarke speaks thus on the text: "For I am holy] *ki chasid ani*, for I am merciful. The spirit of this prayer is,

"That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me."

Though Gesenius does not give "holy" as a definition of the original, we have no doubt, from its use in the Scriptures, that it was sometimes construed to mean so. Yet its *usual* use is in the sense of "merciful," or pious, or "godly." See Jer. 3:12, for the same phrase—"I am merciful." Your friend has no just ground for his claim on the text in question.

Prepare Your Proxies.

ALL should bear in mind that our Association meeting and *general rally* for the whole State will be held in Oakland, April 24, continuing one week. Stockholders in the Publishing Association who cannot attend the meeting must see that their stock is represented by proxy. Do not forget this; do not fail to attend to it.

Quarterly Meetings.

THE time for the quarterly meetings is drawing near. These should be well attended in California this spring. Our general meetings come in April. At the meeting in Oakland the wants of the cause in the whole State will be considered, and arrangements made for labor the coming season. Every church in the State should be well represented, and these representatives should come prepared to state clearly the condition and wants of the cause in their several localities.

Remember that our general meetings will be: Healdsburg, April 16, one week; Oakland, April 24, one week; College annual meeting, May 1.

We trust there will be a general attendance at the Healdsburg meeting of all the friends in Sonoma County, and that section of country. They who cannot remain longer, please come expecting to remain from the 17th to the 20th.

Missionary Workers.

IT is a matter of great importance that our missionary workers in all the societies, improve every opportunity to *learn how* to write good letters. This is a talent to be cultivated; just as any other work is perfected by education and practice. We say they should learn how, for a good-spirited, well-written letter is more likely to bring a response than one of the opposite character. And it is very important that letters be written to those to whom the SIGNS is sent. We think there must be a failure with many in this respect, as the office receives a large number of postmaster's cards, notifying us that the papers sent to the persons named refuse to take them out of the office. Of course the information is of no avail, for we cannot know by whom they are sent. A brief note of explanation to the person himself might induce him to take and read them.

"The Atonement."

THE sale of this book has been quite good, yet not good enough to meet the wants of the people. We believe that the manner in which the subject is introduced in Part One is well calculated to arrest the attention of intelligent unbelievers. Brother J. N. Andrews said of the smaller edition that it was the best defense of the law, and the strongest argument against antinomianism that had ever been published by the Seventh-day Adventists. The present edition is not only enlarged but otherwise improved. It should be circulated everywhere.

Health Retreat, St. Helena.

It is decided to open the Health Retreat, at Crystal Springs, St. Helena, Cal., for summer boarders, as in years previous. Arrangements are being made to have it opened about the 10th of May.

We wish our people to understand that we have been neither disinterested nor idle in regard to the interests of the Retreat and to its opening. Preparations have been in progress for some time past looking toward its being *permanently opened for patients*; and the time is not far distant when there will be an efficient corps of physicians and workers to accommodate its patrons, and to insure its success as a health retreat. It has natural advantages almost unequalled. The water is excellent and abundant, and brought into all parts of the house without expense, as the spring lies some distance above the building. We do not believe there is another location in the State so near our large cities, with a climate so good, water so pure, and scenery so lovely, as the Health Retreat at Crystal Springs. We hope for good days for this institution in the future.

Upper Columbia Camp-Meeting.

THE readers of last week's paper saw, by Elder Loughborough's report, that it has been determined to have a course of Bible instruction, or Institute, in Milton, Oregon, commencing on First-day, May 24, ten days before the beginning of the camp-meeting in the same place. It is our opinion that this will be the means of adding greatly to the interest and profit of the camp-meeting, and that its beneficial influence will be felt in the Conference in this year, and in future years.

We have not yet heard from the North Pacific Conference, but we know that they need the same work at their camp-meeting. And we hope they may find it possible to continue the class instruction after the camp-meetings commence. In this way all who attend the meeting may have their interest aroused on the subject, and better appreciate the work which is being done in the school. We wish that such work could be done in every church, for thereby all the people would "be established in the present truth." 2 Pet. 1:12.

Old Testament in Sabbath-Schools.

THE article in our Sabbath-school department, by Dr. Green, of Princeton College, is copied from the *Old Testament Student*, of which we have before spoken, edited by Prof. Harper, Morgan Park (Chicago), Ill. The *Student* for March contains a "Symposium" on this subject, of which Dr. Green's article is one. We shall copy others hereafter.

There is no man living who is doing more in behalf of Old Testament study, both in the original and in translations, than Dr. Harper. His school of Hebrew is already of world-wide reputation, and the *Student* is a valuable help in the work. If any friend in this State wishes to examine the *Student*, or to obtain information in regard to the school, we shall be pleased to accommodate them as far as lies in our power. The instruction is by correspondence, and the language is studied at the homes of the pupils.

Short Musical Notes.

BY this title we do not speak of the *lang syne* "demisemiquavers," but of editorial notes on the subject of music. A title more expressive might, perhaps, have been found, but this serves our purpose well, and we adopt it.

Our Hymn Book says: "The music introduced into this book will greatly promote uniformity and correctness in singing."—*Preface, page iv.* But music will no more promote uniformity and correctness in singing, unless the singers learn the music and conform to its requirements, than spectacles will insure correctness in reading, in those who cannot read without them. We have long and deeply regretted that our people who use our hymn book, "Spiritual Songs," pay so little respect to the music which it contains. We do not speak of those who never learned music, and cannot read the notes; but of those who can read them, but do not make proper use of the knowledge they possess.

We often hear much said of the deficiencies of the book. Well, the book is not large, but it contains much good music; and, we are forced to say, *more than is used.* In common metres we shall always miss Ortonville, and some of that stamp; but in our attendance of meetings of Seventh-day Adventists we have never heard Howard sung by them, and Litchfield (we think) but once. The former is a splendid piece for a large class of hymns; and the latter is one of Lowell Mason's sweetest church tunes. Why they are so neglected we do not know. (The want of a *sharp* in the upper treble staff, and of a *tie* in the lower ditto, of Litchfield, will be so readily detected that they will present no difficulty to the singer.) Denfield is quite as good as many others which are frequently used; yet it is almost utterly neglected. Dundee is a beautiful Scottish melody, but seldom used. For a certain class of tunes Patmos is much more appropriate as a chanting piece than Harvey's Chant, yet who uses it? And for social meetings, or on any occasion where a heavier tune would be out of place, Woodland is worthy of more attention than it receives.

We could name a score of excellent "C. M." tunes which we would much like to find there; but while so many good tunes lie on its pages unused, there should be no complaints of a scarcity. True some of these are old; but they are good for long service yet. And old as they are, they are so new to some of our congregations that when we have requested them to sing them, they frankly said they could not! Yet the same congregations would sing almost every piece in "Pure Gold," and many other books of that class. Of long and short metres there is not so great neglect, yet we could point out some errors in regard to these.

Now we ask all our friends who can "read notes," to read *this one* and think of it till we give them "the second."

ONE "competent juror" was recently found in a court in San Francisco. He was a man who had never heard of the Sharon divorce trial. Happy man; "where ignorance is bliss," &c.

"NO PHYSICIAN ever weighed out medicine with half so much exactness and care as God weighs out to us every trial. Not one grain too much does he ever permit to be put in the scale."—*Cecil.*

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