

Signs of the Times

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ONE PENNY

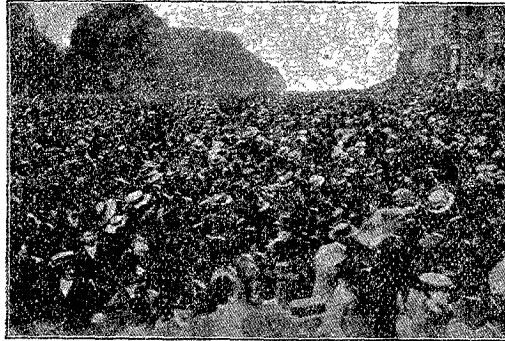
The World As It Is

THE signs which are now rapidly appearing, as day after day passes, should awaken much interest in the statements referring to the near future which have so often appeared in the columns of this paper; and should also lead to the study of the books on kindred subjects which have been so widely distributed, not only in Australasia, but throughout the civilised world. To some minds the future may have been, at one time, shrouded in mystery, but that should not be the case with anyone now.

This is a very uneasy world. There is a restlessness displayed such as the world as a whole has never before experienced. There is perplexity of nations, and there is not a nation upon the face of the earth which feels itself to-day secure. Wise and energetic minds are at the helms of most nations—men whose senses are acute and who are swift to perceive; but the events which now happen, which jeopardise trade, social position, and the retention and ownership of

property and wealth, are beyond the control of the very best of legislators. The unexpected happens. Political moves are checkmated by events which, although not altogether unforeseen, are unprovided for; while the legislation which was deemed sufficient to meet the case is upset in a moment, and the calculations are proved to be defective.

If men want a heaven, they are not going to find it here under present circumstances. It is of no use to single out any one nation as a scene of turmoil and perplexity, for to a large extent the forces at work in the one nation are to a greater or less extent at work also in the others; still, although the unrest is phenomenal and world-wide; although the earth reeks with discontent; and although the earth and its peoples are enraged like a disturbed nest of angry hornets, yet there are thousands who are expecting from all this world-wide and unnatural excitement a time when peace will make her permanent abode upon the earth. These people



Bread Riots in Vienna

do not believe Christ's words when He stated through Daniel the prophet that the end of human history would result in "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." Certainly we have not quite reached that time yet, but we are on the immediate borders of it. It cannot be emphasised too frequently that this age will terminate in woe, international woe.

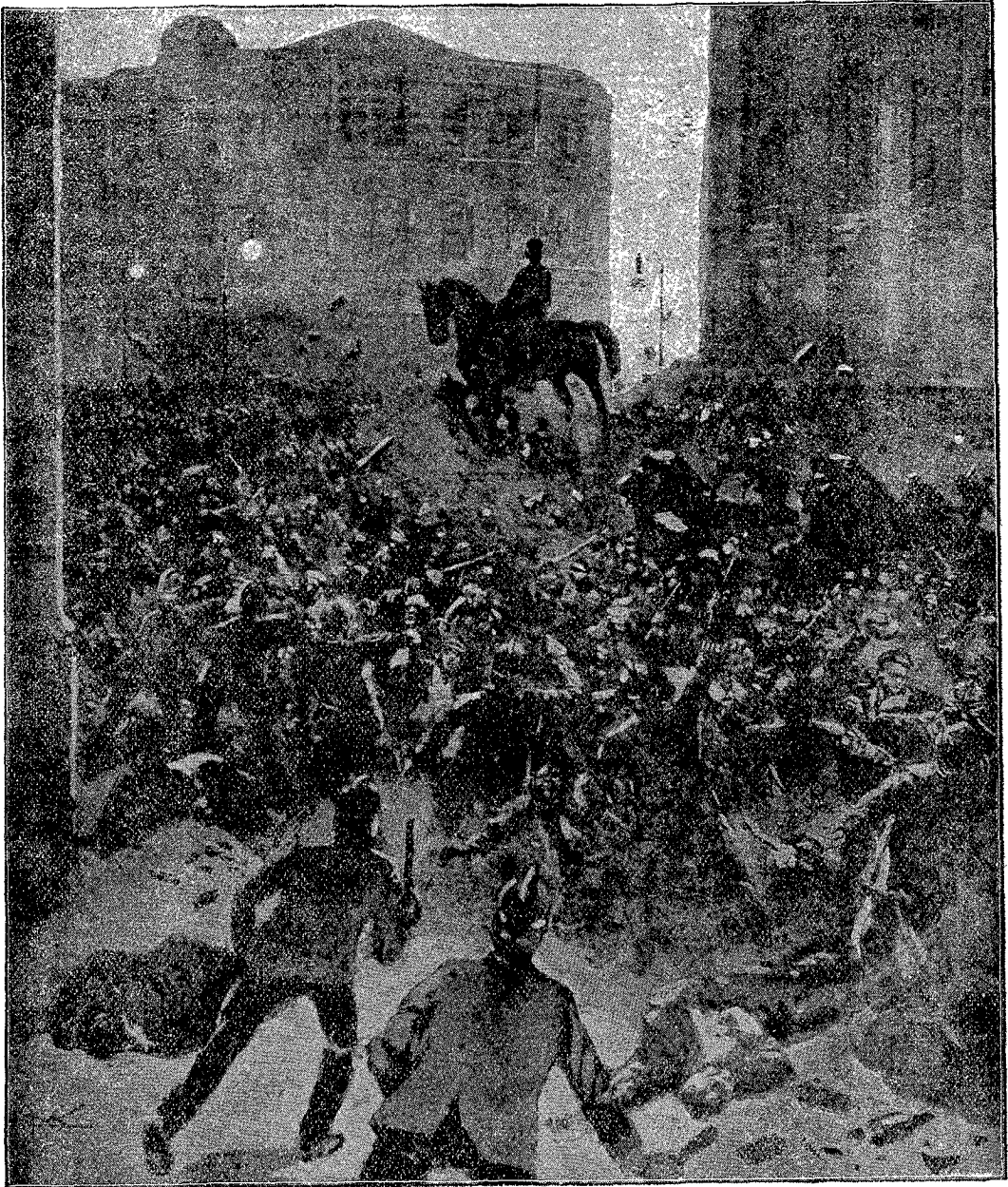
Many at this time realise the danger and see the difficulties ahead, for those difficulties now are not imagined ones, there being sufficient indication in the present state of affairs to remove all doubts from the mind of anyone who thinks we are entering upon a millennium of peace.

What does all this unrest really mean? It means simply this, that the world is fast nearing the crisis when it will have passed the line of human probation. Unbelief in divine revelation, as outlined in the Bible, is one of the most prominent signs of our times. The world to-day is fulfilling the words of the Saviour: "As it was in the days of Noah." "As it was in the days of Lot." The people of this earth have the Bible, but they believe it not. Thousands imagine that they believe it, yet they are deceived in regard to their belief. The theory of some eminent divine is accepted by many as truth; while others have theories of their own, the results of prejudiced minds or a wrong education. The world holds out its deceptive delusions, and to thousands these delusions are more acceptable than the real truth. Many receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

At the present time, what great security does this world offer to anyone? The whole tide of human nature is ruffled. Great confederacies oppose government. Strife is rampant, and individual liberty is interfered with. If we are not approaching a time of trouble, what, then, are we approaching? Some think that there will be peace after the storm. But who is going to live through the storm? Who, in the coming crisis, can guarantee safety for himself and his property? The one half of the world is loudly telling the other half that it is being wronged, that the labourer is robbed of his hire. Arbitration daily fails to satisfy demands. Society is threatened. The socialist

points to nationalisation and equality, the syndicalist to co-operation and trade ownership; their voices, too, are ominously loud. What satisfies the one party dissatisfies the other. Then there is unionism under a multiplicity of heads, which makes a dissatisfied third party. These, with their various interests, are all represented in parliaments, and parliaments are necessarily, and under present circumstances, anything but the abodes of peace. Then the great nations are confederated, and the one confederation is jealous and angry at the other; and behind all stand armies and Dreadnoughts. All these preparations and much more tell us that we are approaching a great storm. The political weather is hazy and very overcast; angry mutterings are heard, ominous voices resound, stupendous efforts are being put forth. All hands in every nation point to the horizon, and all peoples discern that a crisis is approaching. What kind of a crisis? The answer comes from the world: A universal one. Men at the present time should thank God for having four angels stationed at the four corners of the earth, who are holding back the winds of war and strife until He has called a people out. Rev. 7:1-4.

The present security of the nations, as far as that security goes, depends not upon the presence of Dreadnoughts, neither upon that of armies, but upon the mercy of the living God. While the nations are unmerciful to themselves, God is merciful to them. If all will not be saved, God will save a remnant; and for the sake of that remnant God is holding back the winds: but the winds are becoming agitated, the storm is approaching, and the angels are getting ready to let go. God will not much longer use angels to restrain the winds and to withhold calamities from nations who decide to disobey Him. When the time is fully due, the order to let go will be issued from heaven. The winds so long restrained will rush past the forms of the angels, north, south, east, and west, and will clash together in the vicinity of Palestine, in the precincts of the old Jerusalem. A whirlwind will be raised up from *all the coasts of the earth*. That means war with every nation which has a vessel and a coast, and every nation of



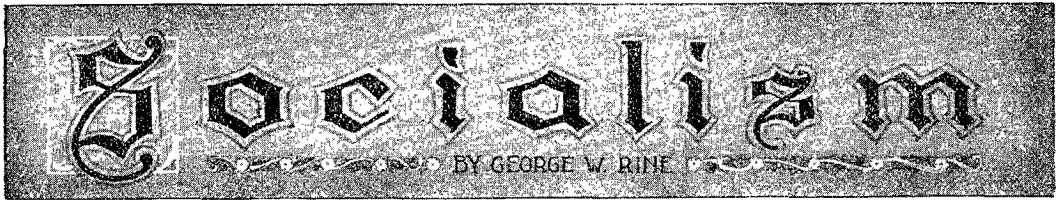
Battle in Liverpool between the Police and Strikers

any account has that. The nations on that day will be as dust in the balances. The only union which will be saved on that occasion will be the union which has confederated with Christ.

"The Lord is merciful and of tender mercy." "God is our refuge and our

strength, a very present help in the time of trouble." Human probation is rapidly and surely drawing to a close. But the Saviour says to us, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

J. B.



In Great Britain and Other Countries

(Continued)

AS a political factor, Socialism in Great Britain made extremely slow progress prior to 1908. In that year British labour-unionism and British Socialism practically coalesced, and they now constitute a solid political unit. This significant coalition was effected at a conference of the most influential leaders of both movements at the city of Hull, and is known as the Hull Conference Compact. As the result of this wholesale alliance, the English Socialist vote of 1910 was sixty per cent in excess of that of 1906. The Socialist Labour Party now hold forty-two seats in the British Parliament.

Since 1892 Socialism has had a phenomenal growth in Italy. In that year the Socialist Party was organised on the general European model. The party now comprises 1,250 local groups. It has returned thirty-two members to the national Chamber of Deputies, and controls politically about one hundred municipalities. The party commands great strength among the rural population, principally farm labourers. In spite of their extreme poverty, 200,000 of these rustics pay their party dues with scrupulous fidelity. In 1910 there were 340,000 Socialist votes polled in Italy. Five daily papers, sixty-five weekly, and twenty-three trade-union journals are devoted to the Socialist movement in that historic peninsula.

Socialism in Russia was at first represented by many widely scattered groups; but in 1901 they combined their forces and created a national party with the ominous title of "The Socialist Revolutionists."

It is impossible to estimate the present strength of Socialism in Russia; but the fact that the second Duma, elected on a

restricted suffrage and under rigid government surveillance, had one hundred Socialist members, is eloquent testimony to the immense spread and power of Socialism in that unhappy empire.

The distinguishing characteristic of Socialism in the three Scandinavian countries is its complete fusion with the trade-union organisations. In 1889 the Socialist Party of Denmark had but one representative in the national legislative body. In 1907 that party returned twenty-eight deputies, out of a total of 114, to the Danish Parliament.

In Germany

There are now more Socialists in Germany than there are people in Spain, or in Mexico, or in Belgium and Holland and Denmark and Norway put together. The German Socialist Party polls a million more votes than any other party in the empire. By reason of an antiquated system governing the distribution of seats, the Socialist Party is represented in the Reichstag by only fifty-two members instead of 115, to which it would be entitled on parity of numbers.* And by reason of unequal suffrage, instead of controlling nearly every large city of the empire, the Socialists elect only about a third of the members of the city councils. The growth of Socialism in Germany can be best appreciated by a comparison of the Socialist vote in the parliamentary elections of that country. In 1871 the Socialists cast 124,655 votes; in 1890, a trifle more than 1,400,000 votes; 1907, 3,258,968 votes. During the five years 1898-1903, the Socialist vote was increased by one million.

The journals published by the German Social Democratic Party reach no fewer than 1,049,707 regular subscribers. The

*Since this article was written the Socialists have made great gains and have now 110 members in the Reichstag.

party publishes sixty-five daily papers, and twelve weekly and monthly periodicals. One of these journals has a circulation of 230,000. The party employs twenty-eight organising secretaries, who go about the country and give direction to the branches in their work of organisation and propaganda. In 1906, the national committee on education opened a school in Berlin for the distinct purpose of training working-men as organisers, secretaries, and editors. The German trade-union movement now numbers 2,300,000 members. The women in the movement number 135,000. At least ninety-five per cent of these trade-unionists are Socialists.

In view of the astonishing progress that Socialism has made in all parts of the world during the last twenty years, as briefly indicated above, it is not at all strange that Mr. J. N. Larned, in the *Atlantic Monthly* for May, under the title "Prepare for Socialism," should have said anent the Socialist movement: "The movement has now gathered a momentum that will carry it surely to some vital and momentous outcome of change in the organisation of society." And again: "It is a movement of such nature, in fact, as seems likely to break suddenly, some day, into avalanches and floods."

Socialism—Some Aspects of Its Programme

Twenty years ago the Socialist propaganda seemed like a mere dream. To-day vast numbers of thoughtful persons of all classes of society regard Socialism as the goal toward which society is inevitably moving. The progress of conviction in this direction has doubtless been quickened by the enormous growth of combinations, both of capital and of labour. Very few of those, however, who cherish the conviction that Socialism is destined to become the ultimate form of human society, have ever clearly worked out in their own minds the programme of Socialism. In truth, the ideas of many Socialists themselves are nebulous and indefinite. As to the programme of actual procedure there are almost endless differences of opinion among them. Many intelligent Socialists decidedly oppose the adoption of violent or revolutionary schemes. They would bring about suc-

cessive reforms just as rapidly as public opinion would warrant. Again, other leaders of the movement—for example, Jack London and Eugene V. Debs—would, as early as practicable, change the existing order radically and violently.

It looks as if the Socialist PROPAGANDA at least has come to stay. It is



World's Work.

Arresting a Socialist Agitator.

therefore imperatively urgent that we all should acquire a fair understanding of the goal to which the movement would conduct us. Socialism is not a system merely of amendment or reform. On the contrary, it declares every system of that sort to be woefully inadequate, and seeks to effect an entire renovation of the body social, to compass an economic and political revolution of momentous magnitude. It holds that the present condition of our industrial and social life is radically wrong, essentially unjust; and therefore demands that its whole character be revolutionised.

(To be continued.)



Give Heed! Beware!

By Agnes Bell

“A WATCHMAN’S duty is to keep a good look out, and give due warning of approaching danger. He must now and again scan his surroundings in order that he may detect any sign which is likely to precede any event which is about to take place, especially if it forebodes evil. If he is a faithful watchman he will sound an alarm, else his efforts will avail nothing, but will in the end work his own ruin. The Lord says through His prophet Ezekiel: “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman, . . . therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.” Eze. 3:17, 18.

The end of this earth’s history is at hand; and as it approaches its final doom, deceptions will be on the increase, and spiritual darkness will envelop the people. Momentous warnings, which either are entirely ignored or unheeded—warnings which are being heralded throughout the length and breadth of the earth—are telling of the Lord’s soon coming, when every man will have to render an account.

Though the Lord has given ample evidence as to the nearness of this event, yet many people are very dense. “Eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not.” They have understanding, but they perceive not; and their minds are spiritually darkened.

“Watchman, what of the night?” The watchman answers: “The morning cometh, and also the night.” It will be the glorious dawn of the everlasting morning

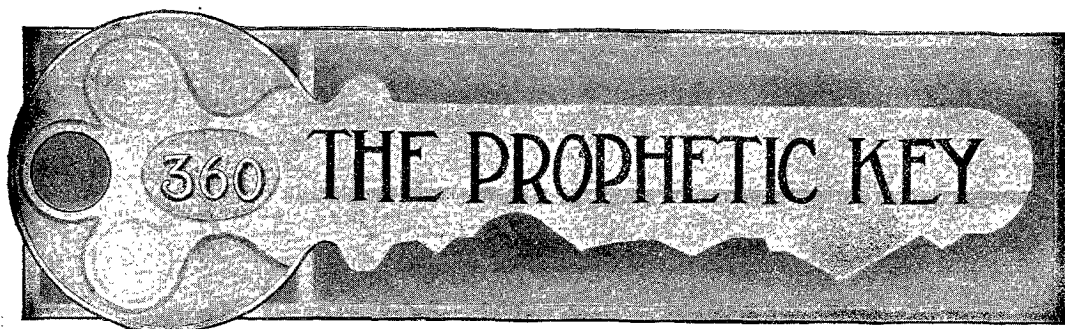
to those who have heeded the call to repentance, and accepted the Sacrifice offered for them on Calvary’s cross, and who have made their calling and election sure. They will stand justified through the righteousness of Christ in whom they have redemption. “For the Lord will be the hope of His people.” Joel 3:16.

But to the wicked and the unrighteous, those who have spurned the offers of mercy, and who have not found pardon in Christ’s name, it will be night, yea, night of the densest darkness. That day will be “a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.”

That day is near, and hasteth greatly. All things proclaim it. The nations are perplexed. They cry, Peace! peace! while they make for war. They are agreed that the only way to keep peace is to manufacture armaments; and so they vie with one another, crying with one breath, Peace! peace! and with the other, Arm! arm! and so “men’s hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.”

There will come a time in the near future when the world will be assured that it has reached a time of peace and safety; but, says the Lord, “When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh.” 1 Thess. 5:3. There will be a stir among the nations, each will fly to its arms; for the proclamation will be: “Prepare war, wake up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.”

This is still in the future, but all things are leading up to this crisis. Therefore the Lord says to his watchmen, “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.” The battle of Armageddon, then the coming of the Lord! So the Lord says: “I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me.” We would therefore say, Give heed! Beware!



HAVING devoted five articles to the exposition of prophetic periods in the book of Daniel, we now invite our readers to turn to the New Testament and examine a most interesting chronological prophecy, which is recorded in the ninth chapter of the book of Revelation.

In the eighth chapter of that wonderful book we read of seven angels with seven trumpets, four of which were sounded in succession with dire consequences to the inhabitants of earth. As nothing whatever concerning time is mentioned in connection with these first four trumpets, it will not be necessary for us here to enter into a lengthy exposition of these interesting verses of Scripture. But in order to have a clearer view of the succeeding two trumpets it will, perhaps, be advisable for us to explain that these first four of the seven trumpets refer to the overthrow of Western Rome, (1) by the Visigoths under Alaric, (2) by the Vandals under Genseric, (3) by the Huns under Attila, and (4) by the final extinction of the Western Empire when the sun, moon, and stars, symbolical of emperor, consuls, and senators, ceased to shine in the imperial city. This was finally accomplished by Justinian's general, Belisarius, A.D. 552. But the ruin which had overtaken Rome did not immediately extend to her sister city, Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Empire. Its downfall was to be accomplished by other peoples and at a much later date.

Continuing the narrative the Revelator says:—

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke

of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented *five months*: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men *five months*. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon ["that is to say a destroyer" margin]. Rev. 9:1-11.

"With surprising unanimity," says Albert Barnes, "commentators have agreed in regarding this as referring to the empire of the Saracens, or to the rise and progress of the religion and the empire set up by Mohammed." It would indeed be a difficult task to find any other people to whom this scripture could refer. We invite the reader to examine the prophecy minutely.

Under the first four trumpets, as we have already pointed out, the Western Empire of Rome was utterly subverted. Now the prophet calls our attention to new scenes. "The bottomless pit" is opened, and smoke is seen to arise from the pit as the smoke of a great furnace, and out of the smoke there came hordes of locusts. These locusts appeared like battle horses, whose riders wore crowns

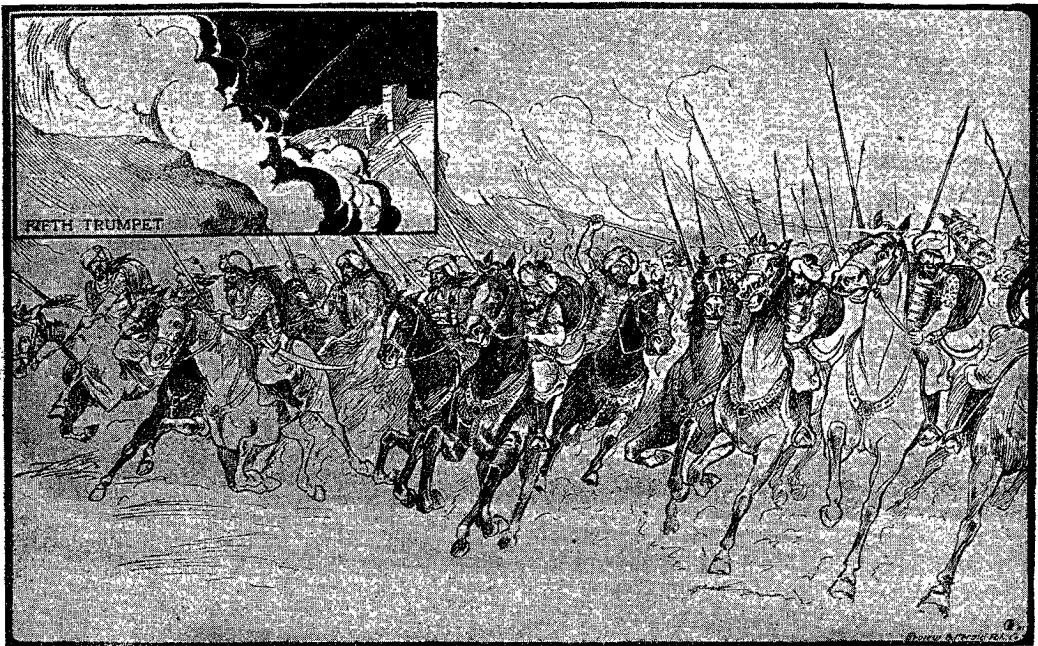
like gold and breastplates of iron. To them "it was commanded that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

Where and what is this "bottomless pit?" Who are these "locusts" which appeared like battle horses, and to whom such a peculiar command was given?

The term, "the bottomless pit," is translated from the Greek word *abussos*, signi-

In A.D. 632 Mahomet died, and was immediately succeeded by Abu-Bekr who began the Mohammedan conquests. Addressing the first army that he sent forth, Abu-Bekr said:—

When you fight the battle of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men, without turning your backs; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women and children. *Destroy no palm trees nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees,* nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you



"The shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle."

fying a waste, desolate region. Undoubtedly, Arabia, the country from which Mohammedanism arose, is correctly described by the term, "the bottomless pit." "In the dreary waste of Arabia, a boundless level of sand is intersected by sharp and naked mountains; and the face of the desert, without shade or shelter, is scorched by the direct and intense rays of the tropical sun."

The locusts with faces as the faces of men, and with the appearance of horses prepared unto battle, fitly represent the hordes of Mohammedans riding on their fleet Arabian horses. Their crowns like gold may denote their turbans, yellow being the predominant colour.

go on, you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God that way; let them alone, and neither kill them nor burn their monasteries. And you will find another sort of people, that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure to cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter, till they either turn Mohammedans or pay tribute. —*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 51.

Gradually the Mohammedans pushed their conquests east and west, north and south. But for more than 600 years they had no king nor regularly organised government. The prophecy, however, distinctly foretells of a time when these hordes of "locusts" had a king over them, whose name or character was "a destroyer." This king was Othman, who

was the first of the caliphs to establish an organised government of the Moham-medans, and it is from this fact that the empire which he founded is called the *Ottoman Empire*. According to the Revelator this destroyer was to hurt men *five months*. Rev. 9:10. Providentially the exact date when this monster first began his attack upon Nicomedia has been recorded for our information. Says Gibbon:—

It was on July 27, A.D. 1299, that Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia; and the singular accuracy of the date seems to disclose some foresight of the rapid and destructive growth of the monster.

The historian was impressed with the singular accuracy of the date, but when we consider that an important prophetic period began at that precise point, it is not at all "singular" that this exact date should be preserved for the last seven hundred years. We have already seen in the preceding articles how carefully other important dates which relate to the fulfilment of prophecy have also been preserved.

Let us now apply the prophetic key—a day for a year—to this period of "five months." At thirty days to the month, which we have already found is the Bible system of calculation (compare Gen. 7:11, 24; 8:3, 4), there are just one hundred and fifty days in this period of five months. As each day represents a year, this prophetic period therefore represents 150 literal years. Beginning on the 27th day of July, 1299, this period would reach to July 27, 1449. From that date another prophetic period commences which is covered by the sixth trumpet. For lack of space the consideration of this prophecy must be left over until our next issue.

WHAT is King George's special day? Tuesday was King Edward's. On Tuesday, November 9, 1841, he was born; on Tuesday, January 25, 1842, he was baptised; on Tuesday, March 10, 1863, married; on a Tuesday in 1871 it was announced that he had typhoid fever; on a Tuesday he attended the public thanksgiving service for his recovery; and on a Tuesday he succeeded to the throne.



Early Work in Tahiti

Burning of Idols

By Mrs. L. Tuxen-Thomas

AFTER an absence of two years, the missionaries received encouraging letters of a most touching yet confident kind from the king of Tahiti, who invited them to return. During their absence, Pomare had suffered reverses, and remained in exile in Eimeo (now Moorea). "Whether the losses he had experienced led him to doubt the truth of that system of idol-worship to which he had been devoted, and on which he had invariably relied for success in every enterprise—or whether the leisure it afforded for contemplation and inquiry inclined him to reflect more seriously on the declarations he had heard of the true God—it is impossible to determine." Most probably these conditions worked together in the hands of Him who could use them as the means of subduing the proud spirit of a heathen king. When the missionaries returned in 1811, the king Pomare received them with warmest demonstrations of joy, and spent much of his time in reading and writing, in conversation, and in earnest inquiry about God, and the way of acceptance with Him, through Jesus Christ. Owing to the still unsettled state of Tahiti, they began their labours in Moorea, where the king had taken up his temporary abode in exile. At this juncture the latter desired publicly to profess Christianity, and to erect a large and substantial building for the worship of the true God. However, two chiefs arrived from Tahiti inviting Pomare to return, and resume his government, promising an amicable adjustment of their differences. Several letters are extant that were written at this time by Pomare to the missionaries, from which we quote the following: "I

continue to pray to God without ceasing. Regardless of other things, I am concerned only that my soul may be saved by Jesus Christ! It is my earnest desire that I may become one of Jehovah's people; and that God may turn away His anger from me, which I deserve, for my wickedness, my ignorance of Him, and my accumulated crimes!" This is a sample of the rest, and does it not evince a worthy spirit of a king, a spirit that might be shared with advantage even in our more enlightened countries?

ing which they were now so desirous of being informed.

Soon after this, indications of the same spirit of inquiry were manifested in Moorea where the first building for public worship was erected in July 1813. At the close of the first meeting, all who sincerely renounced their false gods and desired to receive Jehovah for their God, and to be instructed in His Word, were invited to attend. Thirty-one of the number assembled requested to have their names written down as desiring to



Native Fishing Hut, Tahiti.

At the same time, one or two other natives gave reason of hope for their conversion and sincerity. Several young men and boys banded together with them and agreed to refrain from worshipping the idols, and to worship Jehovah alone. This intelligence was like life to the dead to the missionaries, who thanked God and took courage.

After this two of the missionaries made a tour of Tahiti, preaching to the people whenever they could collect a congregation, and then returned to Moorea with this band of believers who accompanied them to attend school, and receive more ample instruction in those things respect-

worship God, and become disciples of Christ. This number was soon increased to forty-two, among whom were some of the main pillars of idolatry in times past.

On the occasion of one of his visits in Moorea, Mr. Nott, one of the early missionaries, was followed to the house where he had been appointed to preach, by Patii the priest of the heathen temple. He appeared to listen most attentively to what was said, and at the conclusion of the service he accompanied Mr. Nott to the settlement. As they walked, Patii revealed his conviction to Mr. Nott, and declared that he had resolved, at a

certain hour on the morrow, to bring out the idols under his care, and publicly to burn them. Mr. Nott could hardly credit so astounding and decisive a statement, and replied, "I fear you are jesting with me, and stating what you think we wish rather than what you intend. I can scarcely allow myself to believe what you say." "Don't be unbelieving," replied Patii, "wait till to-morrow, and you shall see." The arrival of the stated hour on the morrow was awaited with unusual agitation. When the missionaries with their pupils repaired to the appointed place near the large national *marai* (temple), they found that its priest, with his friends, had collected a quantity of fuel, and that multitudes had assembled to witness this daring act of impiety, or the sudden vengeance which they expected would fall upon the sacrilegious criminal. Patii ordered his attendants to apply fire to the pile. This being done, he hastened to the sacred depository of his gods, brought them out, not as formerly, to receive the blind homage of the people, but to convince them of the vanity of the objects of their adoration and dread.

Patii tore off the sacred cloth in which they were wrapped, stripped them of their ornaments, which he cast into the fire, and then, one by one, he threw the idols themselves into the crackling flames, expressing his own regret at having worshipped them, and calling upon the spectators to behold their inability even to help themselves. Thus were the idols publicly destroyed, which Patii, who was a powerful priest in Eimeo (Moorea), had worshipped. And thus may we, ere probation closes, search our hearts, and with purpose true, gather out the idols we find there, and just as bravely, as fearlessly, and as honestly, destroy the allegiance to every false and deceitful object that may have engaged our attention. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10: 5.

We have evidence that even in this our own generation strong delusion is sent to those who do not receive the love of the truth, their light becomes darkness, and they believe a lie. 2 Thess. 2: 11.

Therefore, let us study the Word, that we may discern the truth, accept and believe it, and finally may be sanctified of the Spirit by belief of the truth. 2 Thess. 2: 13.

The Unhappy Lot of the African Girl

MARRIAGE is contracted in early years. It is considered the end and aim of a girl's existence, and she only waits for someone to buy her. In some tribes of Central Africa, even before birth, some man will aspire to be the husband of the unborn child, and will deposit a sum of money or its equivalent in value with the mother or father. In case the child be a girl, she already belongs to him, and if a boy, the fee deposited is returned, to be offered to some other expectant mother. In most tribes, however, marriage does not take place until the tenth or twelfth year.

The bride is acquired by purchase, the price varying according to the tribe in which she lives, the number of girls on the market, her own charms, and the wealth of the would-be bridegroom. "Five large blue glass beads will buy a woman in some sections of Africa, but it takes ten to buy a cow." In some tribes the price is as high as from forty to sixty goats. Among the Shilluks of southern Soudan, according to latest quotations (1910), the purchase price of a girl is five or more cows, according to her charms. The father takes the cows he has gained in exchange for his daughter's hand, and buys another wife for himself. A man thinks just as much of his wife as he does of the goats or the cows he has, and no more.

There is not, as in the Orient, lamentation at the birth of daughters. They are welcomed, because they are an article of trade. A man sees a fortune in his daughters, a boy in his sisters, for they will bring in so many head of cattle.—*Missionary Review of the World*.

"GOD so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."



Name and address of correspondent MUST accompany question, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith. It is well to enclose stamp for reply.

25. FOREKNOWLEDGE OF SATAN'S FALL.—R. A. S.: Did God know before He created Satan that the latter would sin? If so, why did He create him?

Ans.—Yes, God knew before He created Satan that the latter would sin, for it is one of the prerogatives of God to know "the end from the beginning."

Satan was created for the glory of God. He was created a glorious being, and, if he had so chosen, might all along have continued as one of the most surpassing glories of God's creation. In Eze. 28 : 11-19 there is given—under the symbol of the King of Tyrus—a wonderful description of Satan, and in verse 15 it is stated: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

Now God's foreknowledge that Satan would fall did not cause the latter to fall. In fact it was God's purpose and desire that Satan should not fall. He was created perfect, with no inherent tendencies toward evil; and the position he occupied in heaven, that of Lucifer, the covering cherub (Isa. 14: 12-14; Eze. 28: 14), gave him every opportunity to know of the goodness and wisdom and power of God.

Satan, being a free moral agent—for only the voluntary service of an intelligent being can be pleasing to God—of course could obey God or disobey, whichever he chose. God did not force him either way, and his course was to be decided entirely by his own choice. Though aware of the consequences, he chose to disobey, to rebel, to become the enemy of God; and with himself, therefore, must rest the whole responsibility of his fall. An all-wise, all-loving God, whose ways are ever right, though the finite mind of man may not always be able to understand them, created Satan to be to his Creator's glory. That Satan did not fulfil the Lord's purpose is indeed sad, but the blame must lie with Satan alone.

26. WHO WILL WITNESS CHRIST'S APPEARING?—In regard to Rev. 1: 7, how many will see Christ when He comes? Will all the dead be raised to witness His appearing?

Ans.—In regard to the first question, the text itself is perfectly clear: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Every person living will see Him.

Concerning the second question, no, not all the dead will be raised to witness Christ's coming. A clear knowledge of the resurrections will make this

matter perfectly plain. When the Lord comes, the resurrection of the *righteous* will take place, and these, with the living righteous, will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, to be with Him forever. See 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17. This resurrection of the righteous is called by the Scriptures "the *first* resurrection," for it is the first great, *general* resurrection. But "the rest of the dead," or the wicked, remain in their graves till a thousand years later, when occurs what we might term the *second* resurrection, the great general resurrection of the wicked. See Rev. 20: 4-6.

But how comes it that "they also which pierced Him" witness the Lord's appearing? This is explained by Dan. 12: 1, 2, which brings to view a *special* resurrection that occurs shortly before the coming of Christ, and in which some of the righteous and some of the wicked come forth. And among these wicked will be "they also that pierced Him." They will be raised especially to see Christ coming in His glory.

Hence the dead who will witness Christ's appearing are those who rise in the special resurrection not long before the Saviour's advent, and in the great general resurrection of the righteous at the coming of the Lord.

27. 1 COR. 7: 13-16.—Will you kindly explain 1 Cor. 7: 13-16?

Ans.—This question is a little too general and indefinite for treatment in this department. Briefly it may be said that these verses enjoin upon the converted husband or wife the duty of remaining with his or her unbelieving partner; for the influence the believing partner may exert over the other may lead to the latter's salvation. When, however, the unconverted partner obstinately refuses to live with the believing one, the latter, having done the best he or she can, must yield to the circumstances: "If the unbelieving depart, let him depart." If this answer does not clear the difficulty from our correspondent's mind, we shall be pleased to reply further if she will let us know definitely what points she wishes treated.

28. SEVEN LAST PLAGUES AND PROBATION. C. A. F.: Will atonement for sins be granted after the fifth angel has poured out his vial, as Rev. 16: 11 reads (latter part) that those upon whom the plagues fell "repented not of their deeds," and Rev. 16: 9 declares, in reference to the pouring out of the fourth plague, that "they repented not to give Him glory."

Ans.—No. In the seven last plagues are filled up the wrath of God. Rev. 15: 1. These plagues do not begin to fall till the "mystery of God"—the gospel—is finished, or, in other words, till all who will accept God's offer of mercy have done so, and probation has closed. Then Christ's work as our high priest and advocate will be over, mercy will no longer plead, and the awful fiat will have gone forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. 22: 11.

The statements that the rejected sinners, under the plagues, "repented not to give Him glory," and that they "repented not of their deeds," do not imply that salvation is still open to them, but show that God was justified in closing their probation, inasmuch as they would never have repented of their evil deeds.

—A. H.



Remember the Blessings

By R. Hare

WE pass along, and bowed with anxious care
Forget the song of joy that fills the air;
Forget the flowers that blossom by our way,
And the new mercies born for every day.

We pass along, and by our grief oppressed
Forget that grief pains every human breast;
Forget that none among the sons of earth
Can claim their kindred with the angel's birth.

We pass along, and as days come and go
We read the dark, portentous signs of woe;
And, reading these, forget Heaven's bright design
To give the heritage that's all divine.

"Lest we forget," O gracious God of heaven
Help us to read the blessings hourly given;
Help us to see the countless flowers that bloom
A while on this side nature's silent tomb.

Help us to hear the joyous song of praise
That songsters in their simple gladness raise;
Help us to step above earth's sordid dust,
And join in nature's song of perfect trust.

Humour in the Family

GOOD humour is rightly reckoned a most valuable aid to happy home life. An equally good and useful faculty is a sense of humour, or the capacity to have a little amusement along with the humdrum cares and work of life. We all know how it brightens up things generally to have a lively, witty companion who can turn an annoyance into an occasion for laughter. It does a great deal better to laugh over some domestic misadventures than to cry or scold over them. Many homes and lives are dull because they are allowed to become so deeply impressed with a sense of the cares and responsibilities of life as not to recognise its bright, and especially its mirthful side. Into such a household, good but dull, the advent of a humorous friend is like sunshine on a cloudy day. It is well to turn off an impatient question sometimes and

regard it from a humorous point of view, instead of becoming irritated about it.

"Wife, what is the reason I can never find a clean shirt?" exclaimed a good but rather impatient husband, after rummaging all through the wrong drawer. His wife looked at him steadily for a moment, half inclined to be provoked, then, with a comical look, she said: "I never could guess conundrums," and then she felt happy; and so what might have been an occasion for unkind feelings and hard words became just the contrary, all through the little vein of humour that cropped out.

Some children have a peculiar faculty for giving a humorous turn to things when they are reproved. It is just as well, oftentimes, to laugh things off as to scold them off. Laughter is better than tears. Let us have a little more of it at home.—
The Lutheran.

Results of a Small Favour

IN 1609 Samuel de Champlain and Henry Hudson were exploring under the French and Dutch flags, respectively, and claiming for their sovereigns the lands adjacent to, and situated in, the great region dominated by the powerful Iroquois Indians of the central highlands of New York. Hudson gained their friendship by treating them kindly. Champlain gained their avowed hatred and eternal enmity by assisting the enemies of the Iroquois, the Algonkians, in a skirmish with a part of the Iroquois tribe near Port Royal, now Montreal.

Very insignificant events in themselves! But what was the result? Subsequent history shows that this friendship gained for the Dutch by Henry Hudson, and later passed on to the English, their successors, resulted in victory for the English, and in their ultimate domination of North America. Hudson little realised that by this simple act of good will, he was determining the destiny of a continent.

This incident teaches the possibilities that may be bound up in small acts. God's greatest purposes are often initiated under the guise of the most commonplace and seemingly unimportant act of

a humble person. Experience teaches that God chooses the humble and teachable, because they are willing to do these little, but potential acts. The secret of knowing how to do the great things for God does not consist in being able to forecast the future, but in being filled with the spirit of love and of service toward God and man now. This experience will fit us to be used in doing great things for the Lord by doing the little acts of kindly service which come to us each day.—*W. E. Hancock.*

Only a Spark

A PARTY of young men were on a mountain trip. With their guide they entered the crater of a semi-active volcano, and descended among the lava rocks to the lowest point that was considered safe. As they stood there, gazing down upon rocks which looked just as secure as those on which they were standing, one adventurous young man decided to go farther down. His companions and the guide urged that it was dangerous, but to no avail. He was not afraid, and insisted on satisfying his curiosity. Everything looked safe enough, so, fastening a rope about him, he lowered himself to the rocks below. Held by the rope, he gazed into the black depths of the earth. He had not seen that where the rope passed over the rocks, a spark, small at first, but soon turned into a tiny blaze, was eating the rope, strand by strand. He could not see it; those above could not see it; but it was surely doing its work. The rope gave way—it parted—and the young man was instantly hurled into the depths.

What a price to pay for disregarding counsel!

We shudder to think of it, but are inclined to say, "He was warned." Let us examine ourselves. Is there a parallel in our lives? Has not our Guide counselled us many times? Do we ever descend into the crater of sin against His will? Is there ever a little spark of selfishness in our hearts that may be fanned into a blaze and hurl us into eternity? Shall we heed the counsel, or pay the price?—*New Zealand Christian Herald.*



The Great Gift

(Concluded)

IT was late when Zonia and the package reached the chapel. Not noticing nor caring for the curious eyes, she walked up the aisle tightly clutching the coverlet. Almost as soon as she took the seat offered her near the stage, the room became dark. Hettie Palmer, her friend, began to sing in a glorious voice the old old missionary hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains." Zonia had never seen a stereopticon, so when the first beautiful coloured picture was thrown on the screen to illustrate the song, she was on tiptoe. When the song ended, there were tears in her eyes. After this exercise the old man with snowy hair walked to the front of the stage. His language was simple, yet so impressive that every person was interested. He told how in youth he had given up a position of honour and a good salary, and had gone with his young wife into suffering China to tell the story.

He told how for nine long years they had all but starved outside the city wall; how in the waiting time they had healed the sick and comforted the sorrowful; how their beautiful boy had been born there; how they at last secured entrance into the city.

"For twenty years we lived in the outskirts of Peking," he said, slowly. "My wife and I taught the people and fed them. One day they would be willing to kiss our feet; the next they would revile and persecute us. In all that twenty years we had but one convert, but we did not give up. The great Boxer trouble found us still there. With the other missionaries we were obliged to flee. I came back to this country two years ago," he almost sobbed, "but I left my wife and my boy, who had fallen victims

to the heathen's rage, sleeping beneath the foreign sod.

"After I had been in this country twelve months, the awful yearning to return to the poor people seized me. I could not go for lack of means. I went from one church to another, and to the officers of every missionary board that I knew. They refused to send me on account of my feeble health and my old age. A few called me cranky. A friend grew positively angry when I tried to borrow the money necessary for the trip.

"'You're crazy, John,' he declared. 'You've given your health, your wife, your child, for a lot of yellow heathen who didn't so much as thank you for what you've done. Settle down and write into a book what you have told me. It will make your fortune, man.'

"I wrote the book," said the old man, slowly. The people listened breathlessly. "At the end of ten months I sent it to the publisher. Last week I visited him. He gave me a cheque for one hundred thousand dollars. 'Now, John, settle down and enjoy life,' he said. 'You've earned it.' But I laughed him to scorn. The purpose for which I had written the book was still strong in my heart.

"In one week I sail for China, never to return. I shall never again look into the bright faces of these bonny boys and girls, but I want to make this appeal to them before I go.

"You are preparing to celebrate Christmas, but think a moment; you have never known the hunger or cold of the sufferers dying in China. You who feed on the luxuries of the continents, think of people trying to live on husks and roots and grasses. You who have never lacked for clothing, picture, if you will, the highways crowded with a half-naked, starving crowd who are drifting from one place to another with the hope of securing food enough to keep life in their feeble bodies. Think of parents killing their children rather than see them die of hunger. Think, too, of the thousands who are dying without hope or knowledge of the life beyond the grave.

"Boys, girls, can't you sacrifice something for these untaught, starving millions? Who will give something to the hungry across the sea?"

There was a moment's pause, which was freighted with feeling. Then a girl stumbled up the steps and stood by the old man, an effective picture in her skimmed yellow gown. Few looked at the gown or the package. All wondered over the strange beauty of the upturned face. Her eyes shone like stars. "Take this. It is all I have!" she sobbed. With a dexterous fling she tossed the blue sea and the lustrous stars of the coverlet over the old man's shoulders. It fell to the floor, a protecting mantle. Before the audience recovered from their astonishment, she was gone. In another instant Mrs. Palmer, the wife of a Chicago minister, stood in Zonia's place, telling the story of the great gift. When she had finished, coins, and jewellery fell upon the azure robe like rain. When Mrs. Palmer added to them the price of the coverlet, and went on her way, taking it with her that she might repeat the touching story, she had planned for a campaign of giving among the young people in her own church. Before the end of the week ten thousand dollars had been added to the nucleus that had gathered about Zonia's gift.

Zonia appeared at class the next day as usual. A few noticed that she worked longer hours, but there was a quiet smile on her face, which not even her best friends understood. A word of comfort came to her as she plodded at her unceasing task: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat;" "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "She hath done what she could."

But Zonia did not leave school. At the end of the month, a trunk filled with good clothes came to her address. Before the end of the term she received all her bills receipted. She kept at work until she was graduated. But she did not teach school. One of the happiest missionaries in all the Southern mountains is Zonia, the one-time owner of the blue coverlet.—*United Presbyterian.*

IT is a great deal better to live a holy life than to talk about it. Lighthouses do not ring bells and fire cannons to call attention to their shining—they just shine.—*D. L. Moody.*



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THE acceleration of transcontinental railway travel during the past two years has been made so quietly, that not many people are aware that the time from ocean to ocean has been reduced to less than three and a half days. The fact was recently brought into prominence by daily press notices of a trip made by an Australian passenger who left San Francisco at 10:40 p.m., March 2nd, and reached New York March 6th in time to catch the steamship sailing at noon the same day for Europe, the total time from San Francisco to New York being three days eleven hours.

SOME time ago it was discovered that incandescent gas-mantles made of ramie fibre are much more efficient than those made of cotton. Ramie fabric possesses a wider mesh, and so affords a larger radiating surface. German investigators have since found that woven artificial silk is rougher than ramie fabric, and consequently more luminous. Mantles made from continuous fibres of artificial silk are now on sale in Germany, and are said to be elastic, supple, and durable. The continuous fibres remain distinct and unbroken during use, whereas the short fibres in mantles made of cotton or ramie untwist more or less from the original structure of the spun yarn. An artificial silk mantle was fitted to a high pressure burner, and gave a good light for seven weeks, whereas a ramie mantle attached to the same burner lasted only six nights.

SEVEN or eight years ago a plant was established near Lyons, France, for the manufacture of paving-glass. Numerous descriptions of the new paving material were published, and a brilliant future was

predicted for it. The city authorities of Lyons permitted the manufacturer to lay a specimen section of glass pavement in the Place de la République, a centre for heavy traffic. The glass bricks failed to stand the test of wear. The edges of them were soon broken and splintered, and many of the blocks split in two, so that within two years it became necessary to remove the widely heralded innovation and substitute stone or wood. The city officials are agreed that glass pavement can be used under favourable circumstances for sidewalks, but not for the middle of streets.

THE prevailing impression that whales spout water through their blow-holes is declared to be incorrect. According to Prof. Willy Küenthal, an eminent zoologist of Breslau, Germany, what has been taken for fountains of water by sailors and others is really the breath of the whale charged with moisture, like the visible breath of a man on a cold morning. Doctor Küenthal suggests that the breath of the whale is sent out from the lungs under powerful pressure, and the expansion of it as it reaches the air makes the vapour visible. A whale's blow-holes connect directly with the lungs, but the mouth has no connection with the nasal passages, so that it is impossible for the water taken in at the mouth to be thrown out at the blow-holes. Doctor Küenthal points out the fact that young whales do not blow, and larger ones are never seen to blow on hot days.

RISE from the aerodrome at Pau, the French aviator, Vedrines, flew 101 $\frac{2}{3}$ miles in an hour—the highest speed yet attained. He used a Deperdussin monoplane with a 140-horse-power Gnome motor. Six days later Henri Salmet, on a Blériot monoplane, made the second non-stop flight from London to Paris in three hours and twelve minutes, at a speed of over seventy miles an hour. The fastest trip by train and steamer at present takes seven hours and twenty minutes. Monsieur Salmet steered by compass, and flew at a great altitude. He crossed the English Channel at a height of 6,000 feet, and for about two hours and a half was out of sight of earth. It was only when he was within forty miles of Paris that he descended low enough to fly by landmarks.

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