

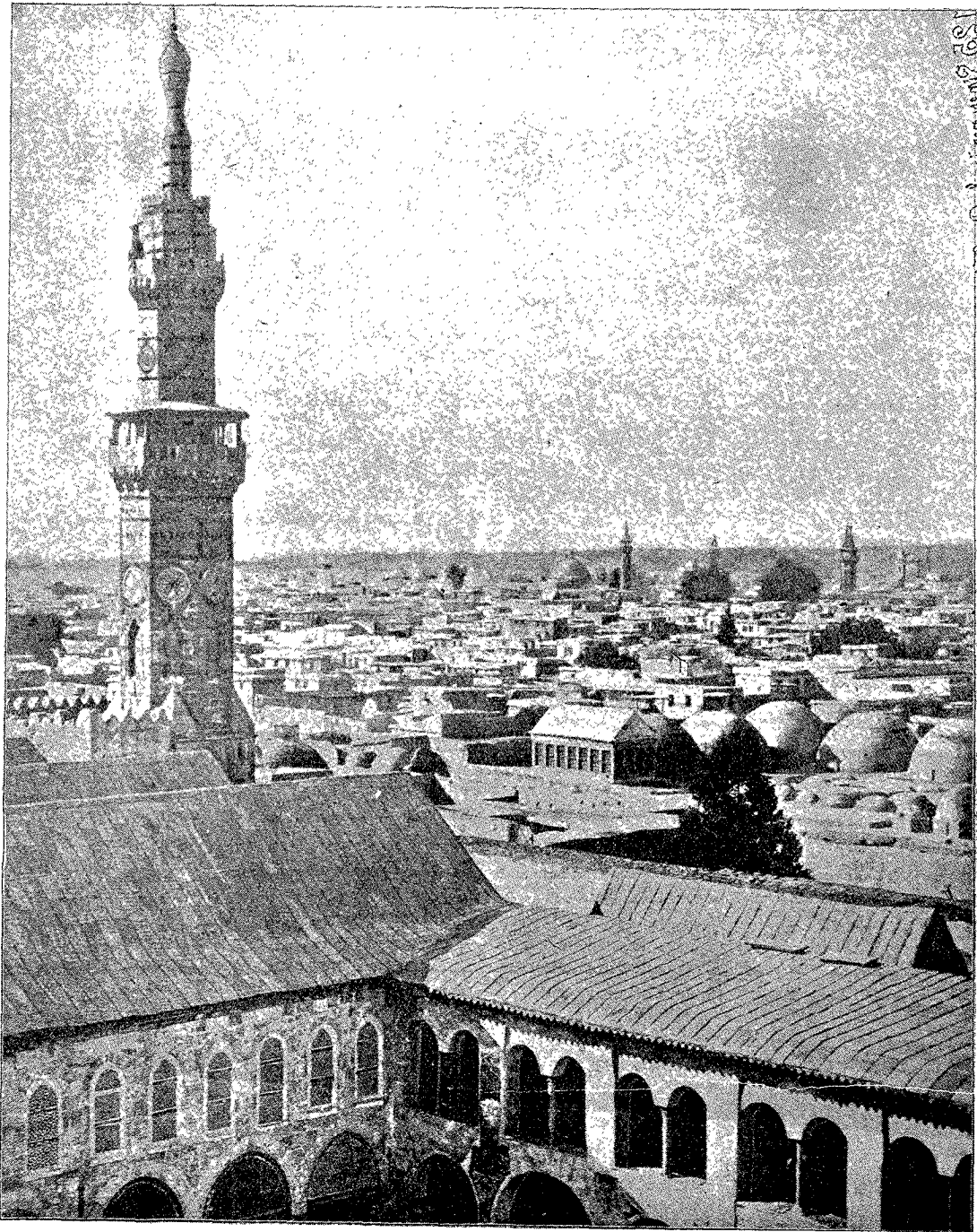
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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ONE PENNY



Damascus, Syria.

The Outlook

Political and Ecclesiastical Affairs in Europe.

OUR readers, we are sure, will peruse with interest the following items of information which we have culled from a letter written by M. Jean Vuilleumier, one of our evangelical workers in Paris. Speaking of the recent imbroglio in the East, he says *inter alia*:—

"All Europe is watching with bated breath to see what the outcome will be. In political circles, as well as among the masses, everyone feels that in Turkey is to be decided the destiny of the world; that with the fate of that tottering empire is connected the fate of all nations. And when I write this, I am simply repeating as nearly as possible from memory the words used by the dean of European political writers in a recent article. Students of prophecy have more than *feelings* to depend upon in viewing matters in this light. They have the 'sure word of prophecy.' But our province is not to deal with that side of the subject; our task is briefly to record current events. So we come back to European politics at the very moment when this sudden and unexpected revolution broke out.

"Austria, who had, with the connivance of Europe, seized her opportunity in asserting her dominion over two of the small Balkan States, found herself disturbed by a third one, Servia, who cried out violently against her injustice. Servia saw her fate in her two neighbours' fate. She remembered how her big neighbour had been and is sapping her vitality and paralysing her development. She thought that Europe would surely sustain her protest, and was already preparing to pay a sacrifice for liberty. War was threatening on the Balkans.

Impotence of the Hague Court.

"'Before this conflict between the weak and the strong,' says the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, 'no one speaks of arbitration. People scarcely remember that there is a court at The Hague, the usefulness of which ought to show itself in just such cases.'

"'Servia is not worth a war,' remarked the *Paris Temps*; 'this war might become general; no government wants it; and it would be criminal to unloose it. . . . One must choose between the extension of the Servian frontiers and the upheaval of Europe.'

"This shows for the hundredth time within a few months that the slightest friction among the Powers over their interests in the East will be the match which will set the world ablaze!

"Yet diplomats and rulers seem unconcerned. What affects them most is the success or defeat of the hour on the big chessboard of world politics. For the moment Austria, and behind her Germany, is exulting, while France and England look on with chagrin.

"Says the *Revue Politique et Littéraire* of April 10: 'The European concert is at the present time abandoning its right to interfere before this Austro-German imperialistic alliance.' And this journal quotes the German press, showing the joy 'of the whole nation' at this 'march of the *Deutschum* toward the southeast.'

What of Reduction of Armaments?

"What can be expected under the circumstances, about the reduction of armaments? Did King Edward VII. and his nephew Emperor William II., who, by the way, have so much to say about 'peace,' see their way clear, at their last interview, to reach some happy solution of the problem? It appears not, when we read what on the selfsame day of last



King Edward and the Emperor of Germany in Berlin.

month Herr von Bülow and Sir. Ed. Grey explained on this matter before their respective parliaments. Their explanations amount clearly to this: a limitation of naval armaments is impossible; the recent diplomatic consultation on the subject was bound to fail; Germany considers it absolutely necessary for her safety to complete her naval programme; while Great Britain means to maintain at any cost her supremacy over the oceans.

A Russian View of the Present Situation.

"Are these enough 'rumors of war' from Europe at this time? Not yet. Listen to this: A Russian correspondent writes to a respectable continental monthly quoting the noted St. Petersburg organ, the *Novoie Vremia*, to the intent that Germany 'thinks much more seriously of engaging in war with Russia than with England. . . . The Germans will not be any more courteous than the Japanese, and will not announce their visit. The whole operation will be done mysteriously. It is even probable that a part of the mobilisation has been all ready for some time, and that the German fleet and troops will enter Russia even before the news has reached St. Petersburg.'

"The same correspondent makes a sad description of the moral, political, and intellectual condition of his country. 'In 1905,' he says, 'before the Czar granted the constitution, the daily average of

prisoners was 85,000; this year it reaches 170,000, not counting 30,000 people on their way to the gaols. . . . The demoralisation of all classes of society is marching rapidly onward. . . . In Russia, the number of school children is 3.8 per cent. of the population; in the Transvaal, 9.6 per cent., in Australia, 19.3 per cent. Even in Chili and Uruguay the number of students is greater than in Russia.'

Church and State in Geneva.

"A popular vote taken about two years ago, pronounced the separation from the State of the old national church founded by Calvin in 1536. This vote was to go into effect Jan. 1, 1909. The year 1908 was busily employed by the Geneva church in preparing for her new conditions. The work was prepared by a committee of nineteen members, and then taken up and decided by a constituent assembly of sixty to seventy members. Two leading questions were bound to come before this body to be incorporated in the new constitution of the church of Geneva: its belief and its membership. The discussion of these two questions laid bare the lamentable situation of the once flourishing and faithful church of Calvin.

"On the first point, the Bible was declared to be the basis of religious teaching, but the Bible as freely interpreted in the light of human conscience and modern science. This means that in 1909 and onward, as before, pastors will be perfectly free to teach what they believe, from the rankest rationalism, deism, and agnosticism, to the old orthodox belief. In fact, a watchword given by the leading pastors of all the parties among which the Geneva church is theologically divided, was the significant phrase of 'NO SCHISM!' With this watchword, no one in the constituent assembly dared to dissent. The Geneva national church, though severed from the State, must remain externally entire and undivided, no matter how inimical and contradictory the religions sheltered under its roof!

"Another declaration made in the opening of the new constitution is that 'Jesus Christ is the Saviour of men.' This was allowed to pass only with the understanding that, on the part of the liberal and rationalist party, this could only mean a political, a historical, a worldly salvation, and never a personal, a future, an everlasting salvation!

"On the point of membership, a strong current was against taking in as members foreigners to the Geneva Republic, be they from other cantons of Switzerland or from other countries. This the committee of nineteen called a religious scandal. But the idea was carried. The majority wanted a national, a Geneva establishment, with Geneva traditions and Geneva people. The idea of conversion of character was entirely left out and spurned. The old doctrine of Cyprian that one is not *born* a Christian, but has to *become* one was changed into: one born in Geneva and of Geneva stock *is* a Christian!

"And in the face of all this, Geneva is preparing to celebrate with great pomp, between July 2 and 10, the four hundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth! It is easy for anyone who has read a few pages of Calvin's great work, 'The Institution of the Christian Religion,' or one of his 2,000 sermons, to tell what the great reformer would say to those who are claiming to honour him while destroying almost every

principle and every truth that he worked so hard to uphold. He would extend his bony hands, his face would light up with a solemn and horrified expression, and he would exclaim, as he did more than once when fighting for a pure gospel: 'You may cut these hands, and you may take this life, rather than to get my consent to connect my name with such a damnable apostasy!'

What Is Insanity?

IT is very convenient to be insane or not insane, according to circumstances. A man with delirium tremens in New York was committed to an insane asylum. He was violent, and had threatened to kill his wife. Not long after his committal he recovered and was acquitted. The first thing he did on securing his freedom was to sue the physicians who committed him, for fifty thousand dollars. He may win it, for in a similar case recently a man who in an attack of delirium tremens was committed to an asylum sued the committing doctors for malpractice, and they had to settle with him.

Now if this man had killed his wife, his lawyer would have pleaded insanity, and doubtless the man would have been freed.

Strange the constructions the law will permit.—*Geo. H. Heald, M. D.*

Spiritualism and Mars.

THERE seems to be a great desire on the part of some people to communicate with Mars. Different methods of doing this have been proposed from time to time. Professor Pickering thinks that £400,000 will be sufficient to build a heliograph capable of flashing signals to the planet. Many other propositions are being made, and all of them, we think, seem rather visionary, and some of them quite ridiculous. The last proposition, and the wildest one of all, is that of communication by thought waves, whatever that may mean. We are told what it means by the information that Spiritualistic mediums should be used for this purpose, since they are cheaper than mirrors. The fact that already we have reports from different mediums, and that none of these agree with one another in the slightest, does not at all seem to dampen the ardour of those making the proposition. Lying spirits are not very apt to agree among themselves, and if an appeal is made to mediums for information regarding Mars, the probability is that we shall have a mass of Martian stories, so called, that will be as varied and contradictory as the lying spirits that dictate them can produce.—*Exchange.*

A PRESBYTERIAN General Assembly in U. S. A. has approved the report of its temperance committee which commended President Taft and former President Eliot of Harvard for being teetotallers. A resolution introduced by a minister, that ministers should not use tobacco, was amended to include laymen, and was adopted with cheering.

A Groan from Armenia!

We may talk about the cruelty of Caligula and Rome,
And despise the deeds of Herod in his Judean home.
We may scorn, too, how Nero enjoyed his bloody game,
As he played his ancient fiddle to the martyr's lurid flame.
We may listen to the clapping of the Imperial coward's hands,
As the Coliseum echoed to his overjoyed commands:
"Let the tigers out upon them! By Janus, let them die!
See if Christ will save the wretches with His legions from the sky."
We are horrified, and shudder when we resurrect the past;
When we see the Christian falling to a persecution's blast;
When we see the Coliseum, and the martyrs once again,
Stand nobly for their Master ere they lie among the slain.
But we overlook Adana, and Tarsus at its door,
And the thousands who have perished on their Asiatic shore.

Ah! what about the human fiends who, just the other day,
Exceeded ancient Nero and the tyrants far away;
Who painted pictures redder, and more damnable in glow,
Than any artist nurtured by the spirits down below?
For groans are heard from Tarsus, and from Adana, too;
Their streets are just as purple as the plains of Waterloo.
St. Bartholomew's no brighter, and the Inquisition pales
Before the scene of agony which Europe now assails!
In our noble Christian era, so humane and civilised,
Can deeds confront the present which the past has ne'er devised?
Tho' the ancients were cruel, and the mediævalists were mad;
Tho' the Assyrians were barbaric and the Philistines were bad,
Yet the star for savage vengeance now gleams in Turkey's crown,
For the manner she has trampled her Christian brother down.

Europe views the bloody scene, and a moment stands aghast,
Then she lets fall the curtain on a drama that is past;
She hurries on to commerce, to Dreadnoughts, and to war,
The Armenian is forgotten for the crisis that's before.
Vengeance seemeth tardy; as for Justice, she is dead!
There's a pall upon her coffin, and a tombstone at her head.
The nations, they are busy; and the great Assassin thrives
To perpetrate more horrors and to take more precious lives.
But will the God above us, He whose patience has been tried,
Hide His wrath forever while His souls are crucified?
Will the clouds forever hold Him, the Heavens stay the flash
That will break o'er every nation in one universal crash?
Oh, no! for Christ is coming to avenge His martyred slain,
And to sacrifice the nations upon Bozrah's crimson plain.—J.B.

Hunting for the Secrets of Lost Arts.

MODERN science has advanced with such tremendous strides in the last half century that we are in danger of pluming ourselves on our achievements and forgetting that past ages had their great men and epoch-making discoveries. In our practical application of science we have apparently revolutionised society and placed the world on a higher materialistic plane than ever before; but the frequent result is that only transient and not permanent effects are obtained. In the arts and sciences we have gone ahead as a whole tremendously, but there are gaps which need filling in, and one of the recognised industries of the day in certain quarters is to employ experts to delve into the mysteries of the past and learn some of the secrets of the lost arts of the ancients.

In the dyeing of fabrics we are not equal to those ancients who wove such wonderful rugs and silken draperies thousands of years ago, their brilliant colours are brighter and purer than any of our own weave. The beautiful blues and reds and greens of antique Oriental rugs have practically been lost, and if the secret of the art could be discovered to-day, it would be worth a fortune to the lucky finder. In the Egyptian tombs we find fabrics dyed thousands of years ago whose colours are as bright and unfaded as when first applied.

This secret of dyeing rugs and silken fabrics is one of the most important of the lost arts. A manufacturer of Oriental rugs who owns a factory in Persia, recently commissioned an expert rug hunter to spend any amount of money in hunting down this lost art. "Surely the secret must have descended to some of the weavers of to-day," was the remark of the manufacturer. The rug hunter travelled through Persia, Syria, Turkey, and the Holy Land, examining weaves and dyepots, and returned with the message:

"There are no such dyes used to-day as in the past. Hand-weaving is as good as ever, but the natives have lost the old art of dyeing. Otherwise, why should twenty to forty thousand pounds be paid for rugs a thousand or more years old which could be duplicated to-day, so far as pattern is concerned? It is the wonderful use of dyes and colours by these ancients that made the rugs so valuable."

Then a chemist of high repute was put on the quest. He studied Oriental dye-woods, gathered material from Egyptian tombs, analysed everything available to ascertain the secret of the lost art. He examined dyed yarn that was in the hands of the dyer in Egypt a thousand years before the Christian era, and ecclesiastical vestments six and seven hundred years old. Mummy cloth, he reported, had been dyed with safflower, and other fabrics with indigo. There were traces in the material of lime, honey, verdigris, alkalies, and oxides which probably the ancients had used in conjunction with their vegetable dyes to fix the colours. But the art of dyeing the material has not yet been discovered, although the chemist could build up synthetically the method of work. The secret of this lost art is one of those strange freaks which modern science, with all of its boasted knowledge, has not yet revealed.

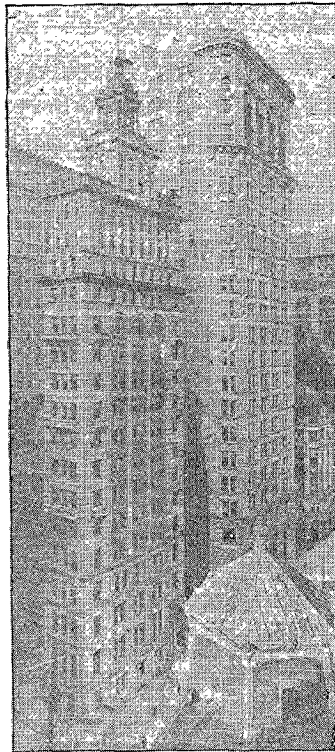
But it is not only in colouring that the lost arts are conspicuous. One reads the thrilling accounts of

the wonderful swords of the Saracens. In Damascus the art of steelmaking reached a high stage of development long before Europe dreamed of such hard material. The old forgers of swords were craftsmen who held their secret from the rest of the world.

"Give me a sword that will cut the blade of my rival in two," was the command of a duellist. The crafty old swordmaker would haggle for a price, and then guarantee to produce a blade that would cut through ordinary steel like a knife going through cheese. A Toledo blade was famous for its keen edge and for its great strength. After allowing something for the exaggeration of early writers, scientists admit

that the early swordmakers had the secret of a steel which exceeds anything forged to-day. In Japan the old art of swordmaking is said to be still preserved, but whether the secret was obtained from Toledo or Damascus is not known.

If they could forge such swords a few thousand years ago, why should not the secret be known and utilised to-day? An agent of an American steel company sent an expert to Japan a year ago to follow up the clue. If the secret is still in existence, American steelmakers want to know it. This expert travelled from one end of Japan to another, and reported thus:—



High Buildings in New York City.

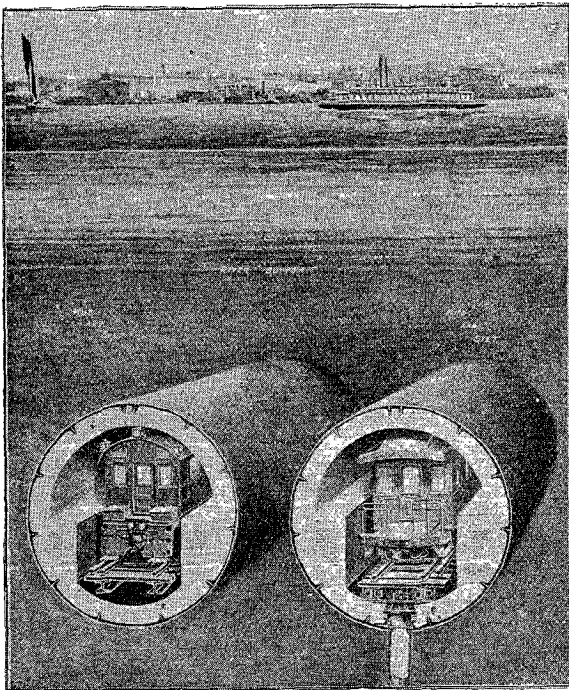
"There are some wonderful samples of old swords which possess remarkable strength and elasticity. I tried some of these on ordinary hand-forged American steel, and they actually cut our material in two. But nowhere could I find anyone who knew how or where they were made. They all seemed to be of ancient origin. I doubt very much if such steel is forged to-day in Japan. It is apparently a lost art, and as I could not secure any of the old swords for testing, I could not apply an analytical examination of the steels."

But the search for this lost secret is not abandoned. On the contrary, it is being carried on extensively and continuously in a thousand laboratories to-day. The chemist is the modern steel wizard; he combines and re-combines the crude elements in his crucible to obtain harder or more elastic steel. In time we may recover this lost art of the early swordmakers and produce even finer steels. But in forging, there is much in slow, loving fashioning of the blade after the right steel mixture is obtained, and in this the early craftsmen had an advantage. To them the forging by hand of a

single perfect blade was a work of love, and it is through such methods that the most perfect articles are obtained. Have the modern craftsmen the patience to forge their steel into perfect swords after the secret has been uncovered?

A modern work on concrete and cements says: "The early workers in masonry possessed a secret of making cement and mortar which made their buildings last for centuries. In many instances their mortar was harder than the stones which it bound together, and in old buildings where the stone walls have disintegrated and crumbled the mortar is found in perfect condition. The secret of their composition has never been discovered, and it is remarkable that they should have produced such a binding agent."

We build skyscrapers thirty and forty stories high, construct underground masonry tunnels, and make



Tunnels under the River Hudson.

hollow concrete block houses; but we cannot make a mortar as hard and durable as the masons of a thousand years ago. Gustavino discovered in some of the early Roman vaults cement which was perfect after the many centuries of exposure to dampness and moisture. This cement was so hard that it turned the edges of chisels and pick-axes used to break it.

We make cement to-day on an enormous scale—good, bad, and indifferent cement—but little or any of it equals the cement in use centuries ago. The manufacture of this old cement is another one of the lost arts. The secret of its composition perished with the masons of the Middle Ages. Even in Egypt they made a cement of lasting value. Yet the material for its composition must have been carried from distant quarries.

To-day engineers have committed themselves to concrete building, and elaborate experiments and tests are being made with cements. Manufacturers are employing expensive experts to test all the various methods of improving the quality of their product,

and yet with all of this skill and ability we have not yet reached the point of development of the ancients. The man who can unearth the secret of this simple binding material will obtain something more substantial for his reward than mere glory.

The ink manufacturer has made great strides in his field. He has produced many coloured fluids that seem well adapted for ordinary use. But how long will this ink last without fading? Did you ever pick up a letter written ten or fifteen years ago, and note how much of it is illegible because the ink had faded? Some precious documents not a century old are preserved to-day in air-tight cases, so that the ink will not fade any more. Others have been copied in order to retain the exact chirography of the original authors. Fading ink is one of the things in which the ancients did not believe. Many of the medieval manuscripts six and seven hundred years old have their letters formed of ink that is as black and bright as on the day when first written. Who has the secret of this lost art of making durable ink? It is another one of the lost arts that is worthy of investigation. The ancients had fewer materials to work with, and less facilities for laboratory tests, but we must acknowledge that there are some things in which they excelled us.—George Ethelbert Walsh.

Not in the Latest Dictionary.

THE *London Globe* states that "plutophobia" stands for a disease that has always afflicted mankind more or less, but "never so much as at the present time." This word may not be found in even the very latest editions of the dictionaries, but the meaning of it, according to the *Globe*, is "hatred of wealth when possessed by others."

England has a harrowing problem in her "army of unemployed," and a part of the article referred to gives the *Globe's* view of the cause of the matter:—

"Plutophobia is the one great cause and mainspring of Socialism, as it is of brigandage and piracy; and, in the Middle Ages, of the disabilities of the Jews. In those days, when land was almost the only form of capital, the Jews were regarded as the representatives of portable wealth; and the tooth-drawing and other persuasive measures to which they were subjected were the outcome of the disease.

"Nowadays the hatred of wealth is directed against Christians quite as much as against Jews; and all forms of direct taxation, ruinous death and succession duties, and so on, are symptoms of it. Hundred of millions sterling have been destroyed by it in England alone during the past few years, and it is one of the principal causes of the unemployment of which we see and hear so much."

There can be no denying the fact that there is a great amassing of wealth in every country of the world, and that is particularly true in America and in England. And there is no denying the further fact that there is a great deal of revolutionary discussion concerning the wealth that is held by the few, while the many are in poverty. Nations of antiquity have gone before us in this same thing, and they have gone down. But there is a brighter prospect before the world to-day. There are both promises and prophecies that foretell the coming of the great Prince of Peace to redeem those who prefer everlasting righteousness above the transitory wrong things of this life. The one great problem is not whether we

are able to meet this tide of "plutophobia" without seeing the disintegration of the nations, but are we ready to meet with joyfulness the Prince of Peace, the King of kings?—*American Signs of the Times.*

"IN less than ten years aeroplanes will cost no more than a hundred pounds," is the prediction of Frank Hedges Butler, the well-known English balloonist. "Lighthouses will be erected to guide aeroplanes at night," he continues. "With the mechanism perfected, as indications warrant, a speed of two hundred miles an hour ought to be made in the air with ease. A journey from England to France across the Channel will be a matter of a few minutes. If such machines now carry two or three persons, there is no reason why larger ones should not transport fifteen or twenty."

"WHEN King Edward was Prince of Wales he is reputed to have spoken jestingly of a coming time when thrones would be 'put up at competitive examination.' Thrones are not so numerous in these days as they once were, and although not yet open to public competition, royalty seems to be forestalling a possible evil day by following the nobility into trade. Prince Henry XXXII. of Reuss, one of the oldest ruling houses of Europe, has recently finished four terms at the Cologne Commercial High School, taken his examinations, and received the mercantile diploma. If, like his father,—who at the time of the young man's birth was the German ambassador to Turkey,—he enters the diplomatic service, his knowledge of commercial usages will manifestly be useful. If, on the other hand, he ever comes to reign over the little principality at the north of Bavaria, he should be able to give it a business administration."

"IN view of the present high price of bread, some utterances at the recent scientific conference are very encouraging. Referring to a statement made last year by Sir William Crookes to the effect that a world's bread famine was one of the possibilities of the next century, Dr. Riecke, of Berlin, says: 'There is no ground for this fear. By utilising the boundless stores of our atmosphere through the discoveries of science and investigation, the amount of available nitrogen will be increased beyond present dreams; agriculture, industry, and commerce will obtain advantages, and the whole human race will be benefited.' The nitrates in the soil are the chief source of fertility, and it was the steady decrease in the productivity of the soil which called forth Sir William Crookes' gloomy prophecy, but now nitrates can be made artificially by drawing on the vast resources of the air, almost four-fifths of which is nitrogen. Oxide of nitrogen is obtained from the atmosphere by means of the intense heat of electric arc furnaces, and this is cooled and passed into absorption tanks, in which it is converted into nitric acid. With this product lime or some other base can then be treated, resulting in the finished nitrate of lime, the fertiliser. This, applied to formerly barren and useless soil, has caused it to bear good crops of many of the principal grains."



A. W. Anderson, Editor.

Melbourne, Victoria, August 30, 1909.

Is the Earth Waxing Old?

ONE of the conditions peculiar to our time which is adding to the perplexities of modern life is the rapidity with which decay makes itself apparent in almost every article of general utility. That this condition was not always a matter of grave public concern may be seen from the article by Mr. G. E. Walsh, which appears on the fifth page of this issue. From the ages of the past we learn that many things which were made by the ancients were noted for their ability to resist the ravages of time. Now, we are constantly reminded by our every-day experiences of the truthfulness of that verse of the well-known hymn which runs thus:—

"Change and decay in all around I see."

Indeed, we may ask, Was there ever a time when decay was so much in evidence as now? Strange though it may seem, we now see decay not only in everything which men make, but this modern peculiarity has taken hold of the things of nature. Even the ground itself to a considerable degree seems to be losing its power to cause the things which are sown therein to grow, and it is a matter of common knowledge that the success of the farmer is now dependent upon the use of artificial manures. The degeneracy of the soil is responsible for the degeneracy of plant life, and the weakness of plant life invites the attack of destructive insect pests and fungus growth. It is but a few years ago since it became imperative to use artificial means to protect plant life. Twenty years ago but little attention was given to the question of insect pests, but of late years the marvellous invasion of the vegetable kingdom by insects and fungus diseases has called forth vast efforts on the part of entomologists, professors of horticulture, and others, who have devoted much time, energy, and skill, to the investigation of various methods by which orchardists may combat these pests. It is only twenty-three years ago since Professor A. J. Cook, of the Michigan Agricultural College, recommended the use of a mixture of Paris green and water for spraying young apples. "This," says Professor Bailey of Cornell University, New York, one of the leading authorities on horticulture, "represented very nearly the sum of knowledge respecting the spraying of orchards at that time. Just ten years later [1896] a manual on spraying, which made a closely printed book of some four hundred pages" was published. "These contrasts," he says, "will serve to show how rapid has been the evolution of the spraying of plants to combat insects and diseases." Every little while the fears of the people are aroused by the advent of some new insect or the appearance of some new fungus

which threatens the existence of some branch of horticulture. What is true of plant life is true also of humanity. Degeneracy has set in most remarkably during the last few decades, and were it not for the skill of scientists who are actively engaged in seeking for means by which the ravages of microbes and bacilli may be arrested in the human family, and insect pests and fungus diseases in plant life, the world would to-day be in a sorry plight.

It is well to look these ominous conditions squarely in the face, for they mean something to us. Humanity, in common with the animal world, depends upon plant life for its existence. Anything, therefore, which threatens the extinction, or lowers the vitality, of plant life is of great importance to man. The wheat farmer is compelled to take most careful precautions to prevent the attack of fungus, the orchardist must adopt the prescribed methods of combating several kinds of pests, the potato farmer is now threatened with "Irish blight." That these things are a menace, not only to the success of the farmer, but to the community at large, must be very evident to anyone who will reflect for a moment upon the consequences of these pests. Last week, the price of potatoes in Sydney rose £3 per ton in a single day because of the government prohibition which was issued against the importation of potatoes from Tasmania on account of the report that "Irish blight" had made its appearance in the island State. Evidence abounds on every hand concerning the perplexities which are arising every season through the appearance of some additional cause for anxiety to the man on the land. Therefore it is wholly unnecessary for us to pile up evidence concerning the disastrous losses which are annually inflicted upon the nations of earth through these causes. That they are beyond computation will be admitted by all who know anything about the rapacity with which these enemies of man attack the produce of his gardens and farms. The existence of these pests are strong evidence that we are now living in the last days, for the Word of God has pointed to these very things as signs of the end. The prophet Joel gives us a prophetic picture of the ravages of these modern pests and the general decay of the earth, and associates with "the day of the Lord" these things, which we now see fulfilling, but which he saw prophetically twenty-seven centuries ago.

"The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth. For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white.

"Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the Lord; the priests, the Lord's ministers, mourn. The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree

languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.

Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord, ALAS FOR THE DAY! FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD IS AT HAND, AND AS A DESTRUCTION FROM THE ALMIGHTY SHALL IT COME. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to Thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto Thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

"BLOW YE THE TRUMPET IN ZION, AND SOUND AN ALARM IN MY HOLY MOUNTAIN: LET ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE LAND TREMBLE; FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD COMETH, FOR IT IS NIGH AT HAND." Joel 1:1-2:1.

In view of all that is taking place in the world to-day, who can doubt that we are living in the last days? Historical prophecies point unmistakably to that conclusion; chronological prophecies declare that we are now living on "borrowed time," for every chronological prophecy in the Bible has been fulfilled; signs in the sun, moon, and stars testify to the approach of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven; and on the earth there are a multiplicity of omens, all of which are directly fulfilling the Scriptures. Surely the earth is waxing old like a garment, and the moth is eating up the things of earth as spoken by the prophet Isaiah. See chapter 50:9; 51:6. No one who will honestly investigate the subject of the near approach of the day of the Lord can fail to be convinced that everything points to the astounding fact that "the great day of the Lord is near, and hasteth greatly." Zeph. 1:14. Our daily concern should be to prepare to meet our God.

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General Articles

Strive to Enter in at the Strait Gate.

By Mrs. E. G. White.

THE belated traveller, hurrying to reach the city gate before the going down of the sun, could not turn aside for any attractions by the way. His whole mind was bent on the one purpose of entering the gate. The same intensity of purpose, said Jesus, is required in the Christian life. I have opened to you the glory of character, which is the true glory of My kingdom. It offers to you no promise of earthly dominion; yet it is worthy of your supreme desire and effort. I do not call you to battle for the supremacy of the world's great empire, but do not therefore conclude that there is no battle to be fought, nor victories to be won. I bid you strive, agonise, to enter into My spiritual kingdom.

The Spiritual Battle.

The Christian life is a battle and a march. But the victory to be gained is not won by human power. The field of conflict is in the domain of the heart. The battle which we have to fight—the greatest battle that was ever fought by man—is the surrender of self to the will of God, the yielding of the heart to the sovereignty of love. The old nature, born of blood and of the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up.

He who determines to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the passions and the powers of an unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Selfishness and pride will make a stand against anything that would show them to be sinful. We cannot, of ourselves, conquer the evil desires and habits that strive for the mastery. We cannot overcome the mighty foe who holds us in his thrall. God alone can give us the victory. He desires us to have the mastery over ourselves, our own will and ways. But He cannot work in us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the faculties and powers given to man. Our energies are required to co-operate with God.

The victory is not won without much earnest prayer, without the humbling of self at every step. Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundred-fold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. The stronghold of Satan would not be broken.

The victory cannot be achieved without the full co-operation of the will. The will must be placed on the side of God's will. You are not able of yourself to bring your purposes and desires and inclinations

into submission to the will of God; but if you are "willing to be made willing," God will accomplish the work for you, even "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." Then you will "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

But many are attracted by the beauty of Christ and the glory of heaven who yet shrink from the conditions by which alone these can become their own. There are many in the broad way who are not fully satisfied with the path in which they walk. They long to break from the slavery of sin, and in their own strength they seek to make a stand against their evil practices. They look toward the narrow way and the strait gate; but selfish pleasure, love of the world, pride, unsanctified ambition, place a barrier between them and the Saviour. To renounce their own will, their chosen objects of affection or pursuit, requires a sacrifice at which they hesitate and falter and turn back. Many "will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." They desire the good, they make some effort to obtain it; but they do not choose it; they have not a settled purpose to secure it at the cost of all things.

Receiving the Mind of Christ.

The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God's will, and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour, and day by day. We cannot retain self, and yet enter the kingdom of God. If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified. Are we willing to pay the price required of us? Are we willing to have our will brought into perfect conformity to the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of God cannot be manifest upon us.

The warfare which we are to wage is "the good fight of faith." "I also labour," said the Apostle Paul, "striving mightily according to His working, which worketh in me mightily."

The Example of Jacob.

Jacob, in the great crisis of his life, turned aside to pray. He was filled with an over-mastering purpose—to seek for transformation of character. But while he was pleading with God, an enemy, as he supposed, placed his hand upon him, and all night he wrestled for his life. But the purpose of his soul was not changed by peril of life itself. When his strength was nearly spent, the Angel put forth His divine power, and at His touch, Jacob knew with whom he had been contending. Wounded and helpless, he fell upon the Saviour's breast, pleading for a blessing. He would not be turned aside, or cease his intercession, and Christ granted the petition of this helpless, penitent soul, according to His promise, "Let him take hold of My strength, and make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Jacob pleaded with determined spirit, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." This spirit of persistence was inspired by Him who wrestled with the patriarch. It was He who gave him the victory, and He changed his name from Jacob to Israel, saying, "As

a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." That for which Jacob had vainly wrestled in his own strength, was won through self-surrender and steadfast faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

A Great Man—But a Leper.

By Hart Hall.

THE Lord was against Israel. Because of their sins He had become their enemy, to harass, to cut them down and afflict them until, subdued, they would turn unto Him.

And so He "had given deliverance unto Syria." From the mountainous region where these sons of Ham abode, companies came down upon the peace-loving Israelites "like the wolf on the fold."

Of the struggle there is no record, but we read that the Syrians "brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid." Whether there were other captives taken from Judah, we know not, but this little maid was made a slave, and she "waited on Naaman's wife."

What a chance for the blues, moping, discouragement, hatred, revenge! Made an orphan probably at her capture, and taken away into slavery as was Joseph, to serve a heathen people, with no hope for the future, did she mourn and bewail her fate? There can be no doubt that she did; it would be against all human nature not to do so. Joseph, when sold into a like fate gave himself up for a time to uncontrollable weeping and despair. But later when the lad remembered the God of whom he had been taught, he resolved to do everything faithfully, and trust in Him.

Are you doing this? In your service—and who are not servants?—are you performing your part the best you can, and trusting Him who controls all to untangle the mesh of life?

This maid whom the inspired writer, with all his faithfulness to pedigree, did not think worthy of a name, soon recovered her natural faith and cheerfulness. Her first recorded thoughts were of God and what He was able to do. And as she served the family day by day, she became acquainted with the terrible sorrow of the household—yes, and also of the nation—a great over-mastering, crushing weight of woe that kept joy and hope away as unbidden guests.

An artist has pictured the scene as it no doubt was. The mistress sits with her head in her arms that are resting upon a table, in utter despair and grief. The maid has witnessed her anguish many times, until it becomes to her sympathetic nature her grief, too. As her grief grew, so did her faith, and now she stands before her mistress, timidly offering counsel.

Here the artist leaves us, but history takes up the tale: "And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." For Naaman was a leper.

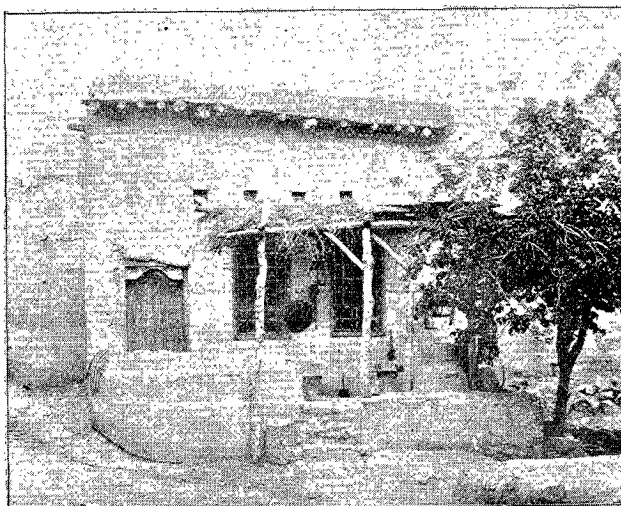
A timid voice, perhaps, but a strong statement; and for all we know it fell upon deaf ears so far as her mistress was concerned, for the voice of fate, louder than the babblings of youth and innocence, was speaking to her.

But who did hear the maid's remark?—A passing servant. Flying seed often strikes rich soil. Falling

upon this servant's ear, the words were pondered, and as he waited upon his lord the king he repeated them. "Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel."

If you would know the full story of Naaman's healing, read it in 2 Kings 5. We turn to the text and the lesson. "Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master and honourable, . . . but he was a leper." "A great man"—the host of Syria was under him; all but the king were at his beck and call. The wealth of the nation he might use as he pleased; he was intelligent, noble in mind and bearing, a far-seeing statesman and a great general, "and honourable," because the Lord could use him, but—he was a leper.

The greatest curse of disease the world has ever known was upon him,—loathsome in its offensiveness, awful in its excruciating torture, frowning in the dread



House of Naaman the Leper, Damascus.

of its contagion, certain in its fatality. Soon he knew he would become unbearably loathsome to king and court. His robes would be stripped from him and burned, and alone or with those loved ones who might already have received the infection, he would be driven like a ravenous beast from the haunts of men. His great usefulness which so overbalanced now the risk of infection would be ended. He knew it, his wife knew it, the king knew it, the kingdom knew it.

Perhaps you remember the story of his restoration to health. He went to the people of God, and by washing seven times in Jordan was wholly restored. His flesh came to him again as in the bloom of youth.

But leprosy is a type of sin, and sin comes easily, insidiously, stealthily, pleasantly, surely. And the infection of sin is everywhere; it is not confined to condition or climate, height of importance or depth of degradation.

The heroic missionary to the lepers of Hawaii, after years of service in health and strength, was one day bathing his feet in unusually hot water when he noticed with alarm that there was an absence of feeling in one of his feet—he had contracted the disease. So with sin; it is indifference and absence of feeling of hope and faith that is a sure symptom of the disease. There have been many Naamans of the past who have

been great. Saul the Kishite stood head and shoulders above all Israel; his mind was great, he had a great call, a great opportunity, a great position, but he was a leper spiritually.

Balaam was a great man and honourable; kings waited on his word, and noblemen of the kingdom were his messengers. He was the seer of God, and communed with Him intimately, but he was a leper at last in soul.

So down through the ages we may read of these great men—Belshazzar, Alexander, Cæsar. And when we scan the New Testament pages, another leper's record is given—that of Judas, an intelligent man and a capable man, with a wonderful opportunity, but a leper morally.

We have them to-day, these great men who are lepers; we read of them in every paper, great masters of their positions, honoured and trusted while the disease is covered; but the fatal day when the malady is disclosed comes, and the world knows they are lepers. With many the disease is tolerated or overlooked or covered up, but the victim, sure of the fate that awaits him, cries out pitifully in moments of remorse, "Unclean, unclean!"

Then there is the unhappiness in the family because of this leprosy. "No man liveth unto himself, no man dieth unto himself." Our influence may be of life unto life or death unto death. The infection of our example may spread rapidly in the character of another while it festers slowly in ours.

The disease is everywhere. What is the remedy? —The same that the prophet gave to Naaman,—Go wash seven times. Not this time in Jordan, nor yet in Abana or Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, but in a stream that is nearer and deeper, and inexhaustible in its purity and efficacy. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." Zech. 13: 1. This is the stream; go wash and be clean.

Naaman refused when the prescription was sent out to him; it was too simple. Do you refuse also? There is no other remedy. Listen to the voice speaking to your heart. If one had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather than wash and be clean? The world rejects the simple way and tries the hard, fruitless method; but all the things of life which are priceless—love, life, happiness, hope, health, and the rest—are easily obtained by the simple way.

I bid you come as did the leper to Jesus, saying, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." The Master did not wait a moment, but cleansed him instantly. He never has waited to cleanse from sin, but answers, "I will; be thou clean."

"BE always displeased at what thou art, if thou desire to attain to what thou art not; for where thou hast pleased thyself, there thou abidest."

Why Was Sin Permitted

?

This is a question which is asked by many persons to which no satisfactory answer can be given. If a sufficient reason could be found, that reason would be an excuse for its existence, and sin would cease to be sin. ¶ It is from this standpoint that S. H. Lane deals with this question in his book entitled

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THE west coast of Africa is probably one of the most difficult mission fields in this fallen world. Ever since the white man first visited these shores, it has been considered his grave.

While we believe the child of God should ever be willing to say, "Here am I, send me," yet many fear to offer themselves for this part of the "Dark Continent." To such, let us say, "Our Father understands every difficulty to be met, and we can trust Him who careth for us."

From Lake Chad on the east, and the Sahara Desert on the north to the Atlantic on the south and west, there are fully 250 languages and dialects spoken. Into but few of these tongues has the Bible been translated. Along the coast line some progress has been made, and missionaries are doing a little, but when we think of the millions who yet lie in darkness, we can but appeal to every soul who is acquainted with Jesus to help us in this mighty conflict against ignorance, superstition, and heathen worship in every form that Satan can devise. Pen cannot describe the awful condition of real devil-worshippers.

I often chill when I call to remembrance the first time I stood face to face with a god of the Crepo people, who inhabit the Dahomey country, along the Bight of Benin. Made of clay, eyes and teeth of shells from the seashore, a gown of native cloth that had witnessed many a storm and hot tropical sun, a small basin of food and water, and a frail shed for a cover, formed the sad object of worship of a large gathering of souls in gross darkness. With deep anxiety they watched every move I made and every expression of my countenance. How I longed to tell them of Him who "can save to the uttermost" all who would come to Him. My prayer was, "Lord, help me to turn them from these dumb idols to the living God."

With an earnest appeal I was asked to make a gift to their idol. Let it be remembered that there is an unseen power from beneath, the power from the "arch deceiver," that takes possession of these poor souls as they prostrate before their objects of worship. Wrapped in gross darkness, and filled with superstition, they at once fall a prey to the influence of fallen angels, and are thus led into the darkest deeds. While the powers of darkness from beneath are taking fast hold upon the inhabitants of this world, let us give praise to God that He is sending down His Holy Spirit, and filling every true missionary with that power sufficient to meet the elements from beneath, and protecting us by His mighty and holy angels who excel in strength the angels of darkness.

Our Father is a mighty God; our Captain, one who has never lost a battle. What we need are men and women, spirit-filled; men and women who are

not afraid to face the conflict, and with whom angels can co-operate.

Heaven on the one hand is anxiously waiting; Africa on the other hand is calling. "Look, the fields are white;" can you say there is plenty of time? God's Spirit and angels are going out before us.

A short time ago while on a visit to one of our mission stations, fifteen young men, representing eight tribes from the hinterland, called on me in person, asking me to take them to our school where they might be trained, so they can carry this message to their parents and friends who worship these dumb idols. With their native clothes wrapped around them, they found their way to the coast. Eager to be educated, they had gained some knowledge of the written English. Their earnest appeal found a place in my heart. By faith I promised them help.

Since coming back to our mission station in Sierra Leone, I have received two letters from them reminding me of my promise, and of their earnest desire to prepare for the work of God. Who will send us help to train these young men?

A few days ago I had a very touching experience. Mrs. Babcock called me and said that a woman wanted to see me. As I stepped to the other side of the house I met a woman with a little boy tied on her back, and by her side stood another of about twelve years of age. As I looked into his bright face a glow of gladness seemed to radiate from his very countenance. The mother then said to me, "I want to give you my boy to be trained for God." As I looked at the boy again, it seemed to me that I could read his anxious appeal, "Won't you take me?" When I told that poor mother that our home was full, and our means limited, she turned homeward with a sad heart, and tears fell from the face of that dear boy.

S. C. BABCOCK.

"THERE is no service like his that serves because he loves."



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Children's Corner

The Tramp Dog.

JOHN and Mary were playing on the front lawn when a large Newfoundland dog who looked as though he hadn't seen a good meal in a long time, trotted up to John and wagged his tail. John's kind heart went to this dog, and he immediately hurried into the house and returned with a bone. The dog ate it in gulps, and when he had eaten enough he lay down, and didn't seem to be in any hurry to leave.

John and Mary played with the dog all the afternoon, and when John's father came home from his

him and told him to go and find the children. He and Mr. Merwin went to the bush, and when they arrived there he rushed away from Mr. Merwin to find them on his own accord.

In a little while Mr. Merwin heard him barking, and went to the place whence it came, and there found the dog and the children.

I think this dog was a real hero, don't you?—Sel.

How Miss Willard Signed Off.

AMONG the underlined passages in my Bible, one is forever associated with Frances E. Willard—Ps. 17:3: "I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress."

The date, Jan. 2, 1876, marks a day when Miss Kate Jackson, Dr. Louise C. Purington, and I were in close talk with Miss Willard. We three, her friends, were greatly aroused over some act of grave injustice toward her, and were freeing our minds about the offender.

Miss Willard filled the first pause with: "Now, girls, I've been thinking it over, and it isn't the Christian way to air our grievances. I'm going to quit; and in token I'm going to sign off from speaking ill of people, and in my old Bible. I want you to take this pledge with me."

We were in no mood to do this, and stoutly demurred. Miss Willard pleaded the case in her inimitable and unreportable way, until all but one of the three had yielded the point. Then she said, "Well let's pray about it."

Only those who knew Miss Willard can imagine the skill with which she drove her arrows home, around by heaven.

Lest the obdurate one should still hold out, she finally said, "Now, E——, you pray about it."

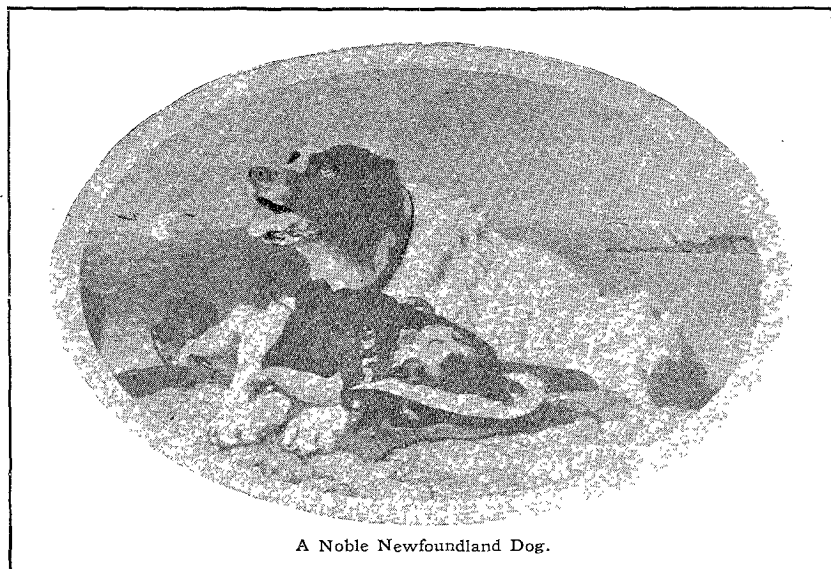
There could be but one outcome of such a course. E—— was altogether persuaded—not to promise, but to *purpose* that her mouth should not transgress. Her name went into Frances Willard's Bible with an "I will try" prefixed to it. Said Miss Willard, "I presume E—— will keep the promise best of all of us."

Not so; Frances E. Willard kept that pledge under extreme provocation, better than anyone I have ever known. She lived Faber's prayer-hymn:—

"Sweeten my bitter-thoughted heart
With charity like Thine,
Till self shall be the only spot
On earth that does not shine."

—Ella G. Ives, in *Christian Endeavour World*.

"SHUN evil companions; and if you at times are thrown into the company of those who use bad language, close heart and ears, and think of that which is pure and lovely."



A Noble Newfoundland Dog.

work, John told his father all about him. At first Mr. Merwin was inclined to send the dog away, but the dog looked up at him with such loving eyes that he couldn't help but keep him. The days following were too short for the three playmates, John, Mary, and Fuzzy, for he answered that name. John taught him to be useful in many ways, to carry the market-basket, and also to carry the evening paper. He ran with Mary and John every night to meet Mr. Merwin coming from work.

Fuzzy was beginning to make himself one of the family, and the incident which I am going to tell you brought him closer to the hearts of the Merwin family, and gave him a permanent place in the family.

One morning in spring, John and Mary took their baskets and lunch and went gathering ferns. They picked ferns and dug up roots all day, and in doing so travelled some distance into the bush, and when they started to go home, they could not find their way, and they began to cry.

In the meantime Mr. and Mrs. Merwin were worried about them, so they called Fuzzy and patted



Strength for To-Day.

- "STRENGTH for to-day is all that we need,
As there never will be a to-morrow;
For to-morrow will prove but another to-day,
With its measures of joy and sorrow.
- "Then why forecast the trials of life,
With much sad and grave persistence,
And wait and watch for a crowd of ills
That as yet have no existence?
- "Strength for to-day; what a precious boon
For earnest souls who labour,
For the willing hands that minister
To the needy friend or neighbour.
- "Strength for to-day, that the weary hearts,
In the battle of right may quail not,
And the eyes bedimmed by bitter tears,
In their search of light may fail not.
- "Strength for to-day, on the down-hill track,
For the travellers nearing the valley.
That up, far up, on the other side,
Ere long they may safely rally.
- "Strength for to-day that our precious youth
May happily shun temptation,
And build from the rise to the set of the sun,
On a strong and sure foundation.
- "Strength for to-day, in house and home,
To practise forbearance sweetly;
To scatter kind words and loving deeds.
Still trusting in God completely.
- "Strength for to-day is all that we need,
As there never will be a to-morrow;
For to-morrow will prove but another to-day,
With its measure of joy and sorrow."

Garden Reflections.

By R. O. Eastman.

EVERY individual aspires to greatness at some time in his career. Most of those, I believe, who keep on *aspiring* actually *achieve*. Those who quit, do so either because they feel they are already great enough,—and the world holds not a few such persons,—or because they have lost all hope and all ambition—and the world holds *more* of these. True greatness lies in capacity, not in fulness. Solon was the wisest man in Greece—we have his own word for it. He had a good reason for reckoning himself as the wisest. "I am the wisest man in Greece," he said; "for the others all think they know a great deal, while I am the only one who knows that he knows nothing." Jesus Christ was the greatest man ever in the world because "He emptied Himself," and His capacity both for receiving and for dispensing became infinite.

What has this to do with gardening? It is the choicest fruitage of my crop. My garden has taught me—more than anything else, I believe—the sublime mediocrity of man. A man begins to realise how small a thing he is when he stands in God's great laboratory and watches the Infinite mix in the crucible

earth, sunlight, and air, and bring forth a harvest. David sang, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" But David would never have read God in the heavens if he had not first observed Him in the fields where he fed his sheep. No human mind can ever master the wonders of the earth, let alone the mysteries of the heavens.

In my domestic abode there is a certain corner distinctively my own, which custom has designated as my "den," though it is inhabited by neither birds, beasts, nor creeping things. This is the final resting-place of some dozens of periodicals which I receive. Most of these are thrown together as a common lot. But in one corner you will find, if you look carefully, a stack or two piled up in an orderly fashion as something worth keeping. These are my farm and garden papers. I have found out that they cover a wider range of thought and study than any other papers I receive. That is why I have to keep them all. For years these papers have been published, and there has never been an issue that did not contain something new; for the garden itself is a book, the pages of which are constantly turning, with never a repetition of either text or illustrations.

I have just come in from planting twenty-one rows of peas. My specialty this year will be peas. I have now just about thirty rows, and they will average in length considerably over one hundred feet. I have just figured out that this means over half a mile of peas. Now every time I go through those peas with the wheel hoe,—on each side of the row,—I am pretty sure to get some exercise, don't you think so? Last autumn I noticed two physical culturists who went by my place every once in a while, carrying between them a stick weighted down with a heavy piece of iron. Think of the intelligent man-power that was going to waste! How many rows of good, succulent vegetables that energy might have produced if harnessed up behind a seeder and wheel hoe through the season! The physical culturist will do that stunt and pay so much a week for the privilege of doing it—and others—according to the authorised version; but show them a hoe and an acre of ground, and their interest wanes. One is *play*; the other is *work*.

But did you ever stop to think what is the real distinction between work and play? Figure it out yourself, and you will find that as a general thing—in practically all cases—the work or play engaged in is a matter of the individual's choice; the distinction is entirely a matter of imagination. It has often been said, What's one man's work is another man's play. Your boy plays football. He becomes proficient and joins a club. Finally he is offered pay for playing. He makes a season's contract, and then he really *works* at football instead of playing it. Play is not always even a recreation. I am tempted to say that it is seldom a recreation, properly considered, as most men take it. The busy office man whose labours all day have entailed great mental exertion, comes home or goes to the club to play chess. The man who has been working over books and papers, goes home to read, while the blacksmith will play cricket on the back lot as long as the light of day lasts, even postponing his supper for the game. The carpenter or

mechanic will come home to work in his yard or garden. Look around in your own neighbourhood and among those who tend their own places, see which are best kept up, which lawns are cleanest cut, which gardens are most prosperous in appearance, and you will find that they belong to the men whose daily labours are physical rather than mental. Yet they are the ones who need it the least of all.

For my own part, I gave up playing a long time ago. Not that I do not like to play. On the contrary, I do. But I found that "just playing" consumed altogether more time than I felt I could afford to give. So I naturally fell into a system which gives me much more recreation than the ordinary individual receives, but in pursuance of which practically all my time becomes productive. My garden, my wood-pile, my lawn, and my fruit furnish me an intense physical action for a regular interval each day. My inside work calls for mental activity. One becomes recreation for the other.

Our Homes.

POETS have written about the home. They have led the mind to the quaint old country place surrounded by vines and blossoming shrubs, and have gently unfolded to our view the sweet-faced mother and the kind-hearted father bent with age. Our great men of the world in their lectures have tenderly spoken of their boyhood days at home, of mother, whose never-ceasing care and love have kept them in the path of integrity. Authors of note have many times written that which has touched an answering chord in the hearts of their readers, and many have been made purer as the memories and teachings of home come back to their minds.

Just now, when Satan is holding out every inducement to our loved ones, we need pure, attractive, and pleasant homes. "More powerful than any other earthly influence upon human hearts and lives is that of a true home." What is a true home? It is not a home where father sits during the evening with a deep frown upon his brow, and where after reading the evening paper, he puts on his coat and hat and goes out to greet Mr.——— and others, and then as he nears home, puts on his frown once more. Such a man cannot be a true head of the household, for he cannot become acquainted with the children or with their love. Perhaps ere his return, mother has quietly put the children in their little beds, for "father is tired and out of sorts to-night."

Neither can a home be a true home where the mother scolds and frets from morning until night; where she appears at meal-time with uncombed hair and soiled dress. Perhaps she has scolded until she is on the verge of tears. Her house is untidy; everything seems to have gone wrong all day. What excuse has this mother?—She is "so nervous."

But the children have no encouragement in such a home. The little ones that God has given us to care for,—the ones we are to give an account for in the great day of God—these are having their feet started in the pathway of ruin through the influence of such a home. God intends the home to be the dearest spot on earth; and each member of the household should do his part toward making it so.

The father, as the head of the household, should strive to make his home a place where cheerfulness, courtesy, and love abide. He should enter his home with smiles and pleasant words. He should establish the family altar, and all should gather for worship. He should take time to become acquainted with his children. Even if his business cares are very pressing he can afford to spend some time with his family, and he will find that it is not time wasted. Human souls are at stake. How much more important is one human soul than all the business cares of life! In the morning before taking up the cares of the day, let the father gather his family around him, and bowing before God, commit the loved ones to the Father in heaven.

On the mother seems to rest the greatest care of the family. Each little trial is brought to her. A little hand or head must be kissed and cared for to cure the bump or ache. The duties of the household press upon her. Every little detail must come under the mother's notice. With patience she should care for the children. With a gentle, God-fearing spirit she should lead her loved ones to the side of Jesus. Her house should be kept clean and tidy, that it may be an attractive place for the husband and children. Solomon has spoken of the faithful wife: "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness; her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."

A great responsibility rests upon parents. In their home life they are sowing seed which will bear fruit for Christ or Satan. As fathers and mothers let us draw near to the Saviour, that He may lead us in this great work of making our homes pure, elevating, and love-inspiring, until we reach the blessed home of the faithful which is just ahead.—*Selected.*

"THERE is an art of reading, as well as an art of thinking, and an art of writing."

THE celebrated Russian artist, Bruloff, one day corrected a pupil's study. The student exclaimed, "Why, you only touched it a tiny bit, but it is quite another thing!" "Art begins where the tiny bit begins," replied Bruloff.

IN his evidence given in favour of the Daylight Saving Bill, says *Present Truth*, Sir Thomas Barlow said that "people had come to look upon sunshine and open air as the most important means of neutralising the ill effects of indoor exhausting occupations, especially as regards bloodmaking. Town life made its influence felt very markedly in producing anæmia, or poverty of blood. In this respect the community were beginning to learn the enormous advantage of sunshine and open air, and also the increased power thereby given to the respiratory organs to resist damaging influences. This was especially marked in the case of those who were just above the border-line of ill-health. There was a vast number of young, delicate people who were specially prone to consumption in its various forms. With sufficient sunshine and open air, such might be enabled to fight the battle of life, and as time went on become tolerably efficient."



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INSPIRED, no doubt, by the recital of some of the incidents connected with the terrible scenes which have recently been enacted in Armenia, a report of which appeared in our last issue, our correspondent, J. B., has written a vigorous and trenchant poem, which appears on page 548.

CENTRIFUGAL force is the active agent in some interesting phenomena, such as keeping a bicycle upright, causing a top to return to a certain position after being disturbed, and giving to a soft iron disc the rotary tension that enables it to cut through heavy armour plate. A disc of cardboard revolving rapidly in a lathe behaves like sheet metal. A report of German experiments states that the cardboard can no longer be bent, and if struck with a hammer it emits a sound like that from bronze. Even paper acquires quite unusual properties. An eight-inch disc of good paper, perfectly circular, was placed on the shaft of an electric motor, and when rotated at the motor's highest speed, it easily sawed through cigar-box wood. Centrifugal force may give many other curious effects. For example, a small chain may be fitted as a closed ring on a rotating drum in such a way that it can be slipped off when the drum reaches its highest speed, and the chain will then roll on a table like a solid ring, and bounce up like a hoop on striking the ground.

BRITISH royal commissions take their work with tremendous seriousness, and they take ample time for their inquiries. For three years has the Royal Commission on the Condition of the Poor been occupied, and their report, now completed, fills 1,238 pages. The evidence compiled, together with the special investigations of many specialists, will fill forty volumes. No less than 250 distinct recommendations are made by the majority and minority members of the commission. Altogether the commission's labours have resulted in one of the greatest sociological investigations ever made. Lord George Hamilton, chairman of the commission, is quoted as saying that the most serious feature of the report "is the deliberate statement that the conditions of life in London and other big towns are such as to produce a degenerate race, morally and physically enfeebled." When imperial Rome had reached that stage, the emperors distributed gratis more and more corn and entertained the mob with free shows in the amphitheatre. England appoints, on the other hand, a royal commission of inquiry, and gets busy with sociology.

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