

THE Signs of the Times

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

VOLUME 14.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, SIXTH-DAY, DECEMBER 21, 1888.

NUMBER 49.

The Signs of the Times.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, FOR THE
International Tract and Missionary Society.

(For terms, etc., see last page.)

Entered at the Post-Office in Oakland.

"A LITTLE WHILE."

A LITTLE while, our fightings shall be over;
A little while, our tears be wiped away;
A little while, the presence of Jehovah
Shall turn our darkness into Heaven's bright day.

A little while, the fears that oft surround us
Shall to the memories of the past belong;
A little while, the love that sought and found us
Shall change our weeping into Heaven's glad song.

A little while! His presence goes before us,
A fire by night, a shadowy cloud by day;
His banner, love inscribed, is floating o'er us,
His arm almighty is our strength and stay!

A little while to live and work for Jesus,
To gather with the reapers till he come;
Oh, let not faithless fears and doubtings seize us—
A little while, and then the harvest-home!

A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—
The wished-for dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Saviour, make our spirit's vision clearer,
And guide, oh, guide us in the shining way.

A little while! Oh, blessed expectation!
A little while! "Lord, tarry not," we cry;
Our hearts up leap in fond anticipation;
Rejoice! "The coming of the Lord is nigh!"
—Selected.

General Articles.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

WAS there ever suffering and sorrow like that endured by the dying Saviour! It was the sense of his Father's displeasure which made his cup so bitter. It was not bodily suffering which so quickly ended the life of Christ upon the cross. It was the crushing weight of the sins of the world, and a sense of his Father's wrath, that broke his heart. The Father's glory and sustaining presence had left him, and despair pressed its crushing weight of darkness upon him, and forced from his pale and quivering lips the anguished cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Jesus had united with the Father in making the world. Amid the agonizing sufferings of the Son of God, blind and deluded men

alone remained unfeeling. The chief priests and elders reviled God's dear Son while in his expiring agony. Yet inanimate nature groaned in sympathy with her bleeding, dying Author. The earth trembled. The sun refused to behold the scene. The heavens gathered blackness. Angels witnessed the scene of suffering until they could look on no longer, and then hid their faces from the horrid sight. Christ is in despair! He is dying! His Father's approving smile is removed, and angels are not permitted to lighten the gloom of the terrible hour. They can only behold in amazement their loved Commander suffering the penalty of man's transgression of the Father's law.

Even doubts assailed the dying Son of God. He could not see through the portals of the tomb. Bright hope did not present to him his coming forth from the tomb a conqueror, and his Father's acceptance of his sacrifice. The sin of the world, with all its terribleness, was felt to the utmost by the Son of God. The displeasure of the Father for sin, and its penalty, which was death, were all that he could realize through this amazing darkness. He was tempted to fear that sin was so offensive in the sight of his Father that he could not be reconciled to his Son. The fierce temptation that his own Father had forever left him, caused that piercing cry from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Christ felt much as sinners will feel when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them. Black despair like the pall of death will gather about their guilty souls, and then they will realize to the fullest extent the sinfulness of sin. Salvation has been purchased for them by the suffering and death of the Son of God. It might be theirs if they would accept of it willingly, gladly; but none are compelled to yield obedience to the law of God. If they refuse the heavenly benefit, if they choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they can have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, which is the wrath of God and eternal death. They will be forever separated from the presence of Jesus, whose sacrifice they have despised. They will have lost a life of happiness, and sacrificed eternal glory for the pleasures of sin for a season.

Faith and hope trembled in the expiring

agonies of Christ, because God had removed the assurance he had heretofore given his beloved Son of his approbation and acceptance. The Redeemer of the world then relied upon the evidences which had hitherto strengthened him, that his Father accepted his labors and was pleased with his work. In his dying agony, as he yielded up his precious life, he had by faith alone to trust in Him whom it had ever been his joy to obey. He was not cheered with clear, bright rays of hope on the right hand nor on the left. All was enshrouded in oppressive gloom. Amid the awful darkness which was felt even by sympathizing nature, the Redeemer drained the mysterious cup even to its dregs. Denied even bright hope and confidence in the triumph which he was very soon to experience, he cried with a loud voice, "Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit." He was acquainted with the character of his Father, his justice, his mercy, and great love. In submission he dropped into the hands of his Father. Amid the convulsions of nature were heard by the amazed spectators the dying words of the Man of Calvary, "It is finished."

Nature sympathized with the sufferings of its Author. The heaving earth, the rent rocks, and the terrific darkness, proclaimed that it was the Son of God that died. There was a mighty earthquake. The vail of the temple was rent in twain. Terror seized the executioners and spectators as they beheld the sun veiled in darkness, and felt the earth shake beneath them, and saw and heard the rending of the rocks. The mocking and jeering of the chief priests and elders was hushed as Christ commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. The astonished throng began to withdraw, and grope their way in the darkness to the city. They smote upon their breasts as they went, and in terror, speaking scarcely above a whisper, said among themselves, "It is an innocent person that has been murdered. What if, indeed, he is, as he asserted, the Son of God?"

Jesus did not yield up his life till he had accomplished the work which he came to do, and exclaimed with his departing breath, "It is finished!" Satan was then defeated. He knew that his kingdom was lost. Angels rejoiced as the words were uttered, "It is finished." The great plan of redemption, which

was dependent on the death of Christ, had been thus far carried out. And there was joy in Heaven that the sons of Adam could, through a life of obedience, be finally exalted to the throne of God. Oh, what love! what amazing love! that brought the Son of God to earth to be made sin for us, that we might be reconciled to God, and elevated to a life with him in his mansions in glory. And oh! what is man that such a price should be paid for his redemption?

When men and women can more fully comprehend the magnitude of the great sacrifice which was made by the Majesty of Heaven in dying in man's stead, then will the plan of salvation be magnified, and reflections of Calvary will awaken sacred and living emotions in the Christian's heart. Praises to God and the Lamb will be in their hearts and upon their lips. Pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the hearts that keep fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary. This world will appear of but little value to those who appreciate the great price of man's redemption.

All the riches of the world are not of sufficient value to redeem one perishing soul. Who can measure the love Christ felt for a lost world, as he hung upon the cross, suffering for the sins of guilty men? This love was immeasurable, infinite.

Christ has shown that his love was stronger than death. Even when suffering the most fearful conflicts with the powers of darkness, his love for perishing sinners increased. He endured the hidings of his Father's countenance, until he was led to exclaim in the bitterness of his soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" His arm brought salvation. The price was paid to purchase the redemption of man, when, in the last soul struggle, the blessed words were uttered, which seemed to resound through creation, "It is finished."

Many who profess to be Christians become excited over worldly enterprises, and their interest is awakened for new and exciting amusements, while they are cold-hearted, and appear as if frozen in the cause of God. But here is a theme, poor formalist, which is of sufficient importance to excite you. Eternal interests are here involved. The scenes of Calvary call for the deepest emotions. Upon this subject you will be excusable if you manifest enthusiasm. That Christ, so excellent, so innocent, should suffer such a painful death, bearing the weight of the sins of the world, our thoughts and imagination can never fully reach, so that we can comprehend the length, the breadth, the height, and the depth, of such amazing love. The contemplation of the matchless love of the Saviour should fill and absorb the mind, touch and melt the soul, refine and elevate the affections, and completely transform the whole character. The language of the apostle is, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." And we may look toward Calvary, and also exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I

unto the world." Considering at what an immense cost our salvation has been purchased, what will be the portion of those who neglect so great salvation? What will be the punishment of those who profess to be followers of Christ yet fail to bow in humble obedience to the claims of their Redeemer, and who do not take the cross, as humble disciples of Christ?

Some have limited views of the atonement. They think that Christ suffered only a small portion of the penalty of the law of God, and that while the wrath of God was felt by his dear Son, they suppose that he had, through all his painful sufferings, the evidence of his Father's love and acceptance, and that the portals of the tomb before him were illuminated with bright hope. Here is a great mistake. Christ's keenest anguish was a sense of his Father's displeasure. His mental agony because of this was of such intensity that man can have but faint conception of it.

With many the history of the humiliation and sacrifice of our divine Lord does not stir the soul and affect the life any more, nor awaken deeper interest, than to read of the death of the martyrs of Jesus. Many have suffered death by slow tortures. Others have suffered death by crucifixion. In what does the death of God's dear Son differ from these? It is true he died upon the cross a most cruel death; yet others for his dear sake have suffered equally, as far as bodily torture is concerned. Why, then, was the suffering of Christ more dreadful than that of other persons who have yielded their lives for his sake? If the sufferings of Christ consisted in physical pain alone, then his death was no more painful than that of some of the martyrs.

But bodily pain was only a small part of the agony of God's dear Son. The sins of the world were upon him, and also the sense of his Father's wrath as he suffered the penalty of the law. It was these that crushed his divine soul. It was the hiding of his Father's face, a sense that his own dear Father had forsaken him, which brought despair. The separation that sin makes between God and man was fully realized and keenly felt by the innocent, suffering Man of Calvary. He was oppressed by the powers of darkness. He had not one ray of light to brighten the future. And he was struggling with the power of Satan, who was declaring that Christ was in his hands, and that he was superior in strength to the Son of God, that God had disowned his Son, and that he was no longer in the favor of God any more than himself. If he was indeed still in favor with God, why need he die? God could save him from death.

Christ yielded not in the least degree to the torturing foe, even in his bitterest anguish. Legions of evil angels were all about the Son of God, yet the holy angels were bidden not to break their ranks and engage in conflict with the taunting, reviling foe. Heavenly angels were not permitted to minister unto the anguished spirit of the Son of God. It was in this terrible hour of darkness, the face of his Father hidden, legions of evil angels enshrouding him, the sins of the world upon

him, that the words were wrenched from his lips, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

We should take larger, broader, and deeper views of the life, sufferings, and death of God's dear Son. When the atonement is viewed correctly, the salvation of souls will be felt to be of infinite value. In comparison with the enterprise of securing everlasting life, every other sinks into insignificance. But how have the counsels of the Saviour been despised by many. The heart's devotions have been to the world, and selfish interests have closed the door against the Son of God. Hollow hypocrisy and pride, selfishness and gain, envy, malice, and passion, have so filled the hearts of many that Christ can have no room.

He was eternally rich, "yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." He was clothed with light and glory, surrounded with hosts of heavenly angels awaiting to execute his commands. Yet he put on our nature, and came to sojourn among sinful men. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Here is love that no language can express. Our souls should be enlivened, elevated, and enraptured with the theme of the love of the Father and the Son. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." The followers of Christ should learn here to reflect back in some degree that mysterious love preparatory to joining all the redeemed in ascribing "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

CHARACTER.

In order to show character in the face, one must be willing to have lines breaking the surface of the countenance. One cannot have a song or a story written on paper, and yet have the paper as free from marks as before. Yet there are persons who actually seek to obliterate from their faces the signs of the little character they possess. They employ cosmetics for the purpose of making their countenances smooth and fair at the cost of destroying the proofs of any gain and growth on their part in the direction of true and noble beings. And there are photographers who will finish up a negative by filling in the lines of character, so that the picture of a real man or of a real woman is reduced to the semblance of a second-rate wax figure in a hair-dresser's window. A fair face is attractive in its way, but it is not to be compared with a fair fame. And when the lines of age or of care are in a face, the attempt to secure a fair face, or a picture of that face as if it were fair, must be at the cost of the fair name which character gives to one who has lived to a purpose, and who has gained the results of worthy living. Well-marked lines in the face are as precious as well-written lines in manuscript. It is not to the credit of any man when it can be said of him that the paper on which he writes is worth more without his writing than with it. —*S. S. Times.*

WHAT IS SELF-DENIAL?

My mind has been directed to the subject of self-denial, and I am convinced that the common idea of it is entirely wrong. My mind was directed to it in the following manner. I found by the teachings of our blessed Saviour, that self-denial was a condition of discipleship. I found also by comparing my experience with the common idea of it, that I knew nothing about it, and I inevitably came to the conclusion that either the common idea of it was wrong, or I was not a Christian.

As I was traveling from place to place, I asked ministers and Christians what they considered as a correct definition of self-denial. I universally received this idea: When a Christian sees anything after which his heart longs, right it may be in itself, yet under present circumstances forbidden by the spirit of the gospel, a struggle ensues in the mind. If he decides on the side of the gospel, and foregoes the pleasure of the thing thus forbidden, it is self-denial.

Now, if this idea is correct, I know nothing about it, and have known nothing about it for more than four years. For more than four years whenever I have seen duty or the will of God, my whole soul has risen right up to do it; and whenever I have seen anything incompatible with the spirit of the gospel, I have not had a single desire for it any more than if the thing was not in existence.

When God called me to go to Africa, my whole soul rose up to go. A blast and a mildew seemed to be spread over everything here. I saw no beauty in anything unless it was in some way connected with my duty.

I have heard of the peculiar emotions that missionaries have felt as they have looked upon their native land for the last time. I stood upon the deck of the vessel and saw my native hills sink—sink until they were entirely hidden behind the mass of water that lay between us, with no other emotion than that of joy—joy that my heavenly Father had counted me worthy to carry the lamp of life to those who sat in the region and shadow of death.

While laboring in Africa, midst all the trials incident to missionary life, I never had one longing desire after home or the privileges of civilization. If the common acceptance of the term is correct, it is no self-denial for me to return to that country. It is my pleasure and delight.

You may be ready to ask what I consider self-denial to be. I think self-denial is a state of mind in which the whole heart, under every circumstance and on every occasion, prefers Christ and duty to selfish gratification. It is a state of mind in which every gratification which is seen to conflict with the will of Christ is at once relinquished, without even the heart longing after it.

Faith is a state of mind, and yet there are particular acts of faith. In the same way, self-denial is a state of mind, and yet there are such things as particular acts of self-denial.

If this view of the subject is correct, it

seems to me that many professors of religion know very little about it, and what they call self-denial is but a yoke of bondage which is entirely incompatible with the spirit of the gospel.—*William Raymond.*

CUMBERED.

CHRIST never asks of us such busy labor
As leaves no time for resting at his feet;
The waiting attitude of expectation
He oftentimes counts a service most complete.

He sometimes wants our ear—our rapt attention,
That he some sweetest secret may impart;
'Tis always in the time of deepest silence
That heart finds deepest fellowship with heart.

We sometimes wonder why our Lord doth place us
Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure,
That nothing we call work can find an entrance;
There's only room to suffer—to endure.

Well, God loves patience! Souls that dwell in stillness,
Doing the little things or resting quiet,
May just as perfectly fulfill their mission,
Be just as useful in the Father's sight,

As they who grapple with some giant evil,
Clearing a path that every eye may see!
Our Saviour cares for cheerful acquiescence
Rather than for a busy ministry.

And yet he does love service, where 'tis given
By grateful love that clothes itself in deed;
But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty,
Be sure to such he gives but little heed.

Then seek to please him, whatso'er he bids thee,
Whether to do—to suffer—to lie still,
'Twill matter little by what path he leads us,
If in it all we seek to do his will.

—*Christian at Work.*

TESTS OF LOVE.

PAUL writing to the Romans says, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." He is not at all uncertain that such was the case, but speaks with assurance, as if he were positive and had no doubt about it. Paul is but the type of the true Christian, and it is our privilege to be as sure in regard to our condition as he was, and to know that we have the love of God in our hearts. The question is, How did Paul know? and, How can we know that we have that love? Many say we can only tell because we feel it; we know, say they, that we have it by the peculiar emotions it produces in us.

But though the love of God produces happiness, a feeling of happiness cannot be taken as a sign that one is imbued with that love, for sometimes a true servant of God is far from feeling happy. Christ at times said that he was exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and he is called the Man of sorrows, while on the other hand Belshazzar, no doubt, felt very happy during his impious feast, but he was weighed in the balance and found wanting. Paul says, "We walk by faith, not by sight"—nor by hearing, or feeling, or any of the senses. How, then, can we know that we have the love of God? Simply by our lives. Christ says, "By their fruits ye shall know them," or as Paul said in this connection, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," and all who have that Holy Spirit will manifest its fruits in their lives. Gal. 5: 22-25. Besides this the Bible gives us some very simple rules by which we may know if we are imbued with the love of Christ.

1. *If we love God we will obey him.* We will keep his commandments, for this is the only way we poor fallen creatures have of showing our love and gratitude to him. Said Christ to his disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John, the apostle of love, tells us, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him." 1 John 2: 4, 5. And again: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." This is a sure test, and one always to be relied on. When men make great professions of love to God, and yet show a spirit of hatred to his law, it is a sure sign that they are not in the path of love, and Christ says to them as he did to the Jews, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."

2. *Those who have the love of God, love one another.* On this point John says, "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." 1 John 4: 20, 21. Those who feel hard and unforgiving towards any may be sure that they have not the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. Those who have this love will not feel animosity against even those who do them great injury, but will follow the teaching of Jesus, who said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" If we only love those that are good to us, we do no more than the rest of humanity or the brute creation, and thus show that we are actuated by no higher power; but if we love those who are not good to us, we demonstrate to the world that we are controlled by a higher motive than what humanity naturally has; thus we show that we have the love of God.

3. *Those who love God think of him.* Said Christ, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." We all know that this is true. The one who is most dear to us is the one who is uppermost in our thoughts; so if we love God we will love to meditate on him and his goodness, and to pray to him. This is not natural for us, for man naturally hates to think of God; it is distasteful to him and troubles him, so before we can thus think of God a change must have taken place in us, that is, we must have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. Reader, what is your main line of thought? If you love God with all your heart, he will be your constant theme of meditation. David, speaking of the godly, said, "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

FRANK HOPE.

SAYING AND DOING.

SOMETIMES a word weighs a ton. Sometimes it is not worth a farthing. Luther's majestic and memorable words, "Here I stand; I cannot change, God help me," when they were pronounced in the Imperial Diet, aroused all Europe. They were half battles. A simple yes or no often decides one's destiny.

Christ commanded open confession of him as one evi- lence of heart loyalty. Yet his divine wisdom detected the utter cheapness of a confession that was not proved genuine by the daily conduct. If he knew the worth of an honest word of profession, he also knew the worthlessness of a mere promise which the utterer never intended to redeem. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." If there is any one passage above all others which a young convert should write in his diary, on the day of his admission into the church of Christ, it is this very text. For under the constant pressure to "confess Christ before the world," and to "open his lips for Jesus," the new convert is in danger of thinking that all that is required of him is a service of the lips. He soon finds words to be cheap and easy. To speak in a meeting becomes no harder a task than to eat his dinner. He may even feed his self-conceit on the praise which his fluent utterances bring to him. His religion runs into words—words—words. That this has proved a snare and a peril to thousands, we pastors know too well.

What Jesus demands of his followers is that their confession should crystallize into conduct. The highest evidence of piety is to do God's will. Saying is good, doing is infinitely better. Faith saves; but faith is not a mere sentiment. It is far deeper than a gracious emotion. It is a stalwart principle, with vigor in every one of its ten fingers, and a prodigious grip and momentum in its right arm. It is not an indolent trust, but an active power in the renewed soul. Faith works by love. Faith overcomes the world; faith removes mountains. Evermore is it set forth in God's word, as a living, acting, burden-bearing, duty-doing principle, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And keeping a commandment of Jesus sometimes costs the carrying of a heavy load; sometimes the conquest of an ugly temper; sometimes the performance of a painful duty; sometimes the endurance of a hail-storm of reproach; sometimes the surrender of what pride clings to with terrible tenacity. Doing Christ's will sent Henry Martyn to die in Persia, and David Brainard to spend his rich, generous life amid the wigwams of savages. Doing Christ's will sometimes makes a rich man become poor, rather than dishonor his religion. Doing Christ's will leads to sacrifices that cut deep. Doing Christ's will often puts a man under the ban of unpopularity, and a woman under the frowns of fashion. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take

up his cross daily, and follow me;" for so shall he be my disciple.

These are times of cheap discipleship. There is a prodigious danger that piety may evaporate into prayer-meeting talks and singing of seraphic hymns. Even Heaven is pictured too often as a sort of celestial "picnic," beneath waving trees and beside sparkling waters. The soul is thus bribed by the promise of enjoyment here and endless raptures hereafter.

Oh, how different is Christ's picture of the Christian life, with its stern duties, its exalted joys, its conflicts, and its well-won crowns! Holiness is not a devout emotion. It is the constant, humble, sincere doing of God's will. "As obedient children, . . . be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

He that heareth Christ's commands and doeth them is the man who buildeth his eternal hopes on a rock. The winds of opposition smite against him; the rains of unjust reproach beat upon him; the currents of selfishness and sin strike him steadily; but he moves not from his sure foundation. He is built on Christ; his life is the daily adding of grace to grace, of deed to deed, of strength to strength, until he is changed into Christ's image from glory to glory.—*Theo. L. Cuyler, D. D.*

"SET APART."

It was in the sweet June days. A young mother, who had two small children and the entire work of the family to do, arose early, while yet the children slept, that she might uninterruptedly commune with Christ. Noiselessly she entered the parlor, so hushed and still, and opened a window eastward, toward the dawn. The fresh, cool breath of the morning swept in.

"I have come early to meet thee, my Father," she prayed; "speak some precious word to me." Opening her Bible, her eyes fell upon these words: "But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself."

With a strange, penetrating power the words came, thrilling her heart. Set apart! For himself—alone! A feeling of great awe and sweetness fell upon her, and as she waited before him it seemed to pervade her entire being with gracious, mollifying influence, like most precious ointment.

The breaking of the day was not so brilliant, so clear or discerning as the light within. Separated unto God! positive, clear, distinct, standing out in bold relief. No such separation had ever been hers before. Yet she knew of consecration unto God. Thoughtfully she had dedicated every redeemed power unto the Most High. But that was her act—this was God's. He had accepted the offering, and now in the intense electric light of his Spirit showed her that he had "separated her unto himself." Henceforth "holiness unto the Lord" must beam forth from all her life, as of old it glistened on the sacred vessels.

Brighter and brighter grew the morning. Softly came the sound of little voices. Was earth, then, with its cares, so near to Heaven? Did its horizon verily lean against the skies?

Ah, yes; but now, as never before, it lay bathed in the wondrous after-glow. The world could never seem quite the same. Life could nevermore be common-place. The ceaseless round of every-day toil,—the tying of a little shoe, the sweeping of a room, or homelier duties,—could nevermore be called drudgery. Now that this secret of the Lord lay hidden in her heart, the round of humble duties was lifted into "service for God," while "deeds of week-day holiness fell from her noiseless as the snow."

The days came and went, apparently as before; but to her life had a richer meaning. She was her own no more—on hand and lip and heart was inscribed, "Sacred to Jesus," while a flood-tide of joy and blessedness weaned her from all unhallowed pleasures.

"How strange you are!" said a friend. "You bring religion into everything, and talk about it as easily as about anything else." "Why not?" she replied. "To live is Christ. We know of no life separate from Jesus."

Will the great mass of God's children ever come to thoroughly understand that the garments of holiness are for every-day wear—the beautiful garments, white and shining?

"Week-day holiness" is what the world needs. Not cloistered saint or monastic vows, but men and women who vindicate by their holy lives the promises of God; those who prove by the sweetness and power of their daily living the verity of their own professed allegiance to Jesus Christ.—*Mrs. M. N. Van Benschoten, in Guide to Holiness.*

HOW SOULS ARE SAVED.

A DYING publican's wife, in England, recently gave the following encouraging testimony, as narrated by the evangelist who visited her. He says: "I was asked to go to a public house in Nottingham and see the landlord's wife, who was dying. I found her rejoicing in Christ as her Saviour. I asked her how she had found the Lord. 'Reading that,' she replied, handing me a torn piece of newspaper containing an extract from one of Spurgeon's sermons, which extract had been the means of her conversion. 'Where did you get this newspaper?' I asked. She answered, 'It was wrapped round a parcel which was sent me from Australia.' Talk about the hidden life of a good seed! Think of that—a sermon preached in London, conveyed to America, an extract reprinted in a newspaper there, the paper sent to Australia, a part torn off (as we should say, accidentally) for the parcel dispatched to England, and after all its wanderings, conveying the message of salvation to that woman's soul! God's word shall not return unto him void."—*Selected.*

"CHRIST's time was largely taken up in making people happy." We are Christ-like, then, when endeavoring to imitate his wisdom and tact, we are doing some little act to make others happy; and there is no one, however narrow his field of service, who cannot find a good many ways each day in which to be like his Lord in this respect.—*Selected.*

THE DEFEAT OF JUSTICE.

DEFEATS of justice have become so common nowadays that they excite little or no remark except in extreme instances. Especially is this true in criminal cases, though even in civil suits it is difficult for one who has not an abundance of money to get justice. Why this is so is well told in the following extract from an editorial in the *Oakland Enquirer* of November 28:—

"The curse of the legal profession, in respect to the habit of mind fostered in lawyers, is that most of the time the best lawyers are employed against the State instead of for it. The lawyers who are able to make the largest incomes from their practice will not accept the moderate salaries paid to public prosecutors, and it is not often that they care to assume the dignities of a judgeship. Thus it comes that many lawyers spend their lives in trying to beat the civil and criminal laws of the Government under which they live, and it is sometimes surprising that they do not despise themselves for the uniform success of their attempts. It is unquestionably true that every accused person has the right to have the best presentation of his defense which the facts admit of, and that defending criminals is reputable business for lawyers, when it is reputably conducted. But twenty or thirty years of this, unmixed with any experience of public advocacy, will certainly narrow and dwarf the mind, if anything can, and stifle all generosity of sentiment.

"In other words, a lawyer is not a good citizen when he subordinates everything to his profession and cares not whether the laws be good or bad so long as he makes his fees. We need only look at the history of San Francisco and California to be satisfied that many of the leading lawyers of the past thirty years have been men of this class. If it is true that the law is a noble profession the nobility of it must be sought in something else than in breaking up public statutes which were drawn for the public good but without sufficient skill, or in fighting legal battles with absolute disregard of the right or wrong, justice or injustice, involved. Cases of this sort are inseparable from the practice of law, but the lawyer who does not rise high enough in sentiment to feel at all times that the laws ought to be executed alike upon the rich and the poor, and that the statutes should be made strong enough to withstand the attacks of millionaire criminals, is really no ornament to society. The responsibility of the lawyer for the perfection of the law is of no ordinary kind, because he spends his life in studying it and commenting on it; therefore, if he is not willing to give of his knowledge and his experience for the benefit of the public, the loss is a very sensible one."

The design of the law, and of courts of law, is to guarantee to every man his rights, to protect life, person, and property, and it ought to be the purpose of every member of every court to carry out fully the spirit of the law;

but such is seldom the ruling principle in the legal breast. Lawyers undertake cases not simply with the determination that their clients shall have their *rights*, but that they shall have all the advantage which can possibly be gained for them by whatever means. The legal profession needs renovation, but there is small hope that it will ever be better than it is now. So long as Mammon holds sway in the hearts of men, lawyers will work, not for right and justice, but for money, for place, and for power.

Be strong to bear, O heart.
Nothing is vain;
Strive not, for life is care,
And God sends pain;
Heaven is above, and there
Rest will remain.

—Watchword.

HOW TO BECOME NEW MEN.

THE following is from one of Talmage's sermons, and is one of the truest things he ever said. Those who will read the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah will find the divine authority for the statements here made:—

"O ye overweighted, successful business men, whether this sermon reach your ear or your eye, let me say that if you are prostrated with anxieties about keeping or investing these tremendous fortunes, I can tell you how you can do more to get your health back, and your spirits raised, than by drinking gallons of bad-tasting water at Saratoga, Hamburg, or Carlsbad,—give to God and humanity the Bible, and 10 per cent. of all your income, and it will make a new man of you, and from restless walking of the floor at night you shall have eight hours, sleep without the help of bromide of potassium; and from no appetite you will hardly be able to wait your regular meals, and your wan cheeks will fill up; and when you die the blessings of those who but for you would have perished, will bloom all over your grave with violets if it be spring, or gladiolas if it be autumn."

OUR BUSINESS.

OUR business is not to talk about shining, not to have theories about the way of doing it—but by our good works to shine, and so to bear testimony to the Lord. This simple thought meets a thousand difficulties.

"I am very poor; my candle-stick is tin instead of silver; if I were richer I should be of more use." Let your light shine.

"I am feeble in health; half my time is passed within a sick-room; my candle-stick is a broken one." Let your light shine, even if there is no more candle-stick than to hold the candle from falling over.

"I am very much out of the way, in a very obscure corner, far off from the general eye and observation; I wish I were in a better position." Let your light shine.

The Lord knows why he has placed you where you are; be sure he has a purpose worthy of being accomplished.—*Rev. James Culross, D. D.*

THE CROSS-BEARING LIFE.

WE have the impression that comparatively few believers ever have attained to a full and correct idea of this divine life, as revealed in the word of God. Cross-bearing is quite commonly understood as the taking up of those forms of duty which burden us and give us pain. On the other hand, the entire Christian life is represented in the New Testament as a cross-bearing life—a form of life in which the cross is never laid aside. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Yet this form of life is represented as one in which the bearer is "kept in perfect peace," and as the only one in which he can be thus kept. Under the pressure of the cross we find not pain, but rest. "Come unto me," says Christ, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke [that is cross] upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke [cross] is easy, and my burden [cross] light."

The cross, we must bear in mind, is really taken up when, and only when, self-denial is complete and perfect; and this is the only state in which "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," can by any possibility keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The individual who was to be crucified was required to take up his cross and bear it to the place of execution. In doing so he not only relinquished all the rights and privileges of citizenship, but consented to his own death, painful as it was to be. Hence, cross-bearing was taken by our Saviour, and the sacred writers of the New Testament, and also by all primitive believers, as emblematical of the true Christian life, the form of life of which there is an utter renunciation of all the rights and privileges of self-ownership, and an acceptance of the will of Christ as the absolute law of the entire being and activity, and his service as the form of life and activity which is to command supreme devotion.

How impressively is this form of life represented by Paul, as exemplified in his own experience: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Hear him once more: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The same state is beautifully expressed in the following stanza of one of our hymns:—

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shalt be."

Two questions arise for your heart and mine, reader: Are our lives, in the true and scriptural sense, cross-bearing lives? Do we, under the pressure of the cross, find not pain but rest to our souls? Unless we can answer both of these questions in the affirmative, do not let us entertain the thought that we are bearing the cross after Jesus.—*Divine Life.*

The Signs of the Times.

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

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OAKLAND, CAL., SIXTH-DAY, DECEMBER 21, 1888.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

THE *Christian Statesman* of November 29 has an article copied from the *Christian Intelligencer*, about the amount of business done by photographers on Sunday. Following are a few paragraphs from it, which will serve to show the drift of sentiment in regard to such labor:—

"It is hardly probable that the Christian people of this city are aware of the extent to which the Sabbath is violated by the photographers. Many of the principal galleries are filled with waiting patrons, and their largest business is done on the Sabbath."

"The famous galleries, although not exactly open to the public, are ready to make appointments, and prefer that day to execute the pictures of the popular actors, singers, etc."

"And most of the small places, after passing a dull week, expect to make up on the Sunday business enough to give them a profit over the week's expenses."

"There is a wholesome law against this transacting business on the holy day, but it is not enforced."

"A few years ago an attempt was made to close up the violators of the Sabbath, but it was not successful, and several of the prominent men in that effort, seeing no remedy, now keep open, and find their purses better filled, their bank account much larger, and their credit much better with the stock dealer. Now in view of this truthful statement, what is the duty of the Christian public in this matter?"

The article carries with it its own answer to the last question, that is from the standpoint of the *Statesman* and the *Intelligencer*. The plainly implied demand is that such business should be stopped by law. And this indicates to what lengths the instigators of the Sunday-law movement will go, when they have secured the legislation which they want, and have the power in their hands. It shows that a system of espionage will be inaugurated, and that nobody's privacy will be sacred from the prying intrusion of the minions of such an iniquitous law.

There is no business that is conducted with more quietness than the business of photography. Nothing is less calculated to disturb public worship or private devotion. Even a monk in his cloister could not be disturbed by the business of a photographer next door if he were not informed of its proximity.

When the photographer may be arrested for quietly conducting his work in an upper room on Sunday, then no person will be exempt. Some zealous individual, anxious for political preferment, will find out that the merchant is in his private office on Sunday, looking over his ledger, and forthwith the merchant will be arrested. The lady who takes in sewing may be arrested for making button-holes, or fitting a garment in her back parlor on Sunday. The literary man who writes for hire may be arrested for quietly working at his desk on Sunday. In short, from such a wholesale stoppage of Sunday work as is desired by the *Statesman*, the *Intelligencer*, and all who may be classed as National Reformers, it will be but a step to the arresting of every citizen who is found away from church on Sunday, unless detained by sickness.

That this is not an exaggerated conclusion is evident from the statement of Dr. Herrick Johnson, that he longed for the breath of the Puritan, for the Puritan Sabbath, and this is just what was done in the days of the Covenanters and Puritans. Robert Wodrow, a Scotch ecclesiastical historian, of whom it is said that his "veracity was above suspicion," and of his writings, that "no historical facts are better ascertained than the accounts . . . to be found in

Wodrow," makes the following statement concerning the methods used to secure attendance at church:—

"It is thoct expedient that ane baillie with tua of the session pas throw the towne everie Sabbath day, and nott sic as they find absent fra the sermones ather afior or efter none; and for that effect that they pas and sersche sic houss as they think maist meit."—*Selections from the Records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberdeen.*

In modern English this is as follows:—

"It is thought expedient that any bailiff with two of the session pass through the town every Sabbath day, and note such as they find absent from the sermons either before or after noon; and for that effect that they pass and search such houses as they think most meet."

In his "Collections" he says: "The session allows the searchers to go into houses, and apprehend absents from the kirk." Now when one of the great cries for a Sunday law is because people do not go to church, and when the only ground for stopping a photographer from working in the seclusion of his own room, could be that he was staying from church and at least inviting others to do so, the conclusion is inevitable that when the clamors for a Sunday law get what they want, they will make no scruple of going into any house where they have reason to suspect that anybody is working on Sunday, and arresting the occupants.

Are we not warranted in saying that the liberties of the American people are in danger? Is it not high time that people were awakening to the alarming growth of the religious legislation evil? Who will protest against the degeneracy of Protestantism?

"HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE."

A BROTHER writing from Nebraska wishes to know if, in case a law were made compelling everybody to keep Sunday, it would be wrong for one who has kept the Sabbath day according to the commandment, to rest upon Sunday also. He asks if the fourth commandment obliges us to work six days in the week, as well as to rest on the Sabbath.

This is a question that is frequently asked, and may very easily be answered. In the first place, the fourth commandment does not oblige us to work six entire days of every week. The idea of the commandment is, that we shall do all of our work in the six days which are given for that purpose, and that the seventh must be kept sacred. In the six days we may work; in the seventh day we may not work. This is God's order; and no earthly power has any right to command us to rest on any of the six days which God has given us for labor, any more than it has to command us to work on the day which God has made sacred to himself. Yet while the statement that in the seventh day we shall not work, prohibits us from doing any secular work on that day, the statement that in the six days we shall do all our own work, does not compel us to work every minute of those six days.

Must we then conclude that it would be all right for us to rest upon the first day if we were commanded by the Government to do so, provided we had previously rested upon the Sabbath? By no means. We could not in that way keep the Sabbath "according to the commandment;" for the commandment recognizes no authority to appoint rest days but Jehovah himself. The granting to us of six days in which to work, is sufficient proof that no earthly power has any right to appoint a rest day. Now if we, in compliance with the command of any earthly power, do rest upon any of the six working days, we recognize that power as of equal authority with God; and that would nullify our keeping of the seventh day, by showing that we did not do it as an act of worship to the only God. In short, our act would show a divided allegiance, fear, and not love, being at the bottom of it. It would show that we kept the seventh day for the same reason that we kept the first, namely, to escape the penalty pronounced upon the violators. Such service God cannot accept.

Sunday as a religious institution is a child of the

Papacy—the badge of authority of that power. Whoever having the fourth commandment before him, and understanding and acknowledging its claims, should keep the first day in deference to the command of any earthly power, would be, in the plainest manner possible, showing deference to the Papacy, and would be far more culpable than the one who should keep the day supposing it to be the true Sabbath. The fact that he had previously rested on the seventh day, would only make his culpability the greater, by showing that he was deliberately, on account of slavish fear, placing the decrees of men on a level with the commandment of God. Such a time-serving policy, while it might secure the person freedom from molestation for a time, would be found to be most disastrous in the end; for "he that findeth his life shall lose it."

W.

SUBJECTION TO THE POWERS THAT BE.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Rom. 13:1, 2.

This text of Scripture has been the cause of a great deal of controversy concerning the scope of civil governments, and the relations which Christians should sustain to them. There are a great many people who take the extreme view that whatever civil governments enact should be scrupulously obeyed, no matter how much it may conflict with the will of God, as revealed in the Bible. They seem to imagine that God has delegated all power to men, and that he waives to the claims of men his right to govern in matters of morals. They virtually say that the inspired command to be subject to the higher powers absolves people from direct allegiance to their Creator. The very statement of the case should be enough to show anybody the absurdity of such a view.

The thirteenth chapter of Romans affords, in itself, ample proof that the powers that be are ordained of God only in matters that pertain to the outward peace of society. But we wish to bring a few other scriptures to bear, to show just how we are to be subject to earthly powers, and at the same time be subject to the highest power of all.

The seventh verse of the same chapter says: "Render therefore to all their due: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." Render "honor to whom honor" is due, is a part of this command. Now it is beyond question that honor is due to God, for the Lord himself says that he will honor only those who honor him. 1 Sam. 2:30. And that this tribute and honor which are due to God are entirely different from those which are due to earthly governments, is evident from the words of Christ to the Pharisees, which are exactly parallel with those of Paul to the Romans: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Matt. 22:21. Thus we see that while we are to be subject to the earthly powers, that subjection must in nowise conflict with our subjection to God.

That inspiration does not teach that men are in duty bound to obey every edict of earthly powers, but that they are to disobey every enactment which conflicts with the law of God, is very plain. Take the case of the three Hebrew children at the court of Nebuchadnezzar. They were as truly bound to be subject to him as ever any men were to an earthly ruler, for Nebuchadnezzar was king by God's own appointment (Jer. 27:4-7), and they had by the same power been placed under him. Yet when the king commanded them to worship an image which he had set up, they absolutely refused to do anything of the kind. For their stubbornness, as the king doubtless thought it, they were cast into a fiery furnace; yet God, who commands us to be subject to the powers that be, showed his approval of their course in the most marked manner.

Take the case of Daniel in the court of Darius. That king made a decree that for thirty days no man should make a request of any god or man except

himself, under penalty of being cast into a den of lions. But Daniel paid no manner of attention to the decree. When he knew that the writing was signed, "he went into his house; and, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." Dan. 6:10. Like his three fellows, he made no secret of his disobedience to the king's order. Yet the same God who commands us to be subject to the powers that be, showed his approval of Daniel's course, by delivering him from the lions, and honoring him before the whole empire.

The apostles afford another case in point. An express injunction was laid upon them by the Jewish Sanhedrim "not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." Acts 4:17, 18. The apostles, however, refused to keep silence, saying, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (verse 20), and they went right on teaching as though the rulers had said nothing. When they were again brought before the council, and reminded of the injunction which had been laid upon them, they boldly replied, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29. All these cases, and especially this last, show that the command to be subject to the powers that be does not mean that we should obey them when obedience to them involves disobedience to God.

Now the question arises, Were these men subject to the Governments under which they lived? Can men be subject to the powers that be, and yet not obey them in every particular, no matter what they command? We answer that men can be subject to the powers that be, and still disobey them when their decrees conflict with the laws of God; and the record shows most clearly that Daniel and his fellows, and the apostles, were subject to the powers that existed in their time.

A passage from the writings of one of the men who refused to obey men when to do so involved disloyalty to God, will make this matter clear. We quote from 1 Peter 2:17-20:—

"Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."

The command to "honor the king" shows this to be a parallel passage to Rom. 13:1, 2. Here, as there, we are exhorted to be subject to rulers, even though they be not good. But that this does not mean that we should in so doing disobey God, is evident from verse 19: "For this is thank-worthy if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." The fact that he is called upon to suffer wrongfully, and that he is buffeted because he does well, shows that his doing right has been in direct opposition to the commands of his master. He suffers "for conscience toward God." That is, his conscience will not allow him to disobey God's commandment in obedience to the powers that be, and so he patiently suffers for it. And although he cannot obey the master's command, his patient acceptance of the threatened punishment shows his subjection to the power.

So we see that being subject to the powers that be means simply that we are to obey them when their commands are right, and to disobey them when they conflict with those of God, and meekly to take the consequences. This is just what Daniel and his fellows and the apostles did. They did not resist, but they did not obey an unrighteous commandment. Now turn again to Romans 13, verses 2 and 5, and you will see that this is just what is taught. We quote:—

"Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

The Bible everywhere teaches respect for authority. Anarchists can find no warrant in the Bible for any of their contempt for authority. Rebellion against authority is not countenanced under any circumstances. Every soul must be subject to the powers that be, and that subjection consists in willing, prompt obedience to all their laws when they do not require disregard of God's law, and as willing an acceptance of the penalty for disobeying laws that do contravene the laws of God. An example of this is found in the early Christians, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Heb. 10:34. Where there cannot be obedience, there must not be resistance. David would not lift his hand against the king of Israel, even though that king was most unjustly seeking his life; Paul would not knowingly speak ill of the high priest, although that priest was a wicked hypocrite. He counseled the Christians to be subject to the powers that were, even while he was daily violating the laws of the most wicked ruler; and he showed his subjection to a power which was despicable because of its moral rottenness, by willingly yielding up his life as the price of his necessary disobedience. w.

THE ESSENCE OF SPIRITUALISM.

QUITE a stir has been made over the publication of the fact that the poet Tennyson is a Spiritualist. In a letter which he recently wrote to a friend, in which he shows that he is his own medium, he said:—

"I have never had any revelations through anesthetics, but a kind of waking trance (this for lack of a better name) I have frequently had, quite up from boyhood, when I have been all alone. This has often come upon me through repeating my own name to myself, till all at once, as it were, out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, the individuality itself seemed to dissolve, and fade away into boundless being, and this not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the sweetest of the sweetest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction, but the only true life."

This, which must surely be called the sublimity of egotism, is the very essence of Spiritualism. It is the beginning and end of the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, for that doctrine begins and ends with self. It was by causing Eve to think of herself, and instilling into her mind an exaggerated sense of her own importance, that Satan secured her fall. The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul grows out of the idea so natural to man, that he is of such transcendent importance that God could not get along without him; and the next step to that is the idea that man himself is a god.

Is it not strange that professed Christians will cling to a doctrine which makes man everything, and ignores Christ as the Author of life? And who cannot see that a doctrine which makes it unnecessary to come to Christ for life, must necessarily tend to immorality, since it depreciates, and causes men to slight, the only source of purity?

MAMMON OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

A CORRESPONDENT wishes an explanation of Luke 16:9, which reads, "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon [margin, riches] of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

This text presents the lesson that our Saviour would have us learn from the preceding parable, that just as the unjust steward had used the riches of this world to provide for himself a home in old age among those he had helped, so the children of light should use the riches of this world to provide for themselves everlasting habitations. It is parallel to Matt. 6:20: "But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Jesus does not mean that we can purchase Heaven by anything we can do; the only price acceptable is that paid by our Lord Jesus Christ. But the way we use the riches of this world is the evidence of the work wrought within. Often the Lord accepts an

individual who has a covetous nature, but who does not know it until subsequent trials reveal it. The sure way for him to then overcome is to use in the cause of God the riches he has gathered, to lay up treasure in Heaven, to make friends of God, Christ, and the angels, and thus crucify and overcome his covetous nature, making sure his reception into everlasting habitations. Neither are we to say, as many thoughtlessly do, "The riches of the universe belong to God, he does not need any means," and so do nothing. It is true, God does not need our means, but he demands them in order to develop within us that unselfish love which will fit us to dwell in the everlasting habitations. We must all learn the lesson, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35.

THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM.

A READER of the SIGNS asks: "Why was it that two and a half tribes of the children of Israel remained on the east side of Jordan? I understand that Canaan was typical of our heavenly rest; why then did some remain outside of that land?" The questioner's supposition evidently is that the territory to the east of the Jordan was not a part of the promised land, but that this is a mistake is evident from Josh. 1:4: "From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast." But aside from this scripture we know that not only the land of Canaan proper, but also the whole earth, was promised to Abraham and to his seed. See Rom. 4:13. And had Abraham's descendants been faithful to God, they would long ere this have subdued all nations and filled the earth. The name Canaan no more limited the promise to the valley of the Jordan—from which the name was derived—than did the necessarily short range of human vision limit the promise to just what Abraham could see, when the Lord said unto him: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."

THOUGHTS ON FAITH.

FAITH concerning that which pertains to the Christian life, should not be based on anything which man may say, unless what he says is supported by the Bible. He may say that what he says is thus supported, but let him produce the evidence. Relying on man's word alone is presumption, not faith. God brings to us solemn and sweet messages through man; but the message should not be received as from man, but as from God. 1 Thess. 2:13. We may honor the messenger as the Lord's servant, for Christ's sake. He has not spoken his own, if he has spoken good; he has spoken only what he has received from God. If we depend upon the word of man, the man upon whom we lean, in whom we trust, may fail. Then our support proves a broken reed, which pierces us in the breaking. But if the word of God be our foundation, it will stand. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever." 1 Peter 1:24, 25.

We should not judge of our condition or relation to God by *feeling*. Feeling may be one thing to-day, another to-morrow. It is at least modified by condition of health, surrounding circumstances, confirmed habits, and the conflicts through which we pass. Feeling is the result of faith, not faith of feeling. Feeling is inconstant, faith is abiding. Therefore what we feel should never be used as the evidence of our condition. It is not by *feeling* that we are to *know* that God has accepted us. Feeling alone may be a true criterion; it may not. It should never be depended upon. If it is, it will often leave us in discouragement, despondency, or despair. Because of faith, joyous feeling is often present. Sometimes we have joyous feelings with but little exercise of

faith. God gives them to encourage trust and love, just as the eagle bears up her wearied and fearful young ones when teaching them to fly. The joy and peace and happiness are little morsels of the blessings of strong faith which lies before. It was thus that God dealt with discouraged Jacob, as he was leaving home because of his sins. In discouragement he lies down upon the cold ground and hard pillow, under what seemed to him the closed heavens. But God's mercy has not left the despondent "supplanter." In his dreams God's tender providence is revealed by the shining ladder and ministering spirits, and it forces from Jacob's grateful heart, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." Gen 28:16. It is even thus that God deals at times with us.

We should not confound mere belief with faith. Belief is the assent of the understanding, and may be, and often is, exercised by the unregenerate. "The devils also believe." James 2:19. Mere belief rests in theory; but faith is operative. It makes application of the promises to ourselves. Belief may only affect the mind, but faith affects the life. There may be belief without faith, but there can be no faith, no trust, without belief. We trust God, or have faith in him, because we believe him. And this faith is based on God's promises. If we believe them, and have complied with the conditions on which they are fulfilled, the promise is ours. We know that it is; for God has said so. So Paul says, "For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God," etc. 2 Cor. 5:1. He knew by faith in God's word. So our Saviour says that we may know when his coming is near, even at the doors. Matt. 24:33. True faith in, and understanding of, the word of God is absolute knowledge. We know by faith. We not only believe God's promises; we appropriate them to ourselves as individuals; and by the appropriation of these promises, we become partakers of the divine nature, sons and daughters of God, with power to overcome sin. 2 Peter 1:4; 2 Cor. 6:17-18; 7:1; 1 John 5:4.

But feeling will not do this for us. Faith generally operates without the feeling, that is, joyous or happy feeling. It is in this way that it becomes strong, and attains its most stalwart growth. Had we the feeling first, we would act because it pleased the sensuous nature, and not because of confidence in God. But God withholds the ecstasy and joy in order to develop the faith. The eaglet would ever remain weak were it always upborne by the parent wings, so it is left on the empty air to develop its powers. It may be fearful at the depth below, but the discipline is necessary. Even so would our faith exist in name only were we to walk by feeling. We would be "only strong for lack of test." God in his rich mercy casts us out where we cannot see or know what lies below or beyond; but—

"The steps of faith
Fall on the seeming void, and find
The rock beneath."

It is only in this way that faith can grow. So the apostle teaches concerning those who are "kept by the power of God through faith" in the last days. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:6, 7. The sweetest songs, the greatest triumphs, the truest love, come from a tried faith. "We walk by faith, not by sight," or by sense of any kind.

Then let the basis of all our relations to God, and our condition before him, be abiding trust in his holy word, and not the evidence given by our changeable, sensuous nature. The latter will fail. We will seek for it, and just when we long for it the most, it will be wanting. But faith in the word of God abides. Darkness may arise, clouds may hide the sun, trials may encompass us about, foes may assail us on every side; but God's word abides. Our faith can rest on the rock of truth, Christ Jesus our Lord, and

on his precious promises. And such faith will bring the sweetest joy, the purest praise, the holiest peace we ever knew. The prison cell of our surroundings will become the reception-room of holy angels. And thus we will be kept by the power of God through faith, till faith is lost in sight. M. C. W.

THE GREAT MISTAKE OF PROTESTANTISM.

REV. H. H. HINMAN has an article in a recent number of the *Christian Oynoure*, in which he writes thus concerning Christmas:—

"If we may adopt religious institutions of mere human devising, and arbitrarily appoint days for their celebration, there is no limit to what man may do in creating religious institutions. There is quite as much reason for the adoration of her who was the most blessed among women, as for the unauthorized celebration of the birth of her Son. The great mistake of the Papacy has been the substitution of human inventions, of which Christmas is manifestly a sample. If we admit these interpolations in religion, we cannot stop short of entire conformity to all that is laid upon us. We must either cease our protest against the worship of the bread and wine in the mass, and to the confessional, or stop doing religious duties that have no higher authority than man. The road leads to Rome, and there is no stopping-place but at the end. We shall find enough to do in keeping divinely-appointed institutions in their true spirit, without turning aside to the commandments of men."

Whatever may be the merits or demerits of Christmas as a mere human holiday, it certainly has no just claims as a religious institution. Few comparatively are so ignorant as to suppose that it is indeed the anniversary of the birth of our Lord; and if it were, there is certainly no divine warrant for its observance. But in that respect it does not stand alone; Sunday keeping is equally without divine precept; and yet in the paragraph following the one quoted, Mr. Hinman calls that day "the Christian Sabbath." Certainly if the practice of celebrating Christmas is reprehensible (and we do not say that it is not), Sunday keeping is doubly so, for whereas Christmas antagonizes no divine institution, Sunday stands opposed to the Sabbath of the Lord, the day commanded in the fourth precept of the decalogue. True it is that the great mistake, yea, the great sin, "of the Papacy has been the substitution of human inventions" for the divinely-appointed institutions of the gospel; and it is no less true that the great mistake of Protestantism has been in adopting these substitutes, thus making void the commandments of God by Papal traditions.

SUNDAY HARVESTING.

ONE of the Presbyterian synods of Scotland has recently been discussing the matter of Sunday observance. That which gave rise to the discussion was the fact that members of that church had been engaged in Sunday harvesting. Such work was condemned by the chairman of the Committee of Sabbath Observance, for the reason that "the circumstances of the present season did not warrant Sunday harvesting." This language seems to convey the idea that in a less favorable season than the one just passed, Sunday work would be justifiable; and according to the *London Christian World*, such seems to have been the view taken by the synod. This, to say the least, is a strange position for Scotch Presbyterians to take. Presbyterians universally profess to regard Sunday as the Sabbath, and to rest its observance upon the fourth commandment; how, then, can they make exceptions not made in that commandment, or, indeed, anywhere else in all the Scriptures? Of the Sabbath, the fourth commandment says: "In it thou shalt not do any work;" not even in harvest, for in Ex. 34:21 we read, "In earing [sowing] time and in harvest thou shalt rest." Of course these texts have not the slightest application to Sunday, but the Presbyterians, and notably the Scotch Presbyterians, teach that they have, though down in their inmost souls they know that Sunday is not the Sabbath; hence the admission that under some circumstances harvesting may be done upon that day.

A NEW RELIGION WANTED.

SOMETHING of a sensation has been made by the Rev. Heber Newton, pastor of All Souls' Episcopal Church, New York, who declared in a recent sermon that the need of the present age is a new religion. He said that Christianity in its present form does not satisfy the present progressive spiritual aspirations of humanity. For our part we can heartily agree with Mr. Newton. We think he is doubly right. In the first place the aspirations of humanity in general can be satisfied only by a fashion-plate, a fancy ball or party, a base-ball game, or a slogging match; and even "Christianity in its present form" cannot satisfy all these longings. And in the second place "Christianity in its present form" is so far removed from primitive Christianity that if the Christianity of Christ and his apostles were taught and lived out, it would be indeed a new religion. That is what the present age needs. Such Christianity will satisfy all the real needs of humanity. Says Christ, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11:28, 29. God is able to make all grace abound, and to do "exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think." He is able to satisfy the highest aspirations of the human heart. But the thoughts and longings of the mass of mankind are too low, and too nearly "only evil continually," to be satisfied by the pure gospel of Christ.

INIQUITY ABOUNDING.

At the recent meeting of the Evangelical Alliance Conference at Syracuse, N. Y., the spiritual needs of the rural districts were discussed by several ministers, who agreed that "the proportion of non-church-goers is as great in the country as in the city, and the number of those who can render efficient aid to the pastor is comparatively small." One speaker said that he could lay his hand on a dozen country pastors who had told him that they could not call on a single member to lead in prayer. Another referred to a town of 2,700 inhabitants, 2,000 of whom never go to church. The 700 who do attend, many of them somewhat irregularly, are divided among four churches.

In the discussion of the needs of the cities Dr. George U. Wenner, of New York, said that in a twenty years' pastorate on the east side of that city, he had seen twelve churches in that district alone decline and disappear, and five more, he said, were ready to follow; and during that period only two had been organized.

Dr. Parkhurst spoke on the "Cause of Estrangement from the Church," and said that the great cause of the failure of the church to reach the masses was lack of love. His conclusion differs somewhat from that arrived at by a number of California ministers, who ascribed a similar failure on the part of the churches in this State to the lack of a Sunday law. This reason could not of course be assigned in New York, for there they have a Sunday law; and, indeed, it is doubtful if the attendance at church in California was much if any better before the repeal of the Sunday statute than it is now. People who have a desire to attend church will do so whether the law requires them to rest on Sunday or not; and those who do not care to listen to preaching are not likely to attend such services simply because the law forbids their engaging in secular pursuits.

But interest in the question of non-attendance on religious services is not confined to ministers, as is evidenced by the fact that one of the leading dailies in San Francisco recently undertook to solve the problem. On a Sunday morning an enterprising reporter of the paper referred to sallied forth, disguised as a poor man, in rather shabby attire, and visited several churches of various denominations. His conclusion was akin to that of Dr. Parkhurst, namely, that there was a lack of love in the churches, especially for the poor. In only two of the many houses of worship visited, did the disguised newspaper man

receive anything like a welcome, while in several he was treated with positive rudeness. Hence, the conclusion that many of the poor stay away from church because they are not welcome in such garments as they must perforce wear.

But the matter was not allowed to rest here; some five or six hundred non-church-goers were visited and asked why they did not attend church, and of course the replies were varied. Some simply said that they did not care to go, others said that the sermons were dull and uninteresting, while others said that they were just as good as those who did go, and that they did not see that going to church could do them any good; but we believe that none assigned as a reason the lack of a Sunday law. From all of which it appears that the real reason why people do not attend church is because of a lack of interest in spiritual things; indeed, it seems but just to conclude that we have reached the time foretold by our Saviour, when because of iniquity the love of many should wax cold. But let us remember, also, that "he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

C. P. B.

ONE USE OF TRIALS.

ONE of the purposes for which our kind heavenly Father permits trials to come upon us, is to reveal to us the imperfections of our character; not to discourage us, but that we may put them away and overcome them. We do not know what lusts are harbored in our sinful flesh till temptation assails us. We are in many things strong only because we have not been tested. Gladly would the Lord reveal to us the defect some other way, but we will not learn our weakness by faith in his word. So God allows it to be demonstrated to us by permitting us to fall. The example of Peter furnishes an instance of this. Peter loved the good opinion of his fellows. He was proud; he wished men to think well of him. Jesus read the defect in his character, and solemnly warned him. Luke 22:31-34. Peter could not believe the warning; he could not read his own heart. Therefore he fell, and his fall brought bitter weeping and humiliation. He doubtless thought he had conquered the inbred pride after that, and so it would seem. Thrice he professes love for the Lord with a full heart (John 21); he is the first speaker on the day of Pentecost; the first notable miracle is wrought through him and John (Acts 2 and 3); he is "filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts 4:8. Surely it would seem that he, if any, had cause to think that he would never fall. But the element of weakness remains in his character still. His pride of heart, or fear of man, leads him to "dissemble," and he is reproved by Paul. Gal. 2:11-16. We read of no lapses after that on the part of this great apostle.

Jesus desired Peter to learn his defect without falling. Peter might so have done if he had but taken to his heart the reproof of the Redeemer. But he did not fully do this, and there was no other way in which the Saviour could teach him his weakness but to let him stand alone against the powers of darkness. He did so, and Peter fell. He realized something of his weakness, something of its sinfulness, but not all. So God permitted him again to fall, and the lesson was learned. The Lord did not desire to deal in this way, but there was no other. It was mercy and not wrath which moved God thus to deal with the bold disciple.

It is even thus that the Lord deals with many. Let us learn the lesson without falling. Search the heart, study the motives, till can be seen the motive power of our deeds of sin; till can be seen the hidden springs of iniquity. Seeing this, "humble yourselves in the sight of God." Suppose that it read, "Humble yourselves as in the sight of God," just as men will when before their very eyes stands revealed the glorified Majesty of Heaven, from whose sight not one thought can be hidden? But the text does not say, "As in his sight;" it says, "In the sight of the Lord." God sees all the heart now as clearly as he will see it then, and he desires us to realize this. Such views of ourselves are not flattering, but they are efficacious. They lead us to realize our weak-

ness and nothingness; and realizing this, if we desire holiness we will seek Him in whom "all fullness dwells," and seeking, we shall find. Let us not be too fearful of getting an adverse and humiliating view of self. The more hatred we have of selfishness the more eager will we be for that love which comes only through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the more fully will we rejoice in the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the gospel. Into these trials or temptations, O Lord, "lead us not;" help us to learn without them. M. C. W.

NO BOASTING.

THE true soldier of Christ, be he ever so faithful, will never feel to boast of his attainments of character or holiness of life. As he gets nearer Jesus, he comprehends more of the infinite perfection of the Master, and sees less to be praised in himself. He may not have been guilty of conscious sin during a certain period, yet when he reviews that period side by side with the life of the great Example, how imperfect it seems. Like Daniel he feels that his comeliness is turned into corruption. Dan. 10:8. The infirmities of our fallen natures are manifested at almost every step, and the tendencies of sinful flesh and confirmed habits have, in unguarded moments, often unconsciously marred the work we were doing for the Master. God accepts the work because it is wrought in love, through grace, by a heart which is set to do the whole will of God; but he does not condone our faults. These we are to "mortify," "crucify," "keep under," "put off." The graces are to "increase," the love to "abound more and more." There will ever be growth till imperfection reaches perfection, till the babe in Christ reaches the fully-developed man. Then with Paul let the child of God say, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

WHAT MORE CAN BE ASKED?

THE *Christian Nation* of December 5 reports that "the committee appointed at the last synod [of the Reformed Presbyterians] to circulate petitions seeking a Christian Amendment to the Constitution, to be signed by those who refuse to accept it in its present form, sent out blank forms to all the congregations of the church during the month of August." They say that "those who did not on November 6 send men to swear to the Constitution should now take opportunity of recording their votes for its amendment." What ails the Constitution now? It grants to all men the privilege of living or refusing to live Christians. So does Christianity. "Whosoever will" may come. Rev. 22:17. The Constitution does not *compel* men to accept any religion. Neither did Christ. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men." 2 Cor. 5:11. What more can be asked? He who asks for that which will discriminate between men, seeks to build up tyranny and oppression. His object is wholly selfish; and selfishness has no part in the religion of Christ. The so-called Christian Amendment to the Constitution will unjustly discriminate between individuals whose only difference before the amended Constitution will be their religious belief or non-belief. Therefore it is not Christian; it is *antichristian*.

NO PRACTICAL DIFFERENCE.

A RECENT proposal in the French Chamber of Deputies, to abolish the embassy to the Vatican, was rejected by a vote of 307 to 217. On that occasion Prince Goblet made the following speech, for which he was applauded:—

"As long as we live under the *régime* of the Concordat, it is necessary to maintain relations with the Vatican for the training of the clergy and the appointment of bishops and cardinals. The importance of our protectorate in Eastern countries, also, requires the maintenance of friendly relations with the Vatican. Rival powers dispute our protectorate. The friendship of the Pope is, therefore, precious.

The Pope already has his bitternesses. Is it for us to increase them? It has been said recently that the Pope could no longer count upon any country but France. That does not mean that France will intervene to restore his temporal power; but the more the Pope is deprived of that power the more France ought to honor him by curtailing nothing of her respect for the high authority he represents."

The present Pope may be trusted to make himself indispensable to the Governments of Europe. It matters little whether he has temporal power or not, so long as he practically controls the movements of the great powers. In this connection it may be noted that the Pope has recently received a letter from the Czar, accepting the Vatican's proposals, and promising to restore diplomatic relations between the Russian Government and the Vatican at an early date.

The Commentary.

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

SHRINKING FROM DUTY.

(Lesson 1, Sabbath, Jan. 5.)

1. UNDER what circumstances did the Lord appear to Moses at Horeb?

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." Ex. 3:1-6.

2. For what purpose did the Lord appear to him?

"And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their task-masters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me; and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Verses 7-10.

3. By what name did the Lord say he would be known?

"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." Verses 13-15.

4. What is the significance of this name?—*The One who is; the self-existent and eternal One.*

5. What similar terms do we find in the New Testament?

"John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne." Rev. 1:4.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Heb. 13:8.

6. What sign was given to Moses, by which the Israelites might know that the Lord had appeared to him?

"And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee. And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand; that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee." Ex. 4:1-5.

7. What additional sign was given?

"And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh." Verses 6, 7.

8. What further sign was Moses to give in case the Israelites should not believe the first two?

"And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land; and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land." Verse 9.

9. What excuse did Moses then make?

"And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Verse 10.

10. What rebuke and encouragement did the Lord give him?

"And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." Verses 11, 12.

11. What reply did Moses make?

"And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." Verse 13.

12. With what did Moses thus indirectly charge God? See note.

13. How did the Lord regard this?

"And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses." Verse 14, first clause.

14. What further encouragement did he give Moses?

"And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth; and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." Verses 14-16.

15. What practical lesson may we learn from this occurrence? See note.

NOTES.

WHEN Moses said to the Lord, "Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou shouldst send," he indirectly charged God with not knowing whom he ought to send. If the Lord had not seen that Moses was the best man for the place, he would not have selected him. While God does not want a man to run when he has not been sent (see Jer. 23: 21), he does want a man to go when he sends him. If God indicates that he wants a man to do a certain work, that is sufficient evidence that he will sustain him in that work. It is a terrible thing to refuse to obey the Lord. To beg off from labor to which one has been appointed, is not always humility. It may be an evidence of pride or stubbornness. This case under consideration may naturally

call to the minds of many the case of Jonah, although Jonah was not like Moses except in that he did not want to do what the Lord wanted him to do. The motives of the two men were different. The teacher, however, who exhausts the lesson before the allotted time has expired, will do well to call attention to the case of Jonah, and of others that come to his mind, as different phases of this shrink- ing from duty.

VERY often people who plead inability to do a certain work in the church or Sabbath-school, to which they are called, think that their refusal is an evidence of their humility, when, in fact, it is an evidence of nothing but pride. They fear that if they should take hold of it, they might make mistakes, and that people might not think so much of them in consequence. And so, in order to avoid possible criticism by men, they are content to be drones, and to risk the displeasure of God. That is one of the worst kinds of pride.

NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

THE VOW OF THE NAZARITE.

(December 30.—Num. 6:1-4.)

THE golden text of the lesson contains the intrinsic meaning of the Nazarite's vow. It reads, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." The Nazarite was one who voluntarily set himself apart from the unholy practices of the world, to become a vessel meet for the Master's use. He offered himself to God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, and took upon him, with his vow of separation, certain marks of his service and appointment, as a priest takes upon him the robes of his office.

ONE of the definite requirements in a Nazarite was entire abstinence from wine and strong drink, and from everything of the nature of an intoxicant. He was also to keep himself from contact with anything of a polluting nature; for he was to be holy unto the Lord. Perfect temperance was to characterize his living, and true temperance is a total abstinence from all that is injurious, and a moderate use only of that which is good.

THE very nature of wine and strong drink is contrary to the reasonable service that is acceptable to God. Says the wise man, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." This fact is so apparent that there is scarcely any need of the aid of inspiration to enlighten the mind to the terrible truth. The shore of the past is marked by the wrecks of men and nations, whose noble crafts struck on the rock of intemperance, and plunged down into the sea of degradation and ruin. Even in this our day of boasted light, we see on every hand the direful effects of wine and strong drink. The whole land is under the shadow of its curse, and the whole heart sick under the woe of its evil. Homes are filled

with its misery, the streets with its beggars, the poor-houses with its paupers, the asylums with its inebriates, insane, and idiots, the land with its crime, the prisons with its criminals, and the gallows with its victims. Hell is enlarged, and opens her mouth for the offspring of this prolific mother of debauchery and vice.

LIKE a sereing stream, intoxicating liquors burn through the fine tissues of the body, till not only the functions of the physical being are wholly deranged, but affection, intelligence, and spirituality are wholly wiped out; and he who was made in the image of God becomes the apparent child and work of the devil, a dishonor to God and a curse and blot upon his creation.

HOWEVER moderately intoxicating drink may be used, it will result in evil, and evil continually. In its first entrance it is an alien and enemy to the mechanism and organism of man. Insensibly it blunts his fine moral perceptions, deadens his affections, steals the bloom from his soul, and degrades his entire being. Then when the advantage is sure, and it will be sure finally, it blots out all that is fine and God-like.

FROM this fact it is evident that its use is incompatible with service to God. An entire separation from wine and strong drink is essential in the servant of the Most High. God is a spirit, and he who worships him must worship him in spirit and in truth. This worship requires the exercise of the delicate spiritual faculties and perceptions that are the first to be blunted by the use of stimulants.

THE Lord does not force men into his service, but he kindly unfolds his requirements for the good of those who will choose him and his way. They must cleanse themselves from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and perfect holiness before him. Those who are received by him at last have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They are without spot or wrinkle, blameless before high Heaven. Christ was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and save his people from their sins. He calls them to the Nazarite's vow: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

THE flesh must be in subservience to the spirit, not the spirit to the flesh, and the use of intoxicants helps to bind the spirit in a most bitter bondage to the flesh. While the separation to the service of Christ calls for self-denial, it brings the truest liberty. Says the psalmist, "I will walk at liberty; for I seek thy precepts." When every faculty of the mind is brought into subjection to the will of the Creator, and that is, into harmony with the original law of its being, its possessor knows "the glorious liberty of the sons of God:" he is in Christ Jesus, and there is

no condemnation, but the peace that passeth understanding. The Lord commanded Moses to pronounce a blessing upon those who separated themselves from the pollutions of the world to serve him. He was to say: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." These words of blessing belong to all who give themselves in unreserved surrender to the service of their Lord and Saviour.

FANNIE BOLTON.

The Missionary.

MONTANA.

I HELD my first meeting in the tent at Livingston, Park County, Montana, on July 6, and continued meetings in that place about eight weeks. After that I held meetings in school-houses and in private families in and about Livingston till November 24, when I started for home to get ready for work in my appointed field of labor. When I came to Livingston I found a few endeavoring to live out the truth, and quite a number more have since begun to obey, so that twenty-six signed the covenant. There are a few others keeping the Sabbath, and still others deeply interested in the truth. The interest seemed as good when I left as at any previous time. There are a number of scattered brethren in this Territory, some of whom have come into the truth through reading alone.

There are some good openings for meetings in Montana. People do not seem to be so bound by church creeds as in older settled places. They are more independent. It seems to me that this Territory is a very good place for ministers to work, as well as for canvassers. The people are mostly intelligent and ready to hear and read. I sold over \$100 worth of books and tracts, mostly of our own publications. Collections and offerings amounted to \$65.58, and the tithes, which were paid mostly by those who signed the covenant, amounted to \$329.78. I never saw people more ready to accept and act upon the tithing system than these were. The total expenses I think will not exceed \$190, and this includes my expenses to and from Montana, and all tent and tent-master's expenses and time. Hence those who now compose this company have already paid in nearly enough to cover all the expenses of the work there, including my time.

Two Sabbath-schools were organized, one of about twenty members in the city, and one of about fifteen members in the country. A Tract Society was organized, which has already secured a good supply of tracts. They also take a club of the SIGNS and a club of *Sentinels*.

These brethren are anxious to have a minister go there and carry on the work already begun, and extend the work to other parts of the Territory. May God bless and help these dear souls to be faithful to the end.

O. A. JOHNSON.

"BREAD UPON THE WATERS."

JAMES BRAINERD TAYLOR was a graduate of Princeton, and only twenty-eight when he died, yet he did a work that any man might envy. He got hold of the idea that there was something in this doctrine of the endowment of the Spirit. Studying the subject, he became perfectly sure that the Holy Ghost might come upon him as upon the original disciples. So he prayed, and his prayers were answered. Whenever he went out he stirred all with whom he came in contact. Sinners used to fall before his preaching as grass before the scythe. It was spontaneous. He could not help speaking to men, and his words were mighty.

There is one very beautiful experience in his life. One day he was out driving, and he drew his horse up to a watering-trough. It so happened that another young man was doing the same thing. While the horses' heads met in the trough, he turned to the young man and said, "I hope you love the Lord. If you don't, I want to commend him to you as your best friend. Seek him with all your heart."

That was all. They turned and went their ways. But what was the result? The young man thus spoken to was converted, was educated for the ministry, and went as a missionary to Africa.

Said this missionary afterward: "Over and over again I wished I knew who that man was who spoke to me at the watering-trough. But I never knew till someone sent to me in Africa a box of books. I opened them, saw a little black-covered book, opened it, turned to the title-page, and there I saw a portrait—a beautiful face. Ah! said I, that is the man that preached the gospel to me at the watering-trough. To him I owe my salvation."

And that of how many more on the Dark Continent! What we want to-day is to be filled with the Spirit. We are filled with so many other things—pride, selfishness, ambition, and vainglory. May the Lord enable us to empty our hearts, and have them filled as by a mighty rushing wind!—*Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D.*

INDIANS AND THE BIBLE.

At the Thousand Islands meeting the first to speak was the Rev. Egerton R. Young, of Canada, for nine years a missionary amongst the Indians of the far north-land. His home was at Norway House, 400 miles north of the Winnipeg, and on the lake of that name. His circuit was 350 by 550 miles, the temperature falling sometimes as low as 55° below zero. Mr. Young told the following story:—

"At Norway House, on a certain occasion, a number of Indians came into my room noiselessly, after their fashion, so that the room was filled with them before I knew it. When I became aware of their presence I asked whence they were. 'From a journey of fourteen nights,' they replied; for they reckon distance by the number of nights they are delayed to sleep. 'We have got the *Keesenaychen* [the Great Book], but we don't understand it, although

we can read it.' I thought they were joking, for the Indians cannot read unless someone has taught them, and I knew from their account that they must live far away from any missionary; but I asked them, 'From what missionary did you learn?' 'We never saw a missionary nor a teacher!' I took down from our shelf our Bible, printed in the beautiful syllabic character for the Cree language, and opened to Genesis; they read it with ease and correctness. I turned the pages, and they read in many places. I was amazed, and asked them again where they lived. They described it to me; it was far away north of Hudson's Bay, hundreds of miles from any missionary. Their hunting-grounds, it seems, adjoin those of some Christian Indians—they cover great distances in hunting—and, continued my visitors, 'we visited your Indians and found that they had the *Keesenaychen*. We got them to read it, and then to teach it to us; and we were so pleased with it that we all learned to read it during the winter.' Every soul in a village of three hundred population had thus actually learned to read the Bible without ever having seen any white teacher; and having providentially come into possession of some copies that happened to be in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company's agent, these Indians had journeyed through the snow fourteen nights' distance that to them might be given instruction in the book they had thus learned to love."—*Record of Christian Work.*

A TRUE REVIVAL.

EVERY revival of religion recorded in the Bible seems to have been a revival of personal righteousness among God's own people. No amount of outward prosperity, no increase of numbers, no new and attractive forms of worship, can possibly make up for or take the place of the faithful conformity to the whole will of God on the part of those who are called by his name. The sooner the ministers and churches recognize this fundamental truth and necessity and bend all their energies toward the bringing about of such a revival, the better it will be for the church as such, and the speedier shall we all reach the desired end of seeing ungodly and skeptical unbelievers brought under the power of the gospel.—*Independent.*

WE should believe God. All that he has said he will make good. He will reproduce his words in facts. His great promises are fulfilled with as much ease as the less ones. He can make an ocean as readily as a dew-drop. He can give you a large blessing as readily as a small one; only give him room in your faith.

"PRAYER is the pulse of the renewed soul, the constancy of its beat is the test and measure of the spiritual life. Better fail a thousand times, and in everything else, than attempt to shape for yourself a life without God, without hope in Christ, and without interest in Heaven."

The Home Circle.

THE WARMTH OF A WORD.

T'WAS a day in the dead of winter,
And the echo of hurried feet
Struck sharp from the icy pavement
Of the pitiless city street.

Each passer was loath to linger,
Though wrapped in a fur-clad fold;
For the air was a-tingle with frost flakes,
And the sky was benumbed with cold.

The cimeter wind, in its fury,
Bore down like a sweeping foe;
The tempest was waiting the onset,
And abroad were its scouts of snow.

Yet 'midst it all, with his tatters
A-flap in the whirling blast,
A child who seemed born of the winter—
A creature of penury—passed.

So tremulous were his accents,
As he shivered and crouched and sung,
That the names of the mumbled papers
Seemed frozen upon his tongue.

He paused for a bitter moment,
As a wondrously genial face
Arrested his voice and held him
With a pity that warmed the place.

"Have a paper?" The kind eye glistened
As the stranger took the sheet,
And glanced at the stiffened fingers,
And thought of the icy feet,

Then dropped in his hand the value
Of his fifty papers sold;

"Ah, poor little friend!" he faltered,
"Don't you shiver and ache with cold?"

The boy, with a gulp of gladness,
Sobbed out, as he raised his eye
To the warmth of the face above him,
"I did, sir—till you passed by!"

—Margaret J. Preston.

THE CHRISTMAS OVERCOAT

"WELL, what shall we do for the children this year?" asked Mr. Adams, after his wife had returned from tucking her nestlings away to bed. "You know that money is scarce. We shall barely be able to make both ends meet during the winter; but I can't think of letting Christmas go by without giving the children their usual presents.

"I've been thinking about it myself," said Mrs. Adams, "but I am very strongly of the opinion that it is time we were teaching our children lessons of denying self for the good of others. Even if they are young, they are not too young to share your burdens and the burdens of others. Suppose that we tell them all about your restricted circumstances, and how it will hamper you to buy their Christmas gifts. Let us test them a little, and see if they really do honor father and mother."

"What! and not try to give them anything? I would rather go without my winter overcoat than think of doing such a thing."

"Yes, but that would not be just either to yourself or to the children. The cruelest thing we could possibly do for them would be to deny them the privilege of learning the lesson that this opportunity affords."

"Very well, mother. You are almost always right, but you may have the privilege of unfolding this opportunity and its blessings to them, for I am afraid they will be grievously disappointed."

"I hope that you will be happily mistaken. I shall insist on your being present also, to hear their unselfish response."

"Well, I will take my station behind the door, and hear your persuasions; but I have not much faith in the unselfish response of the young ones."

The next evening as Mrs. Adams prepared the children for bed, she told them of how many things were needed for the winter, how money was scarce, and provisions high, and unless papa went without an overcoat, they must go without Christmas presents. "Now, my children," said Mrs. Adams, "which shall it be, no overcoat for your papa, or no presents for you?"

Little Johnnie was the first to answer. "Let papa have his overcoat. Me don't want any Trismas pesants."

"Bless your brave heart," said mamma, as she hugged him up in her arms. The other children were more reluctant to reply.

"Oh, dear! I do want a wax doll so much, mamma," said Ethel dolefully.

"And I want a set of tools. I've just lotted on them for months," said Harry.

"And can't I have my skates?" asked Tom.

There was a tone of disappointment in their voices that cut right through Mr. Adam's heart, and made him whisper, "The children shall have their things, and I'll make the old coat do," but Mrs. Adams felt more determined than ever that her little ones should learn the lesson. She did not chide them, however, but simply asked, "What do we celebrate Christmas for? what is Christmas?"

"Well, it's the day upon which Christ was supposed to have been born. At least that is what it is celebrated for," said Harry.

"Did Christ give up anything that we might have this day of joy? or did he simply come here that he might receive gifts and gratify himself?"

"Why, of course not. He left his throne in Heaven and his power to come down here to be born in a manger so that we might be saved and be brought to Heaven at last," said Ethel.

"Then, Tom, won't you please turn to First Peter, the second chapter, and read the twenty-first verse, and let us see what we are to do?"

Tom read: "For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

"You see that we are to follow in his steps. Wherever we can suffer by denying ourselves for the good of others, we can find an opportunity to follow in his steps. Now, my children, if you want your own way, and do not wish to follow your Saviour, who did so much for you, and if you would rather have your toys than get papa a warm overcoat, all right. I shall leave it altogether with you. But I am sure that if you conclude to deny yourselves, you will find it the merriest, blessedest Christmas you ever spent, and you will follow in His steps who left you an example.

"Let me ask you another question. What kind of men came to Bethlehem, when they saw the star in the east?"

"Wise men," said the children.

"Wise men, were they? Wouldn't you like to be wise?"

"Of course we would."

"Well, what did they do?"

"They brought gold and frankincense and myrrh to Jesus," said Ethel.

"That is right. Now, Harry, please turn to the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, and read from the thirty-fourth to the fortieth verses.

Harry read: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

"Now you can see from this scripture that if we do good to those around us, it will be just the same as though we did it for Jesus. Wouldn't you all like to give our dear, precious Saviour an overcoat this winter? Papa is one of his brethren. That is all I shall say, and now you can do just as you please, but remember that 'the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.'"

"Well, mamma, I am perfectly willing," said Ethel. "So am I." "So am I," said the boys. "We don't want any Christmas presents at all. We'll just make papa and Jesus a present."

There was great whispering going on for several days, and then a consultation with mamma, and then the boys were off every night after school until dark, working for the grocer, and Ethel found herself employment in taking care of Mrs. Larkin's cross baby. Mamma smiled every night as she tucked them to bed, and noticed the marks of toil on their tender hands, and many a time when they were sound asleep, she knelt beside their beds and prayed that God would give them truly unselfish hearts.

"Now, papa," said Mrs. Adams, "why not give the children the money, and let them take you down to the tailor's and get your coat? It would be a great pleasure to them, and will help to present this lesson of self-denial to them in a new light."

"Just the thing," said Mr. Adams. "Have them all ready this afternoon."

What a happy time they did have as they trudged along to the tailor's through the crisp air! And what fun it was to look over coats, and fit them on their father, and find out which one he wanted, and then count out the bills to the funny tailor just like real men and women. They scarcely noticed the gay shop windows, full of wax dolls and tools, and everything beautiful. Without a pang of disappointment Tom called Harry's attention to a pair of shining club skates that he

had picked out, but he said, "I don't care about them now, when papa can have such a good warm coat to wear when he goes to earn money for us."

When Christmas morning came, four little white-gowned children stood beside their parents' bed, holding up four stockings, and shouting, "Merry Christmas."

"Heigh-ho! Merry Christmas, you young rogues! What have you got here?" asked papa, as they thrust before his face his stockings, from which two slipper heels projected. "A pair of slippers for me? What does this mean? Mamma, have you been playing tricks?"

"No, indeed," said Mamma. "But what is this in my stocking? A breakfast shawl, I do believe. Well! well! where did it come from?"

"We earned the money ourselves, working for Mr. Waters, and Ethel earned five cents a night, taking care of Mrs. Larkin's baby, and we thought we'd be papa and mamma this year, and buy our big children some presents."

"This is splendid!" said papa, slipping his bare feet into his new slippers, and bundling mamma in her shawl. "Why, mamma, we shall soon have nothing to do but sit in the chimney-corner and sing. Thank you, my dear children. But where are your stockings?"

"Oh, we weren't going to have any this Christmas! We gave up having any presents for ourselves so that you could have a new overcoat."

"Well, you just run and see if Santa hasn't brought you something."

"Sure enough, there was something—a square-looking parcel under each stocking, and some pop-corn and apples, and a couple of turkey's legs in the two oldest boys stockings, while in Ethel's and Johnnie's were the wings. When they opened the parcels they found a pretty book for each one, with their names printed on the covers in gilt letters.

Johnnie's was all about a wily fox. Tom's was a description of birds, beasts, and fishes. Harry's was a sort of scientific story, and Ethel's a beautifully illustrated copy of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress."

Mamma was as much surprised as the children when papa handed her a new hymn-book from the stand. "You see, my dear, my connection with the book concern has given me some advantage, and I was able after all to afford you each a little present. The dear Lord has been good to us all."

After breakfast Mr. Adams opened the new hymn-book, and they all gathered around the sweet-toned melodeon and sang the following hymn with the spirit and the understanding, making melody in their hearts unto the Lord:—

"My Maker and my King,
To thee my all I owe;
Thy sovereign bounty is the spring
Whence all my blessings flow.

"The creature of thy hand,
On thee alone I live;
My God, thy benefits demand
More praise than I can give.

"Lord, what can I impart
When all is thine before?
Thy love demands a thankful heart;
The gift, alas, how poor!

"Oh, let thy grace inspire
My soul with strength divine;
Let every word and each desire
And all my days be thine."

A little while before dinner Mrs. Adams called the children to carry four small baskets, which she had prepared with a nice dinner in each for some of her needy friends. Johnnie was to carry his basket to poor Grandma Horton, who lived alone in a little house near by. Ethel was to take hers to a little invalid child who was dying with consumption. Tom was to take his to a young Swedish girl who worked down town and boarded herself, and Harry was to carry his and deliver it into the hands of an orphan boy who had to live with a very unkind aunt since his own mother died. The children came back with glowing faces and happy hearts. Each one had some interesting thing to tell about his visit of mercy, and there was a little of the joy of the angels in that pleasant home. How good the dinner did seem, for their walk had given them an appreciative appetite!

Mr. Adams read aloud from Ethel's new book all the afternoon. How interested they did get in Bunyan's pilgrim! There was no stopping until the book was finished, so all through the winter evenings when Mr. Adams was at leisure he read the beautiful allegory to his children, and the story of Christian and his family became the absorbing theme of the happy circle. Ethel grew quite anxious to know when they should start out for the Celestial City, and some of them did start that very winter.

"If we hadn't given up our presents we should never have had this book," said Ethel one day, "and I would rather have it now than a thousand wax dolls. I think it pays to give up one's own way to do good to others, and to follow in His steps who gave us an example."

"So do I," said Tom, brushing his whittlings into the coal bucket, and looking over her shoulder at the picture of Giant Despair. "If I had got my skates, I expect I would have broken my nose before this time, and I never would have been content to stay at home and hear this story about being a Christian."

"Yes, and poor papa would have been cold all winter. He wouldn't have had any nice slippers, and mamma wouldn't have had any breakfast shawl, and everything would have been different. I just enjoy my book, and I'm learning how to use my tools scientifically when I do get them. So that's all right."

"But the very best thing you have received has been the blessing of Jesus. I am hoping that my children will always be better, more unselfish, children because of this Christmas lesson. The Bible says we are not to look on our own things, but on the things of others, and we must not only be unselfish at Christmas-time, but at all times, always looking around to see where self may be forgotten, and someone else remembered, following in His steps who went about doing good. If it is ever so little a service to ever so humble a person, if it is done unselfishly for love's sweet sake, it will be recorded by the angels of Heaven, and received by the Lord of glory as though done unto himself."

FANNIE BOLTON.

Health and Temperance.

TEMPERATURE OF FOOD AND DRINK.

PROFESSOR UFFELMANN, of Rostock, publishes his conclusions, drawn from experimental researches by himself and others, on the effects of food and drink at different temperatures. In brief, these are: 1. A temperature of food and drink which approaches that of the blood is most healthful. For nurslings such temperature is essential. 2. For quenching the thirst, the best temperature is from 50° to 68° Fahrenheit. 3. Very hot or very cold food or drink in health has a damaging effect, which is increased just in proportion to the rapidity with which the hot or cold substance is taken. 4. The use of very hot and cold substances, following or alternating, is injurious to the teeth. 5. Cold food and drink lessen the bodily temperature, whether it be normal or febrile. 6. Cold fluids lessen the irritability and raise the tone of the stomach. 7. Hot food and drinks stimulate the stomach more than cold. But after repeated use they lessen the tone of the digestive tract and cause congestion and dyspepsia.—*Chicago News*.

DIPHTHERIA AND CATS.

If mankind descend from the proper dignity of their nature to a fondling intimacy with beasts, they are sure to find, sooner or later, some penalty that is inseparable from every sort of what the Mosaic law denounces as "confusion." The following (says the *London Sanitary Record*) is an illustration of the possible connection between diphtheria in children and in cats: A little boy was taken ill with what turned out ultimately to be fatal diphtheria. On the first day of his illness he was sick (modern insular for nausea), and the cat, which was in the room at the time, licked the vomit on the floor. In a few days (the child meanwhile having died) the animal was noticed to be ill, and her sufferings being so severe, and so similar to those of the dead boy, the owner destroyed her. During the early part of its illness the cat had been let out at night in the back yard, as usual. A few days later the cat of a neighbor, who lived a few doors further off, was noticed to be ill. It had also been out in the back yard at night. The second animal, which, however, recovered, was the pet and playfellow of four little girls, who, grieved at the illness of their favorite, nursed it with great care. All four girls developed diphtheria, their mother being convinced that they got it from the cat; and, indeed, no other known source of contact with infection could be discovered. It is easy to imagine cats catching an infectious disease like diphtheria when we remember how often milk and other unused food from the sick-room is given to the cat, or by some people thrown out into the back yard for the benefit of their neighbors' cats if they have none of their own.—*Sanitary Era*.

"It is not good to eat much honey."

News and Notes.

RELIGIOUS.

—There are in Burmah 502 Baptist Churches, with over 28,000 communicants, and some 70,000 adherents.

—The first convention of the so-called National Sabbath Union was held in Washington City, December 11 to 13.

—Missionaries in the Sandwich Islands must, if they would reach all the people, preach the gospel in five different languages.

—Seventy thousand Italians and 30,000 Spaniards in New York City are said to be almost entirely destitute of Protestant religious instruction.

—It is thought that the membership of the Protestant churches of the United States is over one-fifth of the total population of the country.

—Bishop Hurst, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, says that there are in Mexico 3,000,000 people who never saw a copy of the holy Scriptures, and yet Mexico is called a Christian country.

—English foreign missionary societies report 1,361 stations, 4,258 out-stations, 2,148 male missionaries, 408 female missionaries, 18,226 native helpers, 258,868 communicants, and incomes aggregating \$4,019,921.

—The *Catholic Review* makes the statement that in 1830 the Catholic population of the United States was only 50,000, and that now it is nearly ten millions, or two hundred times what it was fifty-eight years ago.

—A late dispatch from Rome says that the Pope proposes to establish diplomatic relations with Russia the same as with Germany, a Russian Minister being sent to the Vatican, but no Nuncio to St. Petersburg.

—Less than two years ago King Mwanga, of Uganda, Africa, burned scores of Christians at the stake; now, however, the interdiction upon Christianity has been removed, and English missionaries hold their meetings within sight of the king's palace.

—Having tried voluntary attendance at chapel for four years, the Harvard faculty is meditating a change. At the last meeting of the overseers it was resolved to request the Committee on Government to consider the advisability of making attendance upon daily prayers and upon recitations and lectures compulsory.

SECULAR.

—Harper, the Cincinnati bank wrecker, is insane.

—Two skaters were drowned at Ithaca, N. Y., on the 12th inst.

—Corea has made a treaty granting exclusive privileges to Russian traders.

—Rear Admiral Leroy, of the U. S. Navy, died on the afternoon of the 10th inst.

—Four men were killed by a boiler explosion near Evergreen, Ala., on the 12th inst.

—Russia imports annually 360,000,000 pounds of cotton, chiefly from America and Egypt.

—Two men were instantly killed by a boiler explosion at Cleveland, Ohio, on the 10th inst.

—December 9 the banks of New York City held \$7,200,000 in excess of the legal requirement.

—Late advices from East Africa report active hostilities between the natives and the Germans.

—December 12 a barn was burned near San Diego, Cal., and twelve horses perished in the flames.

—The State Central School building at Lockhaven, Pa., was burned on the 9th inst. Loss, \$1,500,000.

—The French have recently broken up a band of pirates in Tonquin. Eleven of the pirates were shot.

—Two men were killed and several others injured by an explosion in a Colorado coal mine on the 10th inst.

—The roof of a large steel mill at Newark, N. J., collapsed on the 10th inst., seriously injuring ten workmen.

—A family residence was burned near Cookville, Texas, on the 11th inst., and eight persons perished in the flames.

—Count Herbert Bismarck, who is looked upon as the probable successor of the Iron Chancellor, delivered his maiden speech in the Reichstag on the 15th inst.

—The explosion of a gun on a French iron-clad during target practice near Paris on the 13th inst. instantly killed six men.

—Seventeen bridges now span the Missouri River. The last one erected was formally opened and tested at Sioux City on the 5th inst.

—Senator Butler has introduced a joint resolution proposing a constitutional amendment enlarging the presidential term to six years.

—The White Caps have invaded Watertown, N. Y., and propose to regulate social affairs there after the same fashion followed in Indiana and Ohio.

—The police officers at Niagara Falls have been instructed to arrest all persons who may hereafter visit there for the purpose of performing daring feats.

—At Pomona, Cal., a few days since a ten-year-old boy fatally wounded his sister, aged seventeen years, with a gun which he supposed was not loaded.

—The Boston school election held on the 11th inst. resulted in a victory for the Anti-Catholic School Committee ticket. Over 17,000 women voted.

—M. Hammer has been chosen President of Switzerland. The President of that republic is elected for only one year and cannot hold office two terms in succession.

—The Belgian king, as head of the Congo Free State, has prohibited the introduction, transport, and sale of fire-arms and ammunitions within the territories of the State.

—Mad wolves have recently bitten thirty persons near the villages in the neighborhood of Orsoy, Hungary. A number of the victims have already died in great agony.

—The Standard Oil Company will soon lay a pipe line from Lima, Ohio, to St. Louis, for the transportation of oil for distribution over the Southern and Southwestern States.

—December 11 a veterinary surgeon of Taylorville, Ill., was sentenced to twenty-eight years in the penitentiary for torturing forty-five horses with sulphuric acid and croton oil.

—Two battalions of troops have been ordered to the scene of the great Belgium strike. A large number of strikers have been arrested, charged with attempts at dynamite outrages.

—A late dispatch to the *London Standard* from Rome is to the effect that the Pope has appointed a commission, headed by Cardinal Monaco, to consider the encouragement of Catholics voting in Italy.

—The postmaster at Alameda, Cal., was appointed in March, 1855, and has held the office continuously ever since. His term of service has been longer than that of any other postmaster in the United States.

—Three men were fatally burned by the explosion of naphtha at Providence, R. I., on the 13th inst. The same day one white man and two negroes were killed by the explosion of a boiler at Montgomery, Ala.

—The German hospital in New York has received from Prince William, of Wurtemberg, 16,640 marks (about \$4,000). This money is part of a legacy of \$50,000 left to the hospital by Gustave Adolph Meyer, a rich German-American who died in Stuttgart two years ago.

—England is building a 200-ton gun, which will throw a 4,000-pound shrapnel fifteen miles, and can be fired once every five minutes. A single shot from such a gun would sink any ship afloat. The weapon is designed for coast defense.

—A new route, it is stated, has been discovered for the proposed Nicaragua Canal, by which the total length of the excavation from Ochoa to Greytown will not exceed nineteen miles, and will consist of several short embankments instead of one long one. The cost will be greatly reduced.

—The type on the Hartford (Conn.) *Evening Post* is all set and distributed by machinery. The type is set in one continuous line, and is broken into lines of the proper length and justified by hand. Three hands are required to operate one machine, which can do the work of six rapid compositors.

—December 9 a mob of Socialists attacked a Catholic meeting in Amsterdam and prevented the orator of the occasion from making the address. A riot ensued, and before it could be quelled, the police were compelled to fire upon the warring factions. Several were wounded, and a large number of arrests were made.

—Chauncey M. Depew estimates that the recent presidential election cost the country not less than \$506,000,000, as follows: Loss of ten per cent. on \$5,000,000,000 representing the business of the country during the campaign, \$500,000,000; expended by the national committees of the great parties, \$1,000,000; by individuals, \$1,000,000; uninformed companies, \$4,000,000; total, \$506,000,000.

—Congressman Butterworth, of Ohio, has introduced a resolution authorizing the President to invite negotiations looking to assimilation and unity of the Dominion of Canada and the United States under one Government.

—A Cape Breton dispatch of the 13th inst. reports a furious storm in that quarter. The wind, blowing at the rate of seventy miles per hour, unroofed houses and wrecked vessels. The weather was intensely cold, and probably the loss of life was considerable.

—The *London Standard* expresses the belief, founded upon recent advices from Suakin, that Stanley succeeded in joining Emin, and that the latter held out against the Arab forces until his men mutinied and delivered both himself and Stanley over to the Mahdi. Their subsequent fate is unknown.

—The Canadian Minister of Marine has requested the Knights of Labor to take hold of the prosecution of several vessel owners who are known to have sent unseaworthy vessels to sea during the last season, thus recognizing the order on behalf of the Government, which the Knights believe is a big point gained.

—Two years ago the Knights of Labor had a membership of 723,000; its treasury was full and its assemblies united. Its present membership is probably less than 200,000, while its treasury is worse than empty. Reckless strikes, and bickering among its officials, are the causes assigned by members of the order for its rapid decline.

—The National Executive Committee of the Prohibition party met in Pittsburg on the 11th inst. to lay plans for work during the winter. It was resolved that members of the committee should visit various parts of the South as soon as possible, as that section of the country seems to demand most urgently immediate attention.

—The White Caps of Northern Illinois have demanded the resignation of a member of the common council of Rockford, who has been active in passing an ordinance prohibiting liquor selling in that city. A few days after serving the notice they emphasized their request by depositing a dynamite bomb at the door of the objectionable official.

—The total number of post-offices in the United States is 57,376, an increase over 1885 of 6,124. The number of postmasters appointed during the year ending June 30, 1888, was 12,288, of which 6,521 were upon resignation and commissions expired, 3,244 upon removals, 659 to fill vacancies by death, and 3,864 on the establishment of new post-offices.

—Senator Stewart has introduced a bill authorizing the Secretary of War, Secretary of the Navy, and the General of the army, acting as a board, to have constructed 250 pneumatic torpedo throwers of the highest power, capable of throwing steel torpedoes charged with not less than 500 pounds of dynamite or other explosives, a distance of five miles.

—The great Panama Canal Company is on the verge of failure, in fact has failed, and unless the French Government comes to its rescue its collapse must be final. That Government has granted the company three months' time in which to dispose of additional bonds, with permission to defer the payment of its debts for the same period, but it is not at all likely that it can recover its lost prestige.

—A Democratic Congressional caucus has agreed on an omnibus bill to admit as States the Territories of Dakota, Montana, Washington, and New Mexico. The question of the division of Dakota is to be left to a vote of the people. Quite a number expressed themselves in favor of the admission of Utah, and it is likely that a separate bill for the admission of that Territory will be introduced at an early day.

—The Maryland authorities are waging war against the oyster pirates on Chesapeake Bay. On the 11th inst. the State steamer *Governor McLain* encountered a fleet of pirate dredgers, when a sharp fight ensued, in which two of the dredgers were sunk and another captured. Probably more than a dozen lives were lost. The cook from one of the vessels reported that he was the only man who escaped out of a crew of eleven.

—White Caps have recently perpetrated most cruel outrages in the vicinity of Toledo, Ohio. As a rule their victims are not good citizens, but their methods are nevertheless utterly unjustifiable. One of their notices, served at Napoleon, Ohio, contained the words: "God hates liars and perjurers and adulterers. The White Cappers are the Lord's chosen people to wreak his vengeance on the wicked and the unjust."

—One of the leading papers of Chicago in its issue of December 12 published a long article relative to child murder in that city. It says: "Horrible crimes are being perpetrated here daily, and no coroner's inquests are held. The victims are so quietly disposed of that not a ripple is caused in the social stream. Prominent physicians and well-known midwives are engaged to commit murders, and commit them without compunction of conscience."

Publishers' Department.

RECEIPTS.

LONDON MISSION.—Cal S S Association \$7.45.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION FUND.—Mrs J J Bolton \$10.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.—Mrs Critchlow \$1, Georgia Burrus \$1.50.

CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE FUND.—M Burns \$3, Mrs Critchlow \$2.15, Julia Loomis \$3.40, F E Bosworth \$8, Emily Groom \$23.70, George B Thatcher \$2.

CALIFORNIA TRACT SOCIETY.—Dist No 1 Healdsburg \$64.10, Dist No 2 Fresno \$24.45, Dist No 3 Oakland Rivulet Society \$2.50, Dist No 4 San Francisco \$6.55, Dist No 7 St Clair \$25.80, Dayton \$14.20, Reno \$5, Elder Loughborough \$7, Elder Wm Ings \$20.75, Mrs M E Sisley \$10.

A BROTHER who has lately arrived from Roumania would like to secure work among Sabbath-keepers on a ranch. Any who need such help may address, J. V. Badescu, Pacific Press, Oakland.

TIME TO RENEW.

QUITE a number of subscriptions to the SIGNS expire soon. Please examine the address label on your paper this week, and if your time is out in December, 1888, or January, 1889, please send us your renewal at once, so that the letter will have time to reach us before your subscription expires.

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The Abiding Sabbath and the Lord's Day.

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A REVIEW.

The above is the title of a pamphlet recently issued. In its pages the author reviews the two most recent and without doubt the best contributions to the defense of Sunday, popularly called the "Lord's Day." The first of these essays was written by Rev. George Elliott, and took the \$500 "Fletcher Prize," offered by the trustees of Dartmouth College for the best essay on the "Perpetual Obligation of the Lord's Day."

The other essay was written by A. E. Waffle, M. A., and was awarded a \$1,000 prize by the Committee of Publication of the American Sunday-school Union.

We state thus definitely the source of the essays reviewed that all may see their importance. Certainly if there was any argument in favor of Sunday, we should expect to find it in these prize essays. Elder Jones in his *Review* takes up their arguments and assertions, and shows very plainly how several times the authors have *proved what they did not want to prove* at all—namely: The Seventh-day Sabbath is still as binding on all as when the law was given.

This *Review* will be read with interest and profit by all, and those who have friends that are interested in the Sabbath Question should see that one of these pamphlets is placed in their hands.

WORDS OF APPROBATION.

Elder R. A. Underwood, President Ohio Conference, says:—

"The 'Abiding Sabbath' should find its way to every home in the land. It certainly will have a wide circulation. May God bless it on its mission. The quotations from Mr. Elliott's essays set forth the divine origin of the Sabbath, its object, universality, and inseparable relation to the moral law of ten commandments, of which it is a part, and its binding obligation upon all mankind; also the clear distinction between the Sabbath and the ceremonial rites, or laws, in words of sublime, convincing power. Yet he, like all who feel it their duty to prop up the Sunday-sabbath with the fourth commandment, contradicts his own position. Elder Jones has made a clean-cut, sound argument."

Elder J. N. Loughborough, President California Conference, says:—

"I have just completed a careful reading of Elder Jones' *Review*. In this he attacks the main pillars of their argument for a Sunday-sabbath, and at the same time he gives an epitome of the argument for the true Bible Sabbath. He shows clearly that notwithstanding all the efforts of the \$500 and \$1,000 essay men to establish Sunday as the Sabbath, it stands, according to their own admissions, without any Scripture command, or any divine warrant. This *Review* clearly shows what is the true 'Abiding Sabbath,' the day of God's own appointment. This book of Elder Jones' should have a very wide circulation, and be read by all."

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The Signs of the Times.

OAKLAND, CAL., SIXTH-DAY, DECEMBER 21, 1888.

We send no papers from this office without pay in advance unless by special arrangement. When persons receive copies without ordering them, they are sent by other parties, and we can give no information in regard to them. Persons thus receiving copies of *THE SIGNS* are not indebted to the office, and will not be called upon for pay. Please read the papers and hand them to your friends to read.

By comparing the reports concerning the Sunday-law petition to Congress, it will be seen that the number of petitioners has suddenly jumped from six million to fourteen million. This is evidently due to the letter of Cardinal Gibbons to Mr. Crafts, indorsing the movement. It is easy work securing signers to a petition when eight million names can be added by a stroke of the pen.

THE theological faculty of the University of Giessen has conferred on Prince Bismarck the title of Doctor of Divinity! Just what moved them to do this we do not know, but we imagine that it was because they are tinctured with the National Reform idea that men may go up to the polls to worship God. When politics and religion are one, we can see no incongruity in making every statesman a Doctor of Divinity.

Two hundred and twelve thousand copies of the October *Sentinel* extra, besides the regular issue, were printed and sent out, and already the good effect of that movement can be seen. The January number ought to have fully as wide a circulation, and to insure this the publishers offer to furnish them to Tract Societies at the rate of \$10 per thousand copies, in lots of not less than five thousand. Extra plates will be made, so that orders can be filled at any time.

THE *Union Signal* has this to say of the proposed Sunday law: "Labor unions are now united with the churches in demanding such legislation. Our wheelbarrow Government never does anything without pushing; but with the churches pushing with all their might at one handle of the wheelbarrow, and the labor unions doing the same at the other, it must move and carry its load—Sunday observance—along with it." When Pilate and Herod were made friends, Christ had to be crucified.

In the *Chronicle's* report of the San Francisco Methodist Preachers' Meeting, last Monday, we find the following item:—

"Mr. Van Blarcom urged the importance of work for securing a Sunday law from the coming Legislature. Dr. Dwinelle said the only hope of getting one was in a union with the Catholics for the object. He thought they would unite to that end. Others expressed the same opinion."

Of course they will unite to that end. But let them be assured that the Catholic Church never makes any alliance except to its own advantage. And we would like to have these ministers consider whether they can unite with Catholics and still continue to be Protestants.

A WASHINGTON dispatch of the 11th inst. mentions the opening of the National Sunday Convention in that city, and says:—

"A feature of the decorations was festoons of petitions to Congress, from every part of the country, urging the passage of the 'Sunday Rest' Bill introduced last session. The petitions were attached to a seemingly endless broad scarlet ribbon, which reached several times around and across the great auditorium of the church. They contained, approximately, 6,000,000 names."

That to which we wish to call special attention is the color of the ribbon on which these Sunday-law petitions were hung. It was a "seemingly endless broad scarlet ribbon." Inasmuch as the Sunday institution is the child of the woman arrayed in "pur-

ple and scarlet color," which sat upon the "scarlet-colored beast" (see Rev. 17:3-6), and has shed the blood of so many saints, it is highly fitting that that color should be prominent in connection with the Sunday-law petitions. We are glad that our National Reform friends have an eye to the fitness of things. If they choose to array themselves with the trappings of the beast, they have the privilege; but we will have nothing to do with his mark.

ANOTHER evidence, or rather admission, that all Sunday legislation is religious legislation, is found in the remarks of Dr. Goodwin, of Chicago, in presenting to the ministers' meeting the resolutions prepared by Dr. Herrick Johnson in regard to Sunday newspapers and Sunday observance. The Doctor said that "to strike at the Christian Sabbath is to strike at the very corner-stone of all our Christian institutions." Therefore a law in favor of Sunday, the so-called Christian Sabbath, is a law in favor of the Christian religion; and since no open law breaker can hope to be elected to public office, it follows that the enactment of Sunday laws is squarely opposed to that part of the Constitution of the United States which says that no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

THE January number of the *American Sentinel* promises to be one of the best ever issued. From present prospects we may say that we don't know how it could very well be any better than it will be, unless there were more of it. And it seems that by some means the people are anticipating what it will be, for already the publishers have received, by telegraph, orders for many thousand extra copies. One Missionary Society alone has sent an order for thirty-eight thousand extra copies. Perhaps others would like to do the same. From positive knowledge we can say that the publishers would be very willing to print two hundred thousand of the January number. If twice as many are ordered, they will not complain. Among the interesting live matter that the January *Sentinel* will contain, will be reports of the Illinois "Sabbath Association" meeting in Chicago, and of the National Convention in Washington, December 11-13.

It is said that "a sensation has been caused by the refusal of the Pope to bless a lot of medals and reliquaries sent to Rome by an Irish priest, who intended them for distribution in Ireland. The Pope sternly says: 'I cannot bless them. The people of Ireland are disobedient. They seem to prefer the gospel of Dillon and O'Brien to the gospel of Jesus Christ.'"

It remains to be seen whether the people of Ireland can survive this cruel blow. Possibly they may manage to get along without the silly baubles over which the Pope refused to mumble a blasphemous jargon, mis-called a blessing. Probably the blow will fall most heavily upon the unfortunate priest, who no doubt expected to reap a golden harvest from the sale of his medals and reliquaries. Certain it is that the poor people of Ireland have lost nothing by the withholding of the Papal benediction.

THE *Independent* of November 29 had the following note:—

"It is significant that the first article in this our Thanksgiving number is a recognition by the presiding Cardinal Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church in America, of the value of the day of thanksgiving and praise appointed by the President of the United States. Our Catholic fellow-citizens have been slow to adopt this New England institution, but now the same Cardinal Gibbons has directed it to be observed in the churches under his authority. So we agree in bidding all our people, Protestant and Catholic, now for the first time, to celebrate this national holiday."

Indeed it is significant, and significant of far more than the *Independent* imagines. It is significant of the rapidity with which Catholicism and professed Protestantism are coming together. Last spring the majority of Protestant churches in many large cities

observed "holy week," in accordance with Catholic custom; and it is but a slight return for their obsequiousness for the Catholics to observe Thanksgiving-day, in accordance with Protestant custom, especially since the observance consists chiefly in gormandizing.

THE *Chicago Advance* of December 6, in an article on the reasons why fewer men than women attend church, shows the fallacy of the explanation that men are too tired to attend church on Sunday, by saying that "laboring men's organizations are quite commonly holding their meetings on Sunday. They do not seem to be too tired for that." And then it continues:—

"It is also plain that the men who do not come to church include that constantly increasing class who are secularizing Sunday, and making it another work-day. Nothing can be more clear than the fact that the only way to have Sunday a rest day is to keep it a religious day."

And so, "by the same token," it appears that every law for the observance of Sunday is a law in favor of religion; and therefore to make laws compelling people to keep Sunday is to make laws to compel them to be religious, and it should need no argument to convince anybody who has ever read the Bible that such a proceeding is directly opposed to the Spirit of Christ and the gospel.

THE San Francisco County Sunday-school Association was organized last week, and the brief report in the *Chronicle* reveals the fact that there is at least one man in San Francisco who has a level head. The report says:—

"Mrs. Gray, of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, wanted the society to take hold of a petition to the Legislature urging it to pass a Sunday law, and a law prohibiting the sale of tobacco to children; but no action was taken in the matter, Chairman Anthony stating that he had no confidence in the average legislator doing anything to promote godliness."

If Mr. Anthony had only said that he had no confidence in any legislator doing anything in his official capacity to promote godliness, he would have been exactly right. Godliness is obedience to God, and not to man. Human laws concerning religion can never make men godly, nor can they have any tendency in that direction; but if they are severe enough, and are rigidly enforced, they can make first-class hypocrites.

WE heartily indorse the following from the *Sunday School Times*, in answer to the question if the Jews in compassing the city of Jericho seven days did not thereby violate the Sabbath:—

"The record stands that they compassed the city six days, and that on the seventh day they compassed it seven times. This leaves no room for questioning that one of those seven days was the Sabbath. The rabbinical tradition is that the marching began on the first day of the week, and that therefore the last day of the siege was the Sabbath. However this may be, there is nothing in the record that is inconsistent with the true observance of the Sabbath by the Israelites on every one of the seven days. Were they doing their own work on those days? By no means. They were simply following the ark of the Lord; and that is good business for any believer on the Sabbath, or on any other day of the week. The work of destruction in Jericho did not, probably, begin until sundown of the seventh day. In fact, the siege of Jericho was simply a protracted meeting of seven days, with extra services on the last day of the week."

That last sentence has the flavor of originality.

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