

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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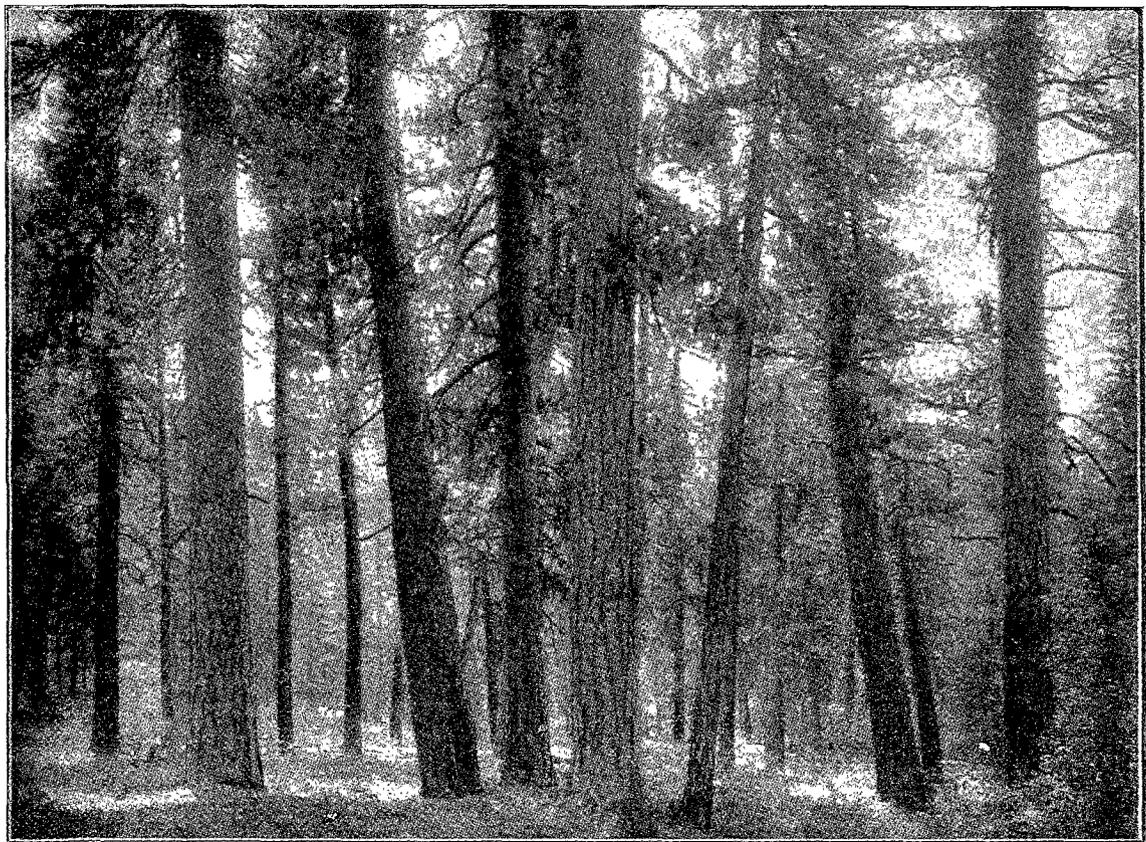
Melbourne, Victoria, February 8, 1909.

ONE PENNY

A Christian's Investigation of the Theatre.

MOST of the expressed opposition to the theatre from people of the church has failed to carry full weight because of one sentence almost always present—"Of course, I do not speak from personal experience." A writer in *The Watchman* (Baptist),

decided change of sentiment among Christian people," and theatre attendance became greatly on the increase, he heard it claimed that "the old arguments did not apply; that 'a new movement' had begun: that there was a distinct and growing 'upward tendency' in the theatre which should be fostered and not frowned upon by a hostile church." He was moved to action by his boy, who "returned from school one



Pine Forest in the North-West of the United States.

who signs himself "An Inquirer," claims "personal experience" as an asset in his opposition, and his revelations have interest if they do not in all cases bring convictions similar to his own. He asserts that during his whole life he has, upon principle, "opposed the theatre as an institution," and that his position was supported by all that he could learn of it. Yet when a few years ago he began to "recognise a

day with the announcement that his teacher wished him to attend one of the plays of Shakespeare which he was studying in his English course." We quote his words:—

"After earnest prayer my wife and I decided to climb over the fence and have a look at this thing for ourselves. We resolved to study the actual conditions as they existed, by attending representative

plays. At first we were attracted; then repelled. We saw several unobjectionable plays, and then others which were more or less tainted with evil. So we dropped the whole thing in dismay for a few months. But then tried it again. There was much that was fascinating and helpful. But too often something, perhaps only a slight thing, would clash with our ideas of right, and would leave us dissatisfied. We were often unaccountably depressed after going to the theatre without apparent immediate cause. We would attribute this as a possible result of our early training. (Thank God for that training.)

"And so we continued to study the matter valiantly. We saw many of the leading plays and operas, good, bad, and indifferent. We read everything that we could find upon the subject. We talked with many who had opinions. We interviewed several prominent actors. On one or two occasions, with a clergyman friend, I went 'behind the scenes.' We learned a good deal. We had many moments when we abhorred the whole thing, and were strongly inclined to abandon our investigation.

"Somehow, we were usually more or less heavy at heart on returning from a play. The sight of the pure and good faces, for instance, of some Salvation Army lasses, would give us a sort of pang. At such times I could not seem to feel my wonted grip upon my Bible or upon prayer. The old hymns did not stir me quite as before. Then we would conclude that it was because we were trying to change a life habit, and that we were a wee bit 'morbid.' So we would start again and use more caution in the selection of the thoroughly 'good' play.

"It seems strange now, very strange, that it took us so long to find out God's will. We prayed and prayed about the matter, and were deeply conscientious, so we thought. I suppose that one difficulty had intruded itself in our search for the wisest course. We were unquestionably charmed and held fast by certain great and many really admirable things that we had seen. We were now not impartial students, for we wanted to go, and realised that it was going to cost a struggle to give it up. It was to us a very attractive form of entertainment and instruction, if we could only avoid certain objectionable features that stained so many of the plays, and this it still seemed possible to do.

"And so we found ourselves almost irresistibly drawn toward it again. Specious arguments filled our minds and seemed for a time plausible; and yet I would sometimes say, 'It seems as if my feet were caught in a net.' God was patient and gentle with us, however. I can never be thankful enough for His leading. We gradually felt ourselves more and more inclined to abandon the venture, and to return to our old position. Too many of the best plays and operas, even Shakespeare's, were streaked here and there with something suggestive, if not openly and boldly vicious. No argument can explain this fact away. Still we needed some decisive experience that would be convincing and forever settle our questioning."

That "decisive experience" came with witnessing a performance of "The Devil," the play by the Hungarian Ferenc Molnar. The writer went to hear Mr. John Craig, an actor, address the Boston Ministers' Meeting. This address occurred in the course of several presented to this organisation bearing the

message from other professions of the kind of sermons that each liked to hear. Mr. Craig, of course, spoke for the actors. "He made a pleasant address," says the writer, "in which he avoided vital issues, and evaded some pointed questions which were asked him." Whether the writer takes into account the differing points of view in thus judging Mr. Craig, he at least shows that an open mind on his part followed this hearing, for when Mr. Craig's "work and the play in which he was then acting were extolled by one of the ministers whom we trust and honour," and the audience then "were all advised to witness the performance," the writer and his wife went to see the play. We read:—

"Most providentially, for us, the play was simply abominable, low, suggestive, immoral, and wholly inexcusable. There was no moral, and I cannot see how any possible good can come from it. We were horrified. The tittering of the afternoon audience (a respectable-looking company), the evident blindness and perverted moral sense of both actors and spectators, distressed us beyond measure. But oh, after our long period of questioning and indecision, it was just what we needed. We saw the danger and the subtlety of the theatre as we never could have seen it in a better play. It shocked us that noble Christian ministers could be so beguiled, and could draw others after them.

"We left the theatre in silence, and walked up Tremont Street, and soon found ourselves opposite a house endeared to me by most sacred recollections. Many years ago it was the home of my godly grandparents, where I lived during the first years of my life. As a child I had there received from my beloved and faithful parents my first impressions of Jesus, my Saviour, and His salvation. With few words, after an earnest prayer, we took hold of hands, standing by the old homestead, and pledged ourselves before God that we would never again attend the public theatre until a revolution had changed the very heart of society.

"As a whole, the theatre is bad, bad, bad, through and through, and, I believe, is growing worse. The perfectly good plays are very few, and cannot save the wreck. The influences of stage life upon those employed are very dreadful, and I fear that very many, if not most of such, are sooner or later corrupted. One of the fearful dangers is to my mind the ease and complacency with which good people can learn to tolerate grievous departures from a New Testament standard of morality. The tendency is for the moral sense to become perverted, blinded. 'For art's sake,' positively repulsive immorality is quietly ignored. It is a strange and sad sight, far too common, to see cultivated and intelligent people sit calmly through performances that ought to shock the moral sense of their inmost soul. No, the church must let the theatre alone. Christians must 'come out from it, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing.'

"Our investigation is over. Our study is completed. It has been a dangerous experiment. But we have information at first hand, we know whereof we speak. We shall be better able than ever to warn and advise. It will enable us to avoid with increased conviction all 'border-line' practices."—*The Literary Digest*.

The Unconscious Load We Bear.

IF a person who had given no thought to the matter were told that he is perpetually sustaining a weight of about fourteen tons, and that that stupendous burden is ever varying, sometimes increasing, sometimes decreasing, to the extent of four and five hundred pounds in the course of a few hours, he would probably consider that his prodigious load represents the weight of air which every person of average size is always bearing; although, as the pressure is equal on all sides, the cumbersome burden is not only not felt, but under certain conditions of the atmosphere, when the barometer stands high, indicating that the pressure is increased, a sense of invigoration is experienced, which passes away when he has been relieved of the additional hundredweight or two which he was carrying.

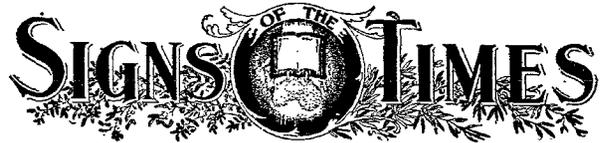
Some idea of the tremendous pressure of the air may be gathered by placing the hand firmly over the receiver of an air-pump and exhausting the air therefrom; a large hand measuring eight square inches would then, if the air were completely exhausted, have a weight of exactly a hundredweight pressing upon its upper surface. Only a Samson would have sufficient muscular force to lift that load and remove his hand from the receiver.

Although our atmosphere is so transparent and so diaphanous, yet its total weight is computed at the enormous total of five thousand five hundred million millions of tons! And when this ponderous element is set in violent motion, as in a hurricane, its weight and density are more readily realised; for then, when in all its fury the unseen air is madly rushing along, or furiously whirling round and round, at the rate of a hundred miles an hour, nothing except the most solidly erected structures can withstand its infuriate and fierce onslaughts. Great trees are felled in a moment; stacks of hay and corn are scattered to the winds; and even human beings struck by the tornado are hurled to the ground, or even caught up and whirled through the air like feathers in a gale.

But it is believed, on the highest authority, that there is a heavier load than air, of which also we are mostly unconscious; of which we may be relieved through the merits and all prevailing mediation of the Redeemer.—*Selected.*

THE iron mountain in Durango, Mexico, which is 640ft., and has a radius of three or four miles in all directions, is said to contain sufficient of the metal to supply the world's requirements for the next 1,000 years.

IN an address to the members of the "Birmingham Microscopists' and Naturalists' Union," Mr Walter E. Collinge mentioned that the average damage to crops in the United States by insects and other pests has been estimated at nearly £60,000,000 per annum, while in England the loss attributable to the ox warble fly alone, has been variously calculated at from £2,000,000 to £7,000,000 per annum, to say nothing of the mischief wrought by insects in sheep and the numerous pests to which all farm crops are subject.



A. W. Anderson, Editor.

Melbourne, Victoria, February 8, 1909

"As a Thief in the Night."

CURIOSITY concerning the future seems to be innate in man, and this peculiar trait in human character leads numbers to spend many idle moments in fruitless efforts to unlock the secrets of the future. Usually, however, these imaginings and speculations differ widely from the actual events as they occur. God alone can reveal what shall be, and it is to this feature of His omniscience that He Himself points in proof of His power, as well as of the rightfulness of His claims upon men, in contradistinction to the claims of all other gods.

"That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it, produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." Isa. 41: 20-23.

"Let all the nations be gathered together, let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth." Isa. 43: 9.

"Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside Me. Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. 45: 20-22.

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure: . . . yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Isa. 40: 9-11.

Through past ages the controversy between truth and error has been ceaselessly waged, false gods and false religions having found a congenial soil for growth and development in the hearts of men; while Jehovah, the only true God, and His eternal principles of truth have been supplanted by the noxious weeds of error. In the texts of Scripture just quoted, God makes a powerful appeal to men to put their false systems of religion and their false gods to the test. He asks them to bring forth their strong reasons and show us what shall happen. "Let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them." He challenges them to "Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." But to this challenge they are dumb like Baal in the days of Elijah, when that noble and fearless man of God challenged Baal and his prophets to prove their

claims. All the eight hundred and fifty false prophets, crying from morning until evening to their false god, evoked no response to their frantic appeals for him to vindicate the claims which they made on his behalf. The record of that controversy between truth and error tells us that after expending half a day in fruitless attempts to stir up Baal to demonstrate his power, Elijah mockingly said to the prophets of the false god, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." To this irony the prophets of Baal responded by crying aloud, and cutting themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. But although they continued their exercises until evening "there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded." Then Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord which was broken down, and having prepared the sacrifice, pouring water over it three times until the trench about the altar was filled with water, the prophet of the Lord lifted up his voice to God, and asked Him to let Israel know that He was the God of Israel. No sooner were the words uttered than "the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God." 1 Kings 18:38, 39.

Surely such a convincing test would be sufficient evidence of God's divinity and power. But it is rather remarkable that God Himself, when appealing to false gods to give a demonstration of their powers, does not ask them to work any miracle, but calls upon them to "show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods."

Prophecy, then, is the sure and certain evidence that the Lord is God, that He is the One who created all things, and who has the only legitimate claim upon our adorations. Is it not exceedingly strange, then, that prophecy is so little studied to-day? But the result of this lack of study of this important part of the Word of God is seen in the unblushing infidelity of the times, an infidelity which, but a few years ago, was hidden to a considerable extent beneath the general respect for the prevailing religious ideas of the people, but which now not only stalks abroad like the pestilence at noon-day, but actually invades even the pulpit, and arrogantly airs its pantheistic, or its deistic, or its agnostic, sophistries. God has unveiled many of the mysteries of the future, in order that men might be armed against the sophistical teaching of ecclesiastical charlatans, who base their fallacious reasoning upon empiricism rather than upon the fundamental principles of truth as revealed in the Word of God. That which would fortify the mind against the deceptions of these last days is unappreciated, and in many cases is cast aside altogether even by the professed people of God.

Perchance there may be some who may read these lines who will be ready to say, as so many do, "We have nothing to do with prophecy now, as the prophecies met their fulfilment in Christ; we have the New Testament for our guide." Without conceding the validity of such an argument which, did space permit, could easily be proved from the Scriptures to

be unsound, for the Apostle Peter said, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place" (2 Peter 1:19), we would ask, What shall be done with all the prophecies of the New Testament? Quite a large portion of the New Testament consists of prophecy, and should be studied carefully in order that we may be fortified against the wiles of the enemy of souls, who, "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Because the Jews failed to grasp the meaning of the prophecies of the first advent of the Saviour, they did not discern the signs of the times, and failed to recognise the Son of man as the Son of God. They were looking for a Messiah entirely different from the Man of sorrows, and being disappointed, they became the sport of every false christ and false prophet which Satan cunningly used to deceive the people. The people of to-day are in a condition similar to that of the Jews at the beginning of the Christian era. The prophecies concerning the second advent of the Saviour are as little understood by the bulk of mankind to day, as were the prophecies of the first advent twenty centuries ago. All kinds of ideas are held and taught, most of which are at variance with the plain teaching of the Scriptures. There are some who think the coming of the Lord, as a thief in the night, takes place at death. The absurdity of such an idea must be apparent after a moment's meditation. There are others, again, who think the Lord may come at any time, or at no time, or in a million years from now. Then there are large numbers who are looking for the Master to come and set up an earthly kingdom at Jerusalem, from whence He will gradually subdue the whole earth. And so we might go on, *ad infinitum*, reciting the fallacious ideas of men who are ready to accept and teach anything and everything except the plain truths of the sure word of prophecy.

So many conflicting ideas are prevalent in the religious world to-day, that we say without any fear of contradiction, that in this respect, as in many others, our day and generation is absolutely without a parallel in history. Because of this, there never was a time when it was more necessary that men should know what the prophetic word has to say in regard to this time, than now. Never in the history of the world have the people had so many opportunities to learn the truth as now. Bibles are being multiplied in the languages of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; therefore, when the day of the Lord bursts upon a world all unprepared to meet the Judge of all the earth, humanity will stand without excuse. That that day will come as a thief in the night there can be no gainsaying; but it is not necessary that this should be so, for God has made ample provision in order that the day of the Lord might *not* come as a thief in the night. To those who will study "the times and the seasons," Paul says, "Ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." 1 Thess. 5:1-5.

Is that day, dear reader, approaching you as a thief in the night? Are you as oblivious of "the times and the seasons" as the householder is of the intentions of the thief who is proposing to make a stealthy raid of his house, whilst the family is asleep?

If that is the extent of your knowledge of the coming of the Lord, then we urge you to seek for an understanding of the sure word of prophecy which will lighten your darkness, and fortify you against the wicked deceptions of false christs and false prophets.

A Predicted Timber Famine.

A CERTAIN land company in the United States in one of its striking advertisements makes the following astounding declaration:—

“Every twenty-four hours 110,000 acres of trees are cut down and consumed for various purposes. At this rate of destruction the entire forest supply of the United States will be consumed in from seventeen to twenty-four years. Last year we cut nearly fifty billion feet of lumber; in the last fifty years we have cut away nearly a million square miles of forest. In all the world's history there has been no parallel, nor anything approaching a parallel, for the rapidity with which this magnificent and seemingly inexhaustible treasure-house of Nature has been exploited. And now we face a timber famine!”

Continuing in the same strain they urge the public to buy suitable land for the purpose of making plantations of eucalyptus on account of the rapidity of its growth. They say,—

“Of all the trees in California none excite so much wonder and astonishment by the marvellous rapidity of their growth as the eucalyptus. In ten years these magnificent trees attain a height of from thirty-five to forty feet,” and so on.

Now if the statements of this land company are true, and we have no reason to doubt them, as they are made in a magazine which would not publish anything about whose *bona fides* there can be any question, is it not a matter for grave and serious reflection that the forests of America are being cut out so rapidly, that there is fear of a timber famine in the near future? It is only another indication that conditions of life are changing very rapidly, and that in spite of the assertions of men to the contrary, all things are *not* continuing as they were. Great changes are being forced upon the world, many of which will be found extremely inconvenient. Living is becoming more expensive the world over, and the growing scarcity of timber will certainly not tend to make matters any better. Those who believe the “sure word of prophecy,” and who are anxiously expecting the Lord Jesus to come in the near future, need not worry themselves with any grave misgivings concerning the anticipated timber famine and the scarcity of other products which shrewd business men are predicting will be experienced in from seventeen to

twenty-four years from now. These perplexing things only furnish stronger evidence that the sure word of prophecy, which never has failed yet, never will; and therefore those who are watching the signs of the times see in all these peculiar conditions which are arising in every part of the earth, and which are affecting most seriously the general condition of the commercial and social world, a fulfilment of the Scriptures concerning the second advent of our Lord and Saviour. One of the signs to which the Saviour made pointed reference is that mentioned by Luke: “Men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world.” This, He said, would be one of the conditions which would be experienced just before the time when the Son of man would be seen “coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” But the child of God need not become gloomy because of the unfortunate outlook



An Example of Destructive Lumbering in California.

which is before the world. He is bidden by his Master to regard the evidences of the end of the world with rejoicing. “When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 21:28.

NO MATTER if you are hidden in an obscure post, never content yourself with doing your second best, however unimportant the occasion.—*General Phil. Sheridan.*

GOD'S witness in His Word is so sure that we may draw solid comfort from it both for time and eternity; so sure that no attacks made upon it, however fierce or subtle, can ever weaken its force. What a blessing that in a world of uncertainties we have something sure to rest upon! We hasten from the quicksands of human speculations to the *terra firma* of divine revelation.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

General Articles

Character.

DAILY deed and daily thought,
Slowly into habit wrought,
Raise that temple base or fair,
Which men call our character.
Build it nobly, build it well;
In that temple God may dwell!

—Edward W. Benson.

Unto Them That Look for Him Christ Will Appear.

By Mrs. E. G. White.

AT the time of Christ's first advent, the priests and scribes of the holy city, to whom were intrusted the oracles of God, might have discerned the signs of the times, and proclaimed the coming of the Promised One. The prophecy of Micah designated his birth-place (Micah 5:2); Daniel specified the time of his advent. Dan. 9:25. God had committed these prophecies to the Jewish leaders; they were without excuse if they did not know and declare to the people that the Messiah's coming was at hand. Their ignorance was the result of sinful neglect. The Jews were building monuments for the slain prophets of God, while by their deference to the great men of earth they were paying homage to the servants of Satan. Absorbed in their ambitious strife for place and power among men, they lost sight of the divine honours proffered them by the King of heaven.

With profound and reverent interest the elders of Israel should have been studying the place, the time, the circumstances, of the greatest event in the world's history,—the coming of the Son of God to accomplish the redemption of man. All the people should have been watching and waiting that they might be among the first to welcome the world's Redeemer. But lo, at Bethlehem two weary travellers from the hills of Nazareth traverse the whole length of the narrow street to the eastern extremity of the town, vainly seeking a place of rest and shelter for the night. No doors are open to receive them. In a wretched hovel prepared for cattle, they at last find refuge, and there the Saviour of the world is born.

Heavenly angels had seen the glory which the Son of God shared with the Father before the world was, and they had looked forward with intense interest to His appearing on earth as an event fraught with the greatest joy to all people. Angels were appointed to carry the glad tidings to those who were prepared to receive it, and who would joyfully make it known to the inhabitants of the earth. Christ had stooped to take upon Himself man's nature; He was to bear an infinite weight of woe as He should make His soul an offering for sin; yet angels desired that even in His humiliation the Son of the Highest might appear before men with a dignity and glory befitting His character. Would the great men of earth assemble at Israel's capital to greet His coming?

Would legions of angels present Him to the expectant company?

An angel visits the earth to see who are prepared to welcome Jesus. But he can discern no tokens of expectancy. He hears no voice of praise and triumph that the period of Messiah's coming is at hand. The angel hovers for a time over the chosen city and the temple where the divine presence was manifested for ages; but even here is the same indifference. The priests, in their pomp and pride, are offering polluted sacrifices in the temple. The Pharisees are with loud voices addressing the people, or making boastful prayers at the corners of the streets. In the palaces of kings, in the assemblies of philosophers, in the schools of the rabbis, all are alike unmindful of the wondrous fact which has filled all



"In a wretched hovel prepared for cattle they at last find shelter."

heaven with joy and praise, that the Redeemer of men is about to appear upon the earth.

There is no evidence that Christ is expected, and no preparation for the Prince of life. In amazement the celestial messenger is about to return to heaven with the shameful tidings, when he discovers a group of shepherds who are watching their flocks by night, and, as they gaze into the starry heavens, are contemplating the prophecy of a Messiah to come to earth, and longing for the advent of the world's Redeemer. Here is a company that are prepared to receive the heavenly message. And suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared, declaring the good tidings of great joy. Celestial glory flooded all the plain, an innumerable company of angels was revealed, and as if the joy were too great for one messenger to bring from heaven, a multitude of voices broke forth in the anthem which all the nations of the saved shall one day sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." Luke 2:14.

Oh, what a lesson is this wonderful story of Bethlehem! How it rebukes our unbelief, our pride, and self-sufficiency. How it warns us to beware, lest by our criminal indifference we also fail to discern the signs of the times, and therefore know not the day of our visitation.

It was not alone upon the hills of Judea, not among the lowly shepherds only, that angels found the watchers for Messiah's coming. In the land of the heathen also were those that looked for Him; they were wise men, rich and noble, the philosophers of the East. Students of nature, the magi had seen God in His handiwork. From the Hebrew Scriptures they had learned of the Star to arise out of Jacob, and with eager desire they waited His coming, who should be not only the "Consolation of Israel," but a "Light to lighten the Gentiles," and "for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Luke 2:25, 32; Acts 13:47. They were seekers for light, and light from the throne of God illumined the path for their feet. While the priests and rabbis of Jerusalem, the appointed guardians and expounders of the truth, were shrouded in darkness, the Heavensent star guided these Gentile strangers to the birthplace of the new-born King.

It is "unto them that look for Him" that Christ is to "appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28. Like the tidings of the Saviour's birth, the message of the second advent was not committed to the religious leaders of the people. They had failed to preserve their connection with God, and had refused light from heaven; therefore they were not of the number described by the Apostle Paul: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." 1 Thess. 5:4, 5.

The watchmen upon the walls of Zion should have been the first to catch the tidings of the Saviour's advent, the first to lift their voices to proclaim Him near, the first to warn the people to prepare for His coming. But they were at ease, dreaming of peace and safety, while the people were asleep in their sins. Jesus saw His church, like the barren fig-tree, covered with pretentious leaves, yet destitute of precious fruit. There was a boastful observance of the forms of religion, while the spirit of true humility, penitence, and faith—which alone could render the service acceptable to God—was lacking. Instead of the graces of the Spirit, there were manifested pride, formalism, vainglory, selfishness, oppression. A backsliding church closed their eyes to the signs of the times. God did not forsake them, or suffer His faithfulness to fail; but they departed from Him, and separated themselves from His love. As they refused to comply with the conditions, His promises were not fulfilled to them.

Such is the sure result of neglect to appreciate and improve the light and privileges which God bestows. Unless the church will follow on in His opening providence, accepting every ray of light, performing every duty which may be revealed, religion will inevitably degenerate into the observance of forms, and the spirit of vital godliness will disappear. This truth has been repeatedly illustrated in the history of the church. God requires of His people

works of faith and obedience corresponding to the blessings and privileges bestowed. Obedience requires a sacrifice and involves a cross; and this is why so many of the professed followers of Christ refused to receive the light from heaven, and, like the Jews of old, knew not the time of their visitation. Luke 19:44. Because of their pride and unbelief, the Lord passed them by and revealed His truth to those who, like the shepherds of Bethlehem and the Eastern magi, had given heed to all the light they had received.

Selfish Prayers.

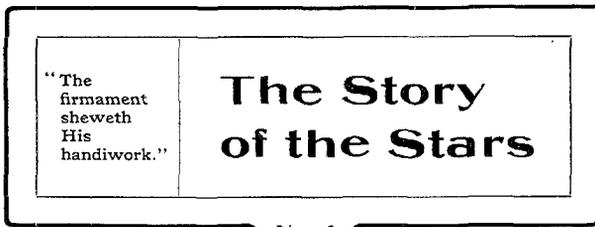
ARE we not a little startled now and then at the monopoly self has in our daily prayers? A large part of prayer, when prayer is at high-tide, is devoted to intercession. A dear girl who recently was called away from life . . . was in the habit morning after morning of spending her silent time not in petitions for her own health and happiness, or even for her own work, but for dear friends over the circuit of the globe. She had friends everywhere, for her soul was attuned to the highest friendship, and she loved to mention these by name to the one Friend who was nearest and dearest of all. When she had gone, there were those who realised that they would miss unspeakably the feeling that she remembered them at the throne of grace.

We may train ourselves in prayer, as in other departments of life and other uses of privilege, to forget ourselves, and as our Master did, seek blessings for our kindred, our acquaintances and neighbours, and for the wide world. If only we could trace some mighty revivals to their source, we should find that the Holy Spirit's power came in answer to the prayers of some dear saints who seldom lifted up their voice in public, who perhaps could give little money, but who often communed with God in solitary hours.—*Mrs. M. E. Sangster.*

Effective Witnessing.

A SERGEANT in a Highland regiment, when asked how he became a Christian said: "There was a man whom I used to persecute. One day he came in from sentry-go very tired and wet. He knelt down to pray. I took my two wet, muddy boots in my hands and threw them, one at each side of his head. He went on praying. Next morning I found the boots, beautifully cleaned, by my bedside. That morning I was converted."

THE Russian Holy Synod does not take kindly to religious liberty. Its late Procurator held that it was liberty enough for a Russian to believe and to do just what the Orthodox Church told him. Now the Synod has a Bill before a commission of the Duma requiring a person desiring to leave the Orthodox Church to subject himself to a daily admonition by a priest for forty days, and in the event of his not presenting himself, he is to be forcibly brought up for admonition. It sounds very much like the practice of Holy Cross Day at Rome, described by Browning, when the Jews were driven to church to be "admonished."



No. 4

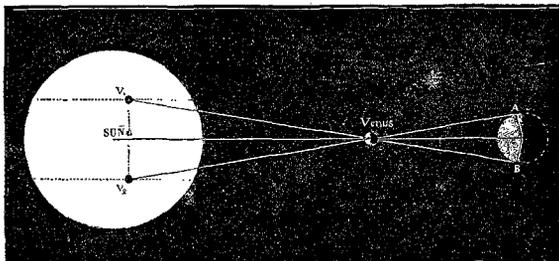
By R. Hare.

Star Distances and Magnitudes.

WE look out upon the trees and flowers about our home, and we understand that they are near to us. Then we see the distant hills, and after that the blue mountains still further away. But all these terrestrial objects may be readily discerned and their proximity easily measured. We may even look to the blue mountains that touch the horizon and tell with a certain degree of accuracy the number of miles that divide between us and them. But beyond the blue mountains, beyond the distant horizon, away out in the deeper blue of the heavens, roll the stars of God, the numberless worlds that adorn the universe of the great Creator.

Now, is it possible for man to measure their distance or tell their magnitude? Human foot has never stood upon them, neither has the human hand touched them. The voice of man has never reached their distant hills, but the eye of man has gazed upon their glory, and it comes back to tell of the far away. In the book of Job we read of beholding the height of the stars. "How high they are." Job 22: 12. They are high indeed, and the mile-measurements with which we are acquainted on this earth appear insignificant when applied to the celestial magnitudes.

The star nearest to our earth after the sun is Alpha Centuri. It is, however, distant from us more than 200,000 times the distance of our earth from the sun—19,000,000,000,000 of miles away. In vain we try to picture the distance expressed by these figures; the mind cannot grasp their immensity. Let us try another kind of measurement: Light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second, but even at this tremendous rate of speed it would require three years



Measure of the Sun's Distance by the Transit of Venus.

and six months to flash across the space between our earth and this nearest star. Alpha Centuri is a star of the first magnitude, found in the constellation of "Centaur," not very far from the Southern Cross. It is really a double star—two great suns revolving round each other once in seventy-eight years. But the distance is so great that to our eyes the two stars appear as one, though they are more than 1,000,000

miles apart. Here, then, at the distance of 19,000,000,000,000 of miles from our earth, we make our first acquaintance with what we call the "fixed stars." Suppose we try by yet another method of measurement to comprehend this great distance:—

"Let us suppose a railway to have been built between the earth and the fixed star, Centuri," said the lecturer. "By a consideration of this railway's workings we can get some idea of the enormous distance that intervenes between Centuri and us. Suppose that I should decide to take a trip on this new aerial line to the fixed star. I ask the ticket agent what the fare is, and he answers—

"The fare is very low, sir. It is only a halfpenny each hundred miles."

"And what at that rate will a through ticket cost?" I ask.

"It will cost £396,000,000," he answers.

I pay for my ticket and board the train. We set off at a tremendous rate.

"How fast," I ask the brakeman, "are we going?"



Measure of the Distance of an Inaccessible Object.

"Sixty miles an hour, sir, and it is a through train. There are no stoppages."

"We'll soon be there, then, won't we?" I resume.

"We'll make good time, sir," says the brakeman.

"And when will we arrive?"

"In just 36,108,066 years."—*World's News*, June 24, 1905.

From the Pole star light would require fifty years to reach our earth, while from Capella, distant 425,980,000,000,000 of miles, it would require a period of seventy-two years. But even this unthinkable distance appears short when compared with some of the still greater distances that reach to the outposts of telescopic vision. In the little star-cluster known as the "Pleiades" there is a bright star called "Alcyone." To us it appears as a star of the third magnitude, but it is really 12,000 times brighter than our sun. We may understand this better when we remember that this great star is twenty-five million times one hundred and ninety millions of miles away.

But even here we have not come to the end of the great universe of God. Sir Robert Ball, writing in "Good Words," makes this interesting comparison:

"Look up towards the heavens, and among the thousands of twinkling points which delight our eyes, there are many so far off that if, after the battle of Waterloo had been won, the news had been immediately telegraphed to these stellar depths, the message would not yet have been received. . . . Then there are stars which are only known to us by the tiny marks which they make on the most sensitive photographic plate after hours of exposure. It seems certain that many of these stars are so remote that if the glad tidings of the first Christmas at Bethlehem 1900 years ago had been disseminated through the universe by the swiftest electric current ever known, it would not yet have reached them."

It will be asked, How can the astronomer determine the distance and magnitude of the stars? There are many methods employed, and with the marvellous instruments now in use the measurements obtained are accurate and true. The method employed by the mathematician in measuring inaccessible objects will give an idea of one way in which star distances are measured.

Yes, Jehovah has a great universe. The human mind cannot measure its height or fathom its depth. The beautiful words of the great French astronomer, Camille Flammarion, will form a fitting reference on this point:—

“As we travel on through space, we meet with suns which take ten or twenty or fifty or one hundred or even one thousand years to send their light to earth. . . . And so, then what is our little universe but a part of a corner of an inconceivably vast galaxy which may itself be only an obscure corner of a galaxy of such appalling dimensions that our poor little minds reel at the very contemplation thereof. Have you ever seen a shaft of light running through a dusty room? There you have the truest analogy of what our poor little universe is to the myriad galaxies that people space, and talk to the troubled soul of man of the Infinite and the Eternal.”

Sincerity.

AN apparent sincerity is not in itself necessarily sufficient for salvation. It depends upon the attitude toward light and truth. One may be saved who is sincere in his belief of error, if he is walking in all the light which has come to him; but when one pleads his sincerity as an excuse for not investigating further in search of the truth, and therefore persists in walking in darkness, he demonstrates that his profession of sincerity is really insincere. There must be sincerity of action as well as sincerity of belief. A truly sincere person is one who not only believes that he is right, but who also holds his mind open to evidence from the Scriptures which will either establish his position more firmly or will lead him to reject any error which he may be sincerely holding.

Apollos was a sincere believer, and he was therefore ready to listen to Aquila and Priscilla when they “expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” Luther was a sincere monk, and therefore became the leader in the great Reformation movement of the sixteenth century. Sincerity should be the synonym for progress in knowledge and practice of the truth, rather than for petrified satisfaction in the acceptance of a creed.—*Selected.*

IT takes courage to speak the truth when, by a little prevarication, you can get some great advantage.

THE most valuable asset in the world is character. The noblest character in the universe is the character of Christ. The character of Christ is a possible possession for all, in the gift of life and righteousness in Christ. “If you give your life to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.” This is the simple and wonderful truth of the gospel.—*Selected.*



The Aborigines of West China.

AN attempt to write about the aborigines of West China brings forth considerable difficulty. In the first place these people seem almost to have dropped out of history, and in the second place they seem to be entirely neglected by modern writers and travellers. There is also a lack of aboriginal literature, which leaves the writer very much in the dark and increases the difficulty.

Chinese history and literature make occasional reference to them, especially to the very early stages. In the medieval times in China they are sometimes met with, but so disguised as to be almost unrecognisable. Usually they are there represented as being in a state of rebellion, and giving the government much trouble. At the present day the most detailed account of their ill behaviour will be found in the archives of the local officials, but especially in the viceroy’s yamen in Chentu, the provincial capital.

That the ancestors of these aborigines in West China played an important part in the early history of China cannot be reasonably doubted. At its very dawn we find Shuen (2255-2205 B.C.), one of the two ideal emperors of ancient China, a man extolled by Confucius, Mencius, and all the other great ancient writers of China. Mencius informs us that Shuen belonged to the eastern aborigines. Temples to his honour exist in the province of Hunan to the present day. Again, Wen Wang, the father of Wu Wang, the founder of the Chow dynasty, belonged to one of the aboriginal tribes of China. Wen Wang was a faithful minister of the degenerate Shang dynasty who suffered imprisonment for his plain speaking and for rebuking the dissolute Choe Shin. Wu Wang (1122-1115 B.C.), Wen’s son, sought revenge and overthrew the Shang dynasty, and the hereditary princes unanimously elected Wu Wang to the vacant throne.

These few instances show that the ancient aborigines of China occupied a very different position from that which they now hold. They were not always despised and feared as they are at this present time. Again, the history of the “warring States” of China is largely the history of these tribes. We find them in the reign of the tyrant, Chin Shi Hwang. He conceived the idea of combining all the petty States under one central authority. Some of his chief opponents were the ancestors of the hill men of Western China. Some of the ancestors of these men helped in building the Great Wall of China under pressure from Chin Shi Hwang and his captains. In all the changing scenes of this great and ancient empire the ancestors of these whom we meet on the streets of this city have been actors in the great drama. Some of them became absorbed and lost their identity in the more powerful “Hans.” It is pathetic to see how these people have fallen from a position of power and influence to one of weakness

and impotency. At the same time we feel compelled to respect and honour those who through all the misfortunes of their long and eventful history have refused to identify themselves with the more powerful and successful Chinese. They scorn submission to their hated and cruel oppressors. They prefer privation and even death rather than the loss of their self-respect and independence. A people with such a history and experience, who have suffered so much for liberty and independence as they understand these terms, cannot but appeal to us.

That these hill tribes have serious defects is very manifest. That they are in many respects inferior to their Celestial conquerors and oppressors is also apparent. In physical endowments they are probably superior to the Chinese, and are more ardently devoted to a wild irresponsible freedom. Intertribal warfare is one serious evil practice. Their code of honour requires them to seek satisfaction by an appeal to arms, and frequently there are bloody conflicts which deplete the ranks of the male population.

They seem, also, to neglect the cultivation of the intellect. Hence they cannot contend successfully with their more intellectual neighbours. They despise study—hence their lack of historical records. The priestly office seems hereditary. None but the priests and their sons can read, the latter only sufficiently to chant their incantations. There are no schools of any kind. It is quite probable that in the ancient times the priests were the schoolmasters, but that later the youth preferred fighting to studying, and the free hills to the low and dark huts where they were expected to study.

The people lack the power of combination and cohesion, and have no genius for government beyond the family and the tribe. They dislike trade, and have no gifts for commerce. In these respects they are an entire contrast to the Chinese. The latter love commerce and delight in haggling over prices. There are no markets among the hill men, each family providing for its own necessities. Usually they buy salt and cloth from the Chinese merchants, but none of the aboriginals engage in trade. It is beneath them.

The aboriginals seem to lack progress; in fact they have receded. With an intellect darkened and entirely under the influence of tradition, much of which is myth and falsehood, with a love for the ancient and a fatal satisfaction with present conditions, it is little wonder that they have fallen behind in the race of nations.

In matters of religion they are very simple and primitive. They seem to be spirit worshippers. They believe in one supreme being, but he is only one among many spirits, all evil and vindictive. They do not worship idols as the Chinese, and yet their ideas of the spirits are no more elevating. In fact, they seem much more superstitious than the less imaginative and stolid Celestial. Their religion calls for sacrifice, and pigs, sheep, oxen, and dogs are offered. The pig and ox are usually offered to the spirit in charge of disease. They have a great fear of this spirit, and believe all disease is caused by him, so that it is quite an expensive business to exorcise this demon. They do not seem to believe in medicine or understand it.

Another spirit they are exceedingly anxious to propitiate is the one in charge of the weather. They

have learned by sad experience the ravages of frost and hail in the late spring. Frequently their crops are entirely spoiled by these elements of nature. To this spirit, therefore, a dog is offered. The dog is first killed and then set up on a rude frame, the head with jaws extended facing the point from which the dreaded hail usually comes. It is a gruesome sight. The dog looks very fierce, and his great teeth are supposed to awe the spirit and drive him away.

Ancestral worship is the chief religion with these aboriginals. This is the most ancient and deep rooted. Ancestral worship seems to be generally practised. Cremation of the dead is very common. No grave piles are visible, as in the case of the Chinese. It is considered a dire calamity to miss the funeral pyre, and they are always anxious to carry away those who are killed in their fights with the



A Chinese Vendor of Cakes.

Chinese, in order to cremate them. They wish to have a strong light on the path leading to the great unknown. These simple and primitive people have a great dread of the under world, and like a light when they go there.

In pleasing contrast to the Chinese is the position woman holds among these hill men. She is queen and real head of the home, the mainstay of the family, the mother of the nation. She cares for the children, spins the yarn, weaves the cloth, and cuts and makes the garments. She cooks the food, and feeds the family. The mother or sister is usually the peacemaker between the tribes. Usually in such cases the woman goes between the opposing faction, divests herself of her outer skirt, trails it between the fighters, then whirls this garment round her head several times, and orders the men to disperse, which they feel in honour bound to do. Daughters are always welcomed into the family. The father who has two or more pretty daughters is considered most fortunate.

Serfdom is universal. The "black bones" have an innate hatred of work—gentlemen they are, knights dressed in coarse homespun, with sword in hand, loving a good fight. The "black bones" are waited upon for everything by the "white bones" (the serfs). The serf attends his chief when on the warpath, and fights with a good will. Nothing pleases a serf better than to slay a long-tailed Celestial. Often great cruelties are practised by these hill men in their raids upon unsuspecting Chinese. They usually burn the dwelling and carry off the women and children to make slaves of them. These Chinese who dwell near the hills occupied by the tribes live in perpetual terror of these raids.

These hill men have an innate love for horses, and are excellent riders, though they are often cruel, and ride the animals to death in the races attending a chief's funeral. When the chief dies the tribes assemble in great numbers and have several days of feasting and horse-racing. They race the ponies in rings, and the pony who can stand the longest and come in ahead is considered the winner. The idea seems to be to honour the old man and give him a good time.

It is impossible to give any estimate of the numbers of these hill tribes. The Chinese affirm that they are more numerous in this prefecture than the Chinese. In one village on market-day thirteen different tribes were represented, each with its own dialect, and some slight distinguishing feature in the mode of dress. The most numerous tribes are the Sifan, Leesu, Moso, and Eren. These are the principal tribes in this prefecture. As one goes south from Ningyuenfu the tribes of Yunnan are met with, while on the west are the Thibetan tribes. The Eren or Mantze are the most warlike and the most feared.

Very much has yet to be learned about all these tribes. That the time has come for their evangelisation no one can doubt.—Robert Wellwood, in *Baptist Missionary Magazine*.



A Man Who Gave Himself.

A MAN of affairs, who handles a business of millions every year, making money for his stockholders and at the same time carrying on a large constructive work of inestimable value to the community in which he lives, told this true story. Of course a writer of fiction might improve on it, but this has the merit of not being fiction. It is an experience out of life that makes us think well of our kind and helps us to believe in generosity, in self-sacrifice, and in the goodness of men—in spite of tales of graft and of exposures of corruption and of the arraying of class against class.

This is the story in the words of the man who told it, and with a suggestion of our own about something he did not speak of; and if anyone who reads it knows another story like it, these columns await that story.

"He wasn't one of the brand of heroes that do spectacular things to the blare of brass bands or the cheering of onlookers or amid the stimulus of physical excitement. But you can judge for yourself.

"I was educated at a little freshwater college. Among the men there one of the most interesting was a farm-hand, a great, big, brawny, slow chap who had made up his mind years before that he'd get out of the day-labourer class. So he'd saved and scrimped for years upon years, had gone to the local minister and plodded doggedly along under his coaching, and finally with a few hundred hard saved dollars had taken the entrance examinations at this college and been admitted. I never saw a man possessed with a more stubborn resolve to lift himself up a peg or two. He knew his limitations, and didn't aim too high, but he was determined to get along to be, say, a lawyer in some country town; and the path seemed open before him, though his mental slowness and lack of early advantages meant that it would take him twice as long as it would a clever youngster.

"It happened that his room-mate was the son of a country doctor, his very antithesis, clever and quick, easily the head of his class, who had been brought up in substantial comfort, with no thought on the boy's part where the money came from.

"The two became fast friends. The doctor's son used to help the other with his studies, and the ex-farm-hand looked up to his superior quickness with a sort of awed admiration which was pathetic to see.

"One day, just about the end of the first year, the doctor's son received a letter from home. His father had died suddenly and his mother had succumbed to the shock a few hours later. It presently turned out that the father had had nothing except a good income from practice; so the boy was left high and dry. He had long talks about it with his chum, of course, and told him that it was evidently all up so far as his career was concerned: he had not the stamina which would enable him to earn his own living while going

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through college, and he accepted the event as meaning that he would be side-tracked, perhaps as a teacher in some out of the way country place. Shortly, he had to return home to settle up some family affairs.

"A few days later he received a letter from his room-mate, which ran something like this:—

"Dear Jack: I've been thinking things over. There's no possible question that you'll get more out of a college course than I could. You'll surely make a mark in the world. I can never be more than a fourth-rate lawyer. Economically considered, therefore, to educate me and leave you out is reckless extravagance.

"I enclose a cheque for the amount I've saved, which was to give me my course. This will see you through with strict economy.

"Of course, I know you won't want to do this; but I've thought it all out, and it's the plain commonsense of the situation. Moreover, I shall disappear by the time you receive this, and nobody will know where I am. So you couldn't return the cheque anyhow.

"Good-bye and good luck."

The speaker stopped. There was a huskiness in his voice which made the listener look up quickly.

"You must excuse me," said he, rising from his chair and walking up and down. "The truth is, I can't tell that story without having the tears come to my eyes."

"Did the doctor's son take his college course?" he was asked.

"He did. And he is doing very well to-day—very well."

"And he never saw his friend again?"

"Never."

The man who listened had by this time a conviction about the identity of one character in this little drama of self-sacrifice. It seemed that this tale was a kind of memorial, the laying of a wreath on a grave, the only tribute that could be paid to a brave man who had given up for his friend something rather more difficult to give up than life itself. And the fine thing about it all was that, without any sentimentality or fancifulness, one could see how this had changed the successful man's whole attitude toward the world, leaving him with a sense of obligation and of a necessity to pass something on to others.—*Selected.*

"Keep Your Friendship in Repair."

SAMUEL JOHNSON once said to Sir Joshua Reynolds: "If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man, sir, should keep his friendship in constant repair." A greater than Johnson says: "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not." True friends are all too few, and no one is so abundantly supplied with them that he has one to spare. Friendship is one of those "good" things which the apostle exhorts us to "hold fast," and is worth all the trouble it may take to retain it. And yet—

"Ah, how strange it is and bitter,
That in silence friendships die!"

Friendship is one of the sweetest and most enriching of life's greatest pleasures, it is true; but it is so much more than a pleasure that it ought to find a large place in life's serious business; for far beyond

the value of wealth or fame is that attachment to good and generous souls which brings out the best that is in us and helps us to realise our aims. Such a friend can never be replaced; and as Thoreau has said, the only danger in such friendship is that it will end.

How many friendships die because they are neglected? The plant, unwatered and untended, fades away. The fence goes down because it is not kept in repair, the nail not driven in the loose end, the plank not replaced as soon as it falls off. The friend is lost because we no longer find time for an occasional talk, a brief visit, for want of a letter now and then, or a sympathetic message in time of trouble. It is not that we intend to forsake or to forget, but we think we are so busy that we cannot command the time required to keep up the correspondence, conversation, or little social courtesies that fortify friendship. And while, like Martha, we are busy about many business and domestic things we are losing Mary's better portion of love and friendship. The alabaster box of ointment is laid away to be opened when our friend is dead.

We are penny wise and pound foolish in this matter. If we live, some day we shall realise that we are lonelier than we are now; our thoughts will go back to old companions, and, like Lamb's, take on a sober colour as we remember—

"How some they have died, and some they left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed:
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces."

We shall know then the feeling of Oliver Wendell Holmes when he wrote:—

"There's no friend like the old friend who shared our morning days,
No greeting like his welcome, no homage like his praise;
Fame is the scentless sunflower, with gaudy crown of gold,
But friendship is the breathing rose, with scents in every fold."

There are divine as well as human friendships. How privileged and honoured are those who, like Enoch, "walk with God," and who at the end of the journey, like Frances Willard, know "how beautiful it is to be alone" with Him! There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, who has taken a great deal of trouble and made Himself of no reputation that He might win our love and fill our lives with blessing and be a Companion through the dark valley of the shadow of death. The last words of President Edwards after bidding his relatives good-bye were these: "Now where is Jesus of Nazareth, my true and unfailing Friend?"

We need to keep Divine friendship in repair. The love of many grows cold; they lose the conscious sense of the heavenly presence; their hearts cease to burn within them by the way because they have turned aside from the Holy One. We need daily by the study of God's Word, by prayer, obedience, and service to keep in constant touch and intimate fellowship with Him who says, "I have not called you servants, but friends."—*James L. Elderdice.*

"In 1840 there were 550 newspapers published in the United Kingdom; in 1870 that number had increased to 1,370, and now the figure has reached the enormous total of 2,358."

Perils of Orchid Hunting.

THE dangers of orchid-hunting are strikingly illustrated (says the *Westminster Gazette*) by the story told of the beautiful £1,000 plant which is the principal attraction at the Temple Flower Show. This orchid was part of the spoils of Messrs. Sander's collectors, who penetrated the wildest district of Annam with an escort of fifty armed men, and risked his life daily in his quest of these floral treasures. Many an orchid-hunter has sacrificed his life to his daring. Falkenberg perished thus at Panama, Brown in Madagascar, Wallis in Ecuador, Arnold on the Orinoco, and so on through a long list of victims of the passion for orchid-finding. Mr. Hamelin, one of the most successful of them all, tells how, in the Madagascar forests, "not only was our party exposed to the risk of being strangled by hostile and ferocious tribesmen—a fate which befell many a poor fellow belonging to our expedition—but we had to struggle almost night and day against the wild animals that haunt these primeval forests."

Practical Uses of Wireless Telegraphy at Sea.

THE perfection of the wireless telegraph system, says *The World's Work*, at one stroke eliminated many of the terrors of the sea. A vessel travelling across the Atlantic is now kept in touch with one shore or the other throughout her passage. Equipped with the wireless system, a vessel can report any difficulty into which she may have fallen, and summon other vessels to her aid. The agonising suspense of long waits for news from overdue vessels, and the tragedies of ships that sail from port and are never again heard from, will soon be things of the past.

The *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* was pushing eastward on her trip from New York to Bremen one day in the latter part of last September. The weather was growing thick, and the sea was growing rough, the forerunner of a storm. The man in the "wireless cabin" heard his instrument tick out the beginning of a message. It was the *Deutschland*, bound westward in mid-ocean. He made the signal that he was listening.

"Hello; who is this talking? This is the *Deutschland*, latitude 40°, 32', 20", longitude 60°."

"Hello, *Deutschland*, this is the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.*, latitude 43°, 31', 19", longitude 60°. How are you?"

"Very bad, thanks. We are fighting a sixty-knot gale. Getting pounded, but weathering it. It is coming toward you. Better look out."

"Thanks, we'll get ready for it."

This is the way that steamships to-day warn each other when hundreds of miles apart on the ocean.

Early last summer the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* encountered a heavy fog on approaching the English Channel. Neither Scilly nor Wolf Rock was sighted. Nor could Captain Cüepers hear the fog signal on nearing the *Lizard*. He sent out a wireless inquiry, and received word from the *Lizard* station that the *Kaiser's* fog whistle had been heard two or three knots to the south. In order to be certain the captain notified the station that he would blow his whistle three times, and requested to be informed whether or not the signal

was heard. When, after waiting two minutes, the three blasts were sounded, the *Lizard* operator advised that the signals had been heard abeam the station. Thus assured about his position, Captain Cüepers held his way toward Eddystone, and sent a wireless communication to Plymouth to have the tenders wait for the liner outside the port.

The *Lizard* had been passed at 1.32 P.M. Eddystone was off to port at 3.15. The vessel steamed slowly ahead until the tender's signals were heard, whereupon the *Kaiser* anchored. The tenders came alongside, passengers, mail, and baggage were landed, and the *Kaiser* resumed her trip to Bremen at 5.35 without even having seen Plymouth.

A Man Who Opposed the Union.

MORE than six thousand working-men joined in a funeral procession in London recently to honour the memory of a great business man who once fought and beat their trade-union.

The South Metropolitan Gas Company was as unpopular as a monopoly could be when this man entered its service. Its methods were wasteful, extortionate, and oppressive, and its customers denounced it fiercely.

George Livesey won public confidence by adopting the "sliding scale," a rule which permitted no increase in dividends except in proportion as the price of gas was reduced. Real reforms accompanied this pledge of good faith; and soon the South Metropolitan was charging the lowest rates and paying the highest dividends of any gas company in London.

This innovation, for as applied to the gas business it was one, was put in effect in 1875. Fourteen years afterward Mr. Livesey, anxious to help his employees as well as his customers, proposed another radical measure, that of profit-sharing. He asked no concession from his men, who were organised in a union, except that they agree not to strike or wilfully injure the company. They did strike, against the plan itself, and although the company won, it was at the cost of a protracted and expensive contest. The profit-sharing scheme was established. Now, after eighteen years, the employees own nearly £400,000 worth of the gas company's stock and elect three representatives to the board of directors.

Mr. Livesey was knighted in 1902, and during his long life many proofs of respect and confidence came to him from the throne and the public. Probably, however, none would have touched him so profoundly as would the closing tribute paid by men who formerly viewed him as their enemy. By different means, he and they had sought the same end—the good of all. He had won, had benefited them in spite of themselves. Time, which tests all men's work, had shown these staunch and honest labour unionists that their employer, the representative of capital, was in the right.—*Selected.*

BETTER blunder than do nothing, if only you know you are blundering, and are really trying to do well, and are properly ashamed of yourself for not doing better.—*Scottish Reformer.*



A Telephone Message.

IT is said that corporations have no souls, but it is certain that they appreciate the hard business fact that the man who takes care of their property is one whom they cannot afford to lose. A little incident which confirms this view occurred a short time ago in Portland, Maine.

In the suburbs of the city is a new street which has not been paved. During the spring it becomes very muddy, and the wheels of passing teams sink nearly to the hub at places. Into one of these bogs a loaded team lunged one day, and a woman in one of the neighbouring houses was forced to witness a brutal sight as the driver beat and kicked his horse into attempting to pull the great load out.

Finally she reported the matter to the police by means of her telephone, and an officer promptly came to the rescue of the animal.

The next day a large express team belonging to one of the city corporations fell into the same dilemma. Fearing that there would be a repetition of the former proceeding, the woman took her station to watch and jump for her telephone if necessary.

The driver, however, got down from his seat, patted his horse on the nose, straightened her harness, fed her with sugar from his pocket, laid his head against her neck, and talked to her. Then he took hold of her bridle and gave her a gentle word of command. She pulled with a will, evidently trying to do all she could for her kind friend. Again he rested, petted, and fed her, and again she pulled, this time with his shoulder against the wheel. It took several attempts before the wheel finally came out, but it was accomplished without a touch of the whip or a loud tone.

The woman was interested and touched, and believing that the company whose name was on the waggon would be pleased to hear of the incident, took up her telephone, called up the office, and complimented them upon having such a man in their employ.

The next morning the same driver called at her door and thanked her for her kindness.

"It was especially providential, madam," he said, "as the company had determined to shorten help, and had told me that I would be through last night. I have a family, and work is hard to get just now, so I did not know what I was going to do.

"Last night the 'old man' came and laid his hand on my shoulder when I went into the office to turn in my collections. 'Tom,' he said, 'I hear you got stuck out on W. Avenue to day.'

"I said that I had had a little trouble out here.

"Well, my man,' he said, 'we heard of that, and we want to say that a man who will take care of our horses like that is one whom we can't afford to let go.

I guess that you can go right on the team next week just the same.'

"I have to thank you, madam, for my job. It was your thoughtfulness that saved it for me."—*Sel.*

A Word for the New School Year: Learn English.

TWO friends were walking along a city street near the entrance to a business college. Groups of students were approaching the building, and now and then one was so studiously perusing a little red book which he held in his hands that he stumbled against the people who were passing.

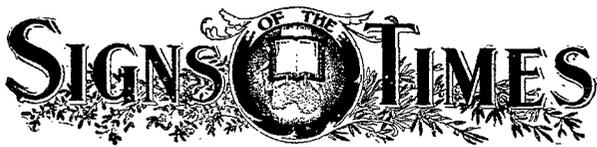
"What's the book that holds them so closely?" asked one of the friends.

"O!" laughed the other, "that's the spelling-book. There isn't one in a hundred that doesn't need it; spelling seems to be a weak point with young people in these days, even with high-school graduates, and so in the business college they have to go back to the spelling-book to fit themselves for writing ordinary letters."

This incident illustrates a word which ought to be said with most insistent emphasis to the young people as they enter upon another school year. It is this: Learn English. Learn it so as to be able to use it; not simply learn about the English language. It is one thing to learn the history of the English language, its progress, what masterpieces of prose and poetry have been written in it; but these things do not give a student any mastery over the language. When a boy goes into a machine-shop as an apprentice, he looks about him, he sees the tools, the lathes, the fly-wheels, the machines of every kind, and he says to himself: "Before I have learned my trade, I must know the name of every one of these tools and machines; and more than that, I must learn how to use them.

Now, the English language is the indispensable tool for every student, no matter what his trade or profession is to be. No one is equipped for his life-work unless he knows the construction of the English language, and what to do with it in time of need. First of all, the student needs to learn to read and speak the language freely and well.—*Selected.*

A CONSIDERABLE industry is being built up in the United States in the manufacture of galalith, or milkstone, which is cheaper than celluloid, and is non-inflammable. The stone is made of milk. The raw material is skimmed milk from the large co-operative dairies. To this in large tanks is added rennet, coagulating the caseine, which is pressed, dried, and powdered, and freed from its cheesy odour by repeated washings, and finally is hardened by a chemical. The product is more brilliant, more solid, and a trifle heavier than celluloid. It is as easy to work as wood, and can be made into a great variety of articles, such as combs, hairpins, piano keys, buttons, knife handles, umbrella handles, backs for brushes, paper knives, dominoes, inlaid ornaments for furniture, and almost any object requiring solidity and fine polish. It can be given any colour or made to imitate marble, coral, tortoise-shell, etc.



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"A NOVEL service was held at Selston, a mining village in England, recently. At one time Selston was fairly rich in charities, but about one hundred years ago they were allowed to lapse. Some of the charities consisted in the distribution of bread to the poor on Lammass, or Loafmass day, and also on the tolling of the church bells on Goose Fair eve. This distribution took place from a tombstone in the parish churchyard. In order to revive this custom the rector held a similar service, when loaves presented by the parishioners were given away from the same tombstone, and in order to enhance their value and the interest attached, a silver coin was baked in the loaves."

At the Horticultural Hall, London, over 600 toy dogs, valued in the aggregate by their owners at something like £50,000, were on view at the annual show. A tiny French bulldog, not quite two years old, and rejoicing in the sobriquet of Halycon Diogene, is valued at 2,000 guineas, and two others, which are slightly larger, at 1,000 guineas apiece. A dainty little Pomeranian, and another of a rich brown, are also priced at 1,000 guineas, and £1,000 is the figure set against a quaint-looking little Yorkshire terrier. Many of the Pekinese and the smaller Pomeranians scarcely turn the scale at 3 lb., and one or two can easily be taken upon the palm of the hand. One of the former, priced at £500, is worth more than £10 per ounce.

MRS. S. G. ASHER, the daughter of the late Mr. Harry Barnato, becomes the legatee of a second million of money from the same source (her father settled the first million upon her on the occasion of her marriage). The acquisition of this second fortune places Mrs. Asher in the band of women who figure as the richest of their sex. The richest woman in the world is generally admitted to be Mrs. Hetty Green, with a fortune of between fourteen and sixteen millions at her command. Others who follow closely are: Mrs. Russell Sage, who received a fortune of £17,000,000, but has distributed much of it in charitable bequests. Mrs. Anne Weightman Walker, who is said to possess £12,000,000. Frau von Bohlen, the daughter of Krupp, the German gunmaker, has property valued at £16,000,000. Mme. Creel, Mexican lady, is said to have an

income of nearly £1,000,000. The Marchioness of Graham is the richest British-born lady, for on the death of her father, the twelfth Duke of Hamilton, she came into an income of £114,000 per annum.

THE wild elephants in Siam occasionally do a considerable amount of damage, but rarely do they go to the length of stopping trains. Still, this has happened, as a writer in the current *Strand* tells. A goods train, heavily loaded and drawn by two engines, was coming down to Bangkok just after dark a few months ago when it suddenly ran into an elephant. The first engine was knocked off into the adjacent rice-fields, the second was thrown on its side across the line, and some thirteen of the trucks were telescoped behind it. Three Siamese members of the train staff were killed, but both the drivers (Britishers) escaped unhurt. The elephant—a small one, weighing perhaps from four to five tons—was smashed to pieces, its bulk being driven some yards ahead of the front of the leading engine. The damage done to line and rolling-stock is estimated at about £60,000, and traffic was seriously hindered for the best part of a week.—*Westminster Gazette*.

THE 14th of September last was a red-letter day in Jerusalem, three events transpiring on that day, the *Youth's Companion* says, that are unparalleled in its history. The first public reading-room in Palestine was opened with an inaugural address by the Moslem judge and acting governor to a large assembly of Moslems, Christians, and Jews. It is well furnished, well lighted, and supplied with Arabic and Turkish newspapers, to which will soon be added foreign papers, especially French and English. During the afternoon the first Arabic newspaper ever published in Jerusalem appeared in print, under the name of *El Kuds, the Sanctuary*. In the evening a night-school was started, at which free instruction will be given in the Turkish language and international law. "These noteworthy events are all a part of the 'campaign of education' now being pushed by the Young Turks to enlighten the people as to the privileges and responsibilities which a constitution carries in its train."

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