

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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ONE PENNY

Fear God and

give glory to Him. Rev. 14-7

"Redemption Draweth Nigh"

ARE you weary, brother, weary,

Of the struggle and the toil—

Weary of the sin and waiting

When all pleasures spoil?

Weary of the shaded darkness,

With its cup of mingled pain,

And your soul is longing, longing

For the glad the sweet refrain

That will tell you He is coming,

Coming back again?

Struggle on, the day is ending,

And the toil will soon be done;

Struggle on, for heaven is nearing,

Crowns will soon be won.

Days count ages now, remember,

For each moment brings to thee

Some decision that will measure

Though thy dim eyes may not see—

Some decision that must measure

For eternity.

See, the world is chasing pleasure,

Phantom joys that will not stay;

Better far the weary toiling

On the upward way.

Weary not, thy Lord is coming,

And His coming brings release

From the burden and the struggle,

From the care that will not cease,

From the lone and weary waiting,

And it brings thee peace.—*R. Hare*

A Solemn Appeal

THE time in which we live is also an age of wickedness. Crime, murder, suicide, divorce, the struggle between capital and labour, and the world's preparation for its Armageddon, all unite in declaring the parallel pictured by Christ to be a reality. We are now in the antitypical 'Days of Noah.' The social impurity, the defilement of youth, the corruption of age, the licensed prostitution of the cities, and the "white slave traffic" of the nations, have again combined to shade the picture of social life with all the historic outlines of the days of Noah. Surely it is time that the voice of warning was heard in the land. The day of earth's "desperate sorrow" approaches, and evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, in hurried preparation for the harvest of evil!"

"Parents, teachers, ministers, and all who love God and humanity, must carry a largely increased responsibility in this crisis-hour. None should fail to take up the warning that this little volume presents. Fathers and mothers, the life and character of your children, their welfare here and hereafter, are all at stake in this question, and it demands your attention."

The above extracts are taken from the preface to one of our latest publications, entitled:—

"A SOLEMN APPEAL"

By Mrs. E. G. White

In the first chapter, "An Appeal to Mothers," the writer says, "My apology for addressing mothers on this subject is, that I am a mother, and feel alarmed for those children and youth who by solitary vice are ruining themselves for this world, and for that which is to come. Let us closely inquire into this subject from a physical, mental, and moral point of view."

This important subject is considered under the following headings: "An Appeal to Mothers"—"Sentimentalism"—"Female Modesty"—"The Broken Law"—"The Marriage Relation."

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NOVEMBER 8, 1915

The Pledge of Destiny

WITH eyes fixed on the promise of the Eternal, Abraham left his country and his father's house to sojourn as a stranger in a strange land. Everything around was changing, transitory, and uncertain. On one thing alone could he depend—the pledge of destiny given by Jehovah in the promise that he should be “heir of the world.”

Abraham believed God as no other man had ever done, and he went forth a pilgrim of the tent, to build his altar where the evening found him, in a land for which he could hold no title-deed except the pledge of the Unseen. But when thirty-nine years had passed, and no apparent evidence concerning the inheritance or the promised seed appeared, his faith asked for a further demonstration.

Pointing to the stars in their clustering multitudes, Jehovah declared, “So shall thy seed be.” Abraham said, “Amen.” But the land? “To thee will I give it,” declared the voice. Then it was that Abraham asked the question of his life—“Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” Gen. 15:8.

The oath of assurance was a common feature of Oriental life. Sometimes this was given by standing before the altar, lifting the hand to heaven, or placing it upon the head of the condemned. But the most impressive and binding of all forms lay in that of passing between the parts of a divided victim. In doing this, the person taking the oath, or making a covenant, “interposed himself,” or placed his own life as a pledge of the assurance given. This latter method, as the most binding and sacred of all, Jehovah adopted, and Abraham was directed to prepare the sacrifice. Gen. 15:9-18.

Abraham secured the offerings as directed, divided them, and placed piece

over against piece with a pathway between, that the dead might witness to the sincerity of the living. Then he waited the attendance of Deity. When the sun went down, robed in his garment of flame, or as the Hebrew expresses it, the “lightning,” Jehovah submitted to the covenant of a man, “interposed Himself,” and walked with Abraham between those parts. Heb. 6:17.

Among the Hebrews this was called “cutting the covenant.” It is frequently referred to in the covenant records of the Bible. Commenting on the statement, “The Lord made a covenant with Abraham,” Dr. Clark writes:—

Careth berith signifies to cut a covenant, or rather the covenant sacrifice; for as no covenant was made without one, and the creature was cut in two that the contracting parties might pass between the pieces, hence cutting the covenant signifies making the covenant. The same form of speech obtained among the Romans; because in making their covenants they always slew an animal, . . . after which they divided the parts as we have already seen.—*Commentary*, Gen. 15:18.

Another interesting reference to this custom is found in the “Jewish Nation,” page 164. It reads as follows:—

In that case the parties who covenanted together passed between the pieces of the sacrifice. By this ceremony was denoted, that if either of them broke the covenant, they might expect in like manner to be cut asunder by Divine justice. Such appears to have been the view taken by the Jews, and by the heathen among whom this sort of sacrifice was common.

A direct reference is made to this plan of covenant-making by Jeremiah. In it the Lord declares a forfeit over the lives of the men who, having “cut the calf and passed between the parts thereof,” proved unfaithful to their pledge. Their dead bodies would be given to the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth. Jer. 34:18-20.

Think of it, child of earth, the great

Jehovah, the mighty Ruler of the universe, stepping down to take the place of a man in His pledge of destiny with the Hebrew exile, and through him with every child of faith. This was done that there might be no question in the mind of Abraham concerning the heritage, and no question in the mind of anyone who wishes to share with Abraham when he becomes "heir of the world." Think how sure the promise concerning that inheritance must still be since the life of God remains pledged to its fulfilment.

Paul writes of "two immutable things." The divine promise—the word spoken to Abraham—was one, and the action described in ratification of that promise, passing between the parts,—“interposing Himself,”—was the other. Neither of these can ever be undone. Jehovah did make the promise. He did place His life at stake in the agreement, and eternity must witness the complete fulfilment of all that was promised. Heb. 6:18. With this reality before him the child of faith may walk hopefully, though a pilgrim in a strange land.

Reader, do you accept God's pledge? He has gone as far as it is possible for Him to go. His oath has been taken in a way that touches His own existence. It still rings in the promise, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." "And "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The ancient Egyptian, as a debtor, gave the embalmed body of his father as a pledge to remain with the creditor till the debt was paid. But the Christian is pledged in a living Christ, for in "Him all the promises are Yea, and in Him, Amen." 2 Cor. 1:20.

Slow-moving years, crumbling kingdoms, falling empires, and changing dynasties mean nothing in hindrance to the great Arbiter of eternity. His plans will yet rise and shake themselves from the dust of ages. His promises will yet find their perfect fulfilment, for Jehovah has "interposed Himself" as a pledge of the destiny yet to be.

R. H.

"DO not tell your troubles to your fellow mortals, but carry everything to God in prayer."

Is Man Immortal?

G. B. Thompson

MANY believe that he is. They have been taught it from childhood by the religious teachers of the day. On funeral occasions, the bereaved are told by the minister that there is no such thing as death, that the deceased is not dead, but that he is now amid the celestial glories of the world to come, singing songs of praise and adoration to God.

Never Dying Soul Forever Dies

So much is said of the immortality of the soul, that one would think it could be found on almost every page of the Bible. Poets have written about it, and from our youth up we have sung about it. One favourite hymn says:—

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A *never dying* soul to save,
Fitted for the sky.

Then the poet, seeming to have overlooked what he said in the first stanza, says in the second:—

If I my trust betray,
I shall *forever* die.

This rhyme has been sung thousands of times, and but few persons have ever stopped to inquire how "a *never dying* soul" could "*forever die*."

The Bible Does Not Say It

We would like to ask how anybody knows that man is an immortal soul. Nowhere in the Bible have we ever read a verse that says such a thing. The words "soul" and "spirit," it is true, occur something over 1,700 times in the Bible, and the word "immortal" is found in the Bible; but not in a single instance do we find a text that says anything about an immortal soul.

This seems a strange omission, indeed, when men have been saying so much about immortal souls. The facts are that the doctrine of the soul's inherent immortality is based not on the declaration of God, but rather upon a statement made by Satan in Eden. The Lord had set forth as a penalty for sin, that in the day that man would eat, he should surely die. Death is a penalty for sin. But Satan appeared as the tempter, and said:—

"Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat

of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Gen. 3:1-3.

Satan Raises a Question

True to his nature, Satan raised a question in regard to what God had said. Notice the words, "Hath God said," as though it seemed impossible to think that the great and mighty God of truth would make such a declaration as that. "Hath God said?" Is it possible that you tell me the God of verity has said such a thing? Then he followed his words with, "Ye shall not surely die."

God had said man would die as a penalty for sin. Satan disputed it, contradicted Jehovah by saying that man would *not die*. When man sinned, the penalty for transgression was death. Adam was banished from his Eden home, and soon death appeared. The leaves began to wither upon the trees, nature became seared, and the human family began to pass down into the tomb. What now?—Satan was seen to be a liar unless he could bring forth something that would prove that his words were yet true. So in his councils he concocted the dogma of the soul's immortality. He said man was not really dead; it only seemed so. The body was but the temple, the tenement in which the real man resided; but the real, living man was the soul, which survived the stroke of death, and lived on in uninterrupted consciousness. And, sad to say, this Satanic falsehood is echoed and re-echoed throughout the world.

The One Source of Immortality

The Bible very plainly declares that man does not *now* possess inherent immortality. We are admonished to "seek for glory and honour and *immortality*." Rom. 2:7. Why should we seek for what we already possess? This would be nonsense. We are plainly told that man is *mortal*. Job 4:17. And we are told that God "*only* hath immortality." 1 Tim. 6:15, 16. Immortality is an attribute of the Deity, and will never be given to those who refuse to accept the

precious boon of eternal life. Immortality is a gift of God to the overcomer, and it will be bestowed upon them at the resurrection of the just. When the trumpet of God shall reverberate through the long galleries of the grave, and the righteous dead shall come forth, then, and then only, will man receive immortality.

"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. 15:51-55.

THE TIME FOR PRAYER

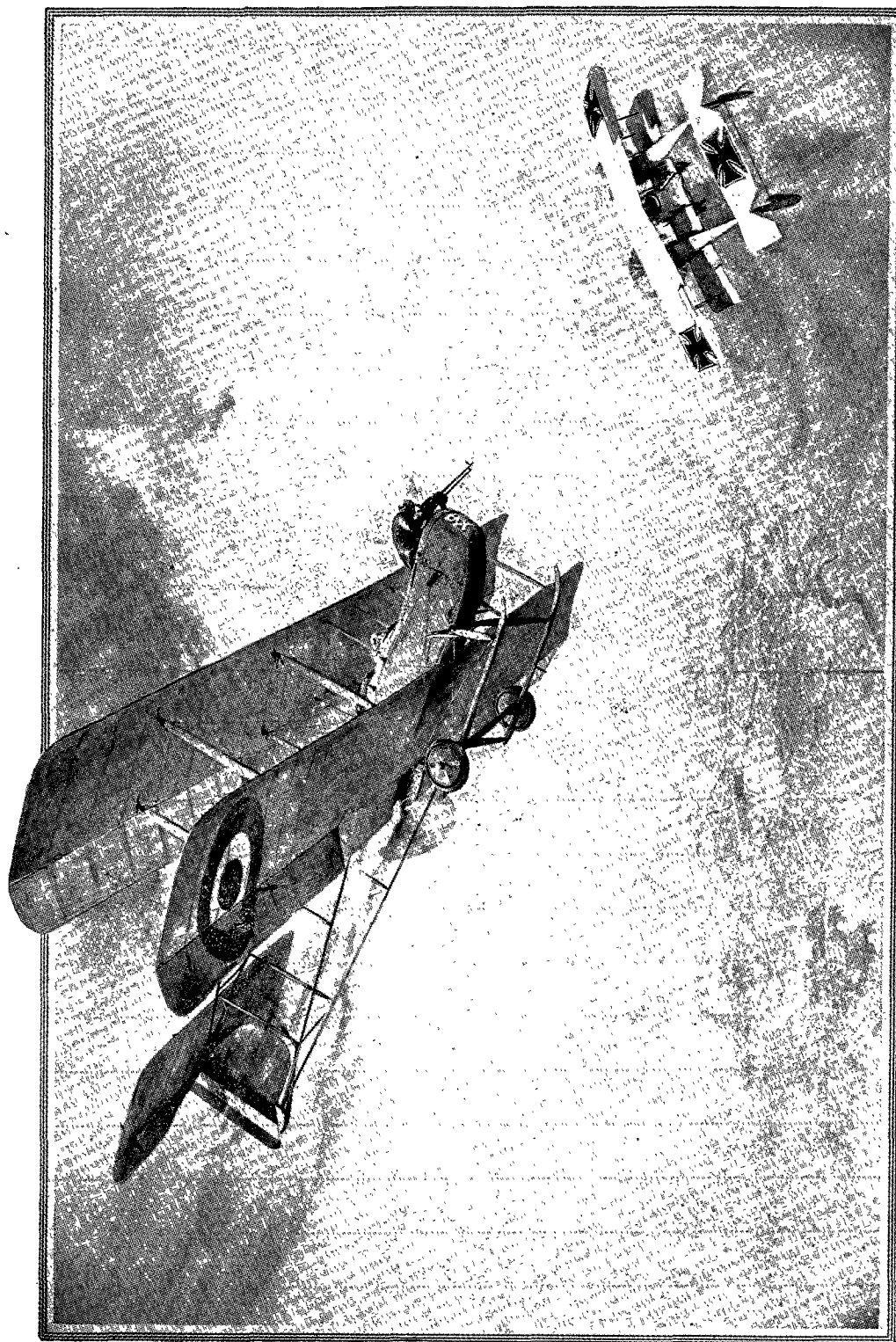
WHEN is the time for prayer?
With the first beams that light the morning sky,
Ere for the toils of day thou dost prepare,
Lift up thy thoughts on high;
Commend thy loved ones to His watchful care;
Morn is the time for prayer!

And in the noontide hour,
If worn by toil or by sad cares oppressed,
Then unto God thy spirit's sorrow pour,
And He will give thee rest;
Thy voice shall reach Him through the fields of air;
Noon is the time for prayer!

When the bright sun hath set,—
While eve's bright colours deck the skies;
When with the loved at home again thou'st met,
Then let thy prayer arise
For those who in thy joys and sorrows share;
Eve is the time for prayer!

And when the stars come forth,—
When to the trusting heart sweet hopes are given,
And the deep stillness of the hour gives birth
To pure, bright dreams of heaven,—
Kneel to thy God, ask strength life's ills to bear;
Night is the time for prayer!

When is the time for prayer?
In every hour, while life is spared to thee,
In crowds or solitude, in joy or care,
Thy thoughts should heavenward flee,
At home—at morn and eve—with loved ones there,
Bend thou the knee in prayer. —Selected.



A Combat in Mid-Air Between a British War-Plane and the German "Double" Biplane

The Sphere

A Poetic Prophecy

Ernest Lloyd

WAR dispatches containing the reports of fighting between air craft over France and Germany and Belgium chronicle the fulfilment of a poetic prophecy of the late Sir Alfred Tennyson, the English poet laureate, who penned many years ago, before aeroplanes or aerial warfare were thought of, the following lines in "Locksley Hall":—

For I dipped into the future far as human eye could
see,
Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder
that would be;
Saw the heavens filled with commerce, argosies of
magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with
costly bales;
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there
rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the
central blue.

Prophecy and the present condition of society point to sword and flame and famine. God is about to shake mightily the earth. The time of indignation is at hand. "The giants, Capital and Labour, have yet to battle in the arena," writes a more than superficial student of the times and of the Word of God. He continues: "Romanism, sensualism, racial feuds, ignorance, strange cults, paganism, heathen religions—how they press and pull for supremacy! The divisions and classes of the human race are like so many heaps of dynamite over which a Satanic being is ever brandishing a flaming torch.

"Man is a fallen being. He is by nature totally depraved. History shows that he is a murderer in every possible sense of the word. He is a homicide, a patricide, a regicide, and a deicide. When the pagan world lay on its death-bed, expiring in lust and blood, God in His mercy came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. And what did men do to Him?—They nailed God to the accursed tree. From a broken heart God's blood flowed down a pierced side, a sufficient atonement for the sins of the world. And upon the crimson flood came the sweet breath of God's Holy Spirit to sanctify the hearts of believers.

"And now, behold, this same fallen mass of totally depraved and demoralised humanity has so denied and grieved the

blessed Holy Spirit that He is about to retire from the face of the earth."

Then shall come the great tribulation, such a time as has not been since the beginning, nor ever shall be again, thank God! The judgments of God shall be in the earth. Amid the breaking of seals, the blast of nature, and the pouring out of wrath, the kings and peoples of earth shall be taught the power and dominion and sovereignty of the King of kings, whose kingdom will be gloriously ushered in and established for eternity. O, soul of mine, prepare for this greatest of events, and be ready for His coming!

"The Earth's Future"

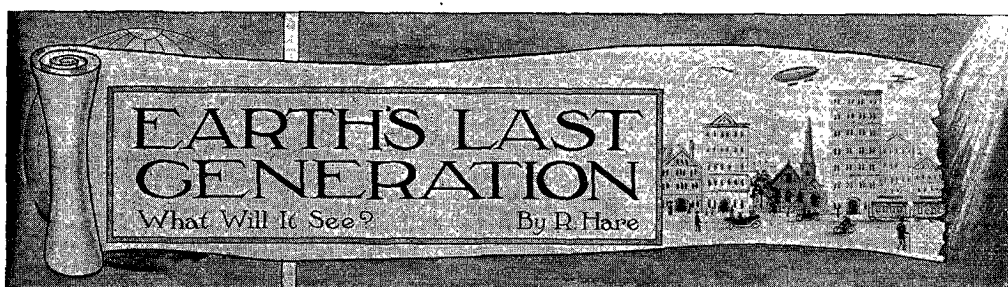
R. A. Caldwell

ALL Christians are united on the position that Jesus Christ was to occupy three offices from the time He took upon Himself "the seed of Abraham;" viz., Prophet, Priest, and King. At the present time He is humanity's great High Priest, the sinner's advocate. When on earth He was a Prophet like unto Moses. Deut. 18:15.

A king implies territory, subjects, and a throne. After the second advent this earth is to become "His kingdom." It is at present in the hands of the usurper, the "god of this world," who is the great war lord. This earth, after it has passed through the purifying fires of the last day, becomes the glorious, eternal inheritance of the redeemed. Then "His servants shall serve Him" joyfully. Rev. 22:3.

No estrangement will exist between the Orient and the Occident, but all will possess the same spirit and have a "pure language."

The "first dominion" over which Adam had authority, and which he forfeited by disobedience, will then come to Him, the second Adam, "whose right it is," and thus there shall be no more curse or cursing. The purified atmosphere will resound, not with the wail of the tormented, or the distressed cry of the lost who have perished in the second death (Rev. 20:14), but with a song of praise from every animate being. Rev. 5:13. That glorious day hastens on apace.



The Story of Sodom Retold

No. 10

DOWN toward the south of the Dead Sea, in a vale beautiful as the "garden of the Lord," there once stood the proud city of Sodom. The story of its building has not been told, neither has its architect been named, nor the number of its inhabitants chronicled. One thing alone has given it a place in history and carried its name down over the ages—the record of its impurity.

No monument has been left as a memento for time; no ruined towers reveal the locality of its decadence; nor has one vestige of its ruin been left for the eye of either scorn or pity to rest upon. It is even as though it had not been.

In the passing of its last night a tragedy was enacted that filled its cup of iniquity to overflowing. Two messengers were sent from heaven to report upon the wickedness of the cities of the plain. But the sons of licentiousness sought to abuse them. Even the defence of Lot's hospitable home proved no barrier to their wicked design until the defiled and criminally-minded multitude were smitten with blindness. Gen. 19: 9-11.

Finally the last morning dawned over that doomed city. The rising sun gilded the distant hills and cast long shadows across the plain. All was bright as usual, but when Lot departed a thunderbolt fell and set the city, with all its palaces, on fire. Then, after its baptism of brimstone, it went down to give its unholy inhabitants a dishonoured grave under the briny waters of the Dead Sea.

A double destruction, a nameless grave. Why?—The sin of Sodom was great, and its people were "sinners be-

fore the Lord exceedingly." Gen. 13: 13.

It was a place of unusual fertility, surpassing beauty, and charming in all its aspects. So delightful was it that Lot was charmed by the prospects that it presented, and he became one of its citizens. First his tent was pitched "toward Sodom." Then nearer and nearer until at last the pilgrim tent was renounced, and the man who was looking for worldly advantage became an inhabitant of Sodom and a judge in its civic affairs.

But the beauty of its position could not save that city. The vision of its green fields could not arrest the impending doom. Neither could the abundance of all its charms atone for its guilt. Rising above every advantage, towering above every line of beauty, the criminality of its social life condemned it to an awful and hopeless ruin.

Cause of Its Defilement

Sodom was not built a corrupt city, neither did it become corrupt in a day or a year. In writing about it Josephus says:—

About this time the Sodomites grew proud on account of their great riches and wealth; they became unjust towards men, and impious towards God, insomuch that they did not call to mind the advantages they received from Him.—*Antiquities, Book I, chap. II.*

These things are also spoken of by the Hebrew prophet. Three reasons are assigned for its immorality—"pride, fulness of bread and abundance of idleness." Eze. 16: 49. But these are all destroying elements. "Pride" cast the angels from heaven, "appetite" cost man his Eden home and the crown of this new kingdom, while "idleness" is Satan's great highway to sin. They are all agencies

of evil, and the people of Sodom were led to ruin by them.

By Peter we are told that Lot was vexed with the "filthy conversation" of the people of Sodom. 2 Peter 2:6, 7. Jude tells how they "gave themselves over to fornication." Jude 1:7. But, as the impure word and impure act are both the result, or product, of the impure mind, this people must first have given themselves over to mental debasement.

Not only was their language filthy, their actions licentious, and their minds corrupt, but the very "show" or appearance of their countenance became tell-tale in its evil aspect under the influence of their unnatural crimes. Isa. 3:9. Then, when there was no hope, when love had pleaded for just "ten," and ten could not be found in all the cities of the plain, then the rain of fire came down, and the mantle of oblivion was cast over the typical scene of earth's corruption.

The Picture Historic

Think not, gentle reader, that the story of Sodom's debasement, dishonour, and overthrow is a romance of some Hebrew writer. True, it appears in definite colours in the Book of God, where the name is mentioned forty-nine times, but it also finds a place in the records of ancient history. Tacitus tells of its barren fields and the "cities burned by lightning." Strabo tells of the lake, the burnt rock, the soil turned to ashes, and a report among the people that the cities were formerly destroyed by earthquake and fire. Diodorus pictures the Lake Asphaltites as filling the place where these cities once stood, and states that the adjacent country was set on fire and sent forth a grievous smell. See *Stackhouse*, p. 176.

But why should this picture have been stamped so indelibly upon the minds of men and nations? Why held up so continuously in Bible prophecy and historic narrative? Why pictured so often in its garments of carnality, and then in its baptism of "eternal fire"?—It is set forth as an "example" before an unbelieving world. 2 Peter 2:6. It is a picture of destruction hung up in the great historic gallery for the eyes of earth's last generation to gaze upon.

(To Be Continued)

The Face of the Pilot

"AND He awoke, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still."

Robert Louis Stevenson's story of the storm that caught a vessel off a rocky coast and threatened to drive it and its passengers to destruction is thrilling. In the midst of the terror one daring man, contrary to orders, went on deck, made the dangerous passage to the pilot house, saw the steersman lashed fast to his post holding the wheel unwaveringly, and inch by inch turning the ship once more out to sea. The pilot saw the watcher and smiled. Then the daring passenger went below and gave out a note of cheer: "I have seen the face of the pilot, and he smiled. It is all well."

Blessed is he who, in the midst of earthly stress and storm, can say with equal assurance, "I have seen the face of my Pilot, and He smiled."

"The Pilot Smiled"

Still am I out upon life's stormy ocean,
Powerless to shield myself from any harm;
The world around is rocked in wild commotion,
The days revealing oft some new alarm.

The spirit quails at thought of dire disaster;
Who can protect me from the coming storm?
Vain is all earthly help—but, O my Master,
Faith can discern Thy calm, almighty form.

"*Keep in My ship*;" the Pilot, *smiling*, urges;
"I have o'ercome that you may conquer too;
No tempest in its wildest, maddest surges,
Can snatch from Me the soul that counts Me true."

Be brave, then, heart of mine, no terror craven
Should rule a follower of the Crucified;
Soon shalt thou safely reach the blessed haven,
Which lies beyond this dread, tumultuous tide.

My Saviour, O my Saviour! keep me ever
Gazing upon Thy soul-inspiring face;
So from Thee nothing shall prevail to sever
The feeblest subject of Thy saving grace.
—E. L.

"WE are commanded, 'Watch and pray, that ye *enter* not into temptation.' Christians would often be saved the ignominy of defeat in their battle with the devil, if their strength were only employed to *keep out* of temptation, instead of being employed in trying to resist when they have voluntarily placed themselves within its grasp."

Great Signs and Wonders

Soon to be Manifested on Earth—Nothing Like Them Ever
Seen Before by Mortal Eyes

T. E. BOWEN

TRUTH is of God. Truth shall stand forever. Anything founded in the truth of God's Word cannot and shall not be destroyed. It is very important, therefore, that we study God's Word for ourselves, that we may know what is truth. "Sanctify them," prayed Jesus to His Father, "through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth." John 17:17.

Falsehood Sanctifies No One

No man can be sanctified, therefore, through anything that is not the truth. And no one can discover error but by knowing the Word of God, which is the truth. Thousands will perish at last because they are religiously, and possibly very devoutly, trusting in that *as truth* which has no foundation whatever in the Word of God—*itself the truth*.

Startling Wonders to Be Seen

A time of deception is just ahead for this world, such as has never before been. Strong delusions will be experienced, well-nigh over-powering, and these by many will be believed as true.

"How do we know?" you ask.

Because God's Word says so. Unerringly the Bible points out that just before the revelation of Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, this world will experience such manifestations of wonderful phenomena as have not before been known among men. Here is the scripture pointing it out to us: "Even Him [Jesus Christ] whose coming *is after* the working of Satan *with all power and signs and lying wonders*." 2 Thess. 2:9.

Satan, therefore, will be permitted by God Himself to manifest himself in this world, in *all his power*, just prior to the revelation of God's Son. That power will be displayed in signs and lying wonders such as no human eyes have before beheld; and these will be manifested in such a way that another por-

tion of Scripture, in speaking of this very same period, reveals that "if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Satan Reveals Himself to Men

Just what all these signs and wonders shall be we are not told. But some are revealed in the Scriptures.

It is stated that Satan himself *will be seen*. This will of itself be a wonder. Having worked some five or six thousand years unseen, to reveal himself openly to men will surely be quite a wonder in itself. He now delights in setting forth either that there is no such being as a personal devil, or that he is a horrible object with a spear-headed tail, cloven hoofs, horns, and bat wings. Neither of these representations is true. When Satan actually appears as a beautiful angel of light, people will be wholly unprepared to believe that this wonderful being is the devil himself. No doubt there will then be plenty of people who will render him homage. We apprehend that should anyone be so incredulous as to suggest, at that time, that this might be the evil one himself instead of the Lord, the people would be prepared to take up stones to cast at such a one.

Satan to Sham the Advent of Christ

The text cited above affords us a clue as to the rôle Satan will assume when thus appearing as an angel of light. "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24.

His appearance as the Christ, at a time when the world has been warned of the advent near, will present a strong delusion. Yet he shall not be able to falsify that appearing; for the Word of God says, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Verse 27.

Again, "Every eye shall see Him." But it is only by the *truth* of the Word regarding the coming of Jesus that any-one shall know, and but few *know the Word*, hence the deception.

That Satan will thus come visibly and work among men somewhere between this and the end, is shown by this text: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 2 Cor. II:14. And the time in which he is to do it is just prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus in power and great glory. See 2 Thess. 2:8-10, as previously cited.

Fire to Come Down from Heaven in the Sight of Men

Another one of these revealed wonders to be displayed at the time when Satan manifests his signs and wonders, is the duplication of the sign used by God in Elijah's time to prove to Israel that Jehovah is the only true God.

Back there, the true God was to answer by fire from heaven. Fire was to come down out of heaven in the sight of all Israel to consume the sacrifice Elijah had prepared, or the one the prophets of Baal should prepare. No fire in either case was to be placed upon the altar. That was a wonderful day on Mount Carmel. It marked the close of a three-and-one-half-year famine because of Israel's forsaking Jehovah. During this time, Ahab, Israel's wicked king, had hunted everywhere for Elijah, to slay him, attributing the calamity of the famine to him. Now Elijah fearlessly meets Ahab, and commands him to assemble the people on Mount Carmel.

All day the priests of Baal implored their god to answer by fire. They went through all manner of performances to arouse their god. They finally jumped upon the altar and cut themselves, to show their great zeal and earnestness for their false religion; but no fire came down.

The aged prophet then repaired the broken altar of God. He slew a sacrifice, typifying the Christ to come. This was placed upon the wood on the altar.

Water was then brought and poured upon the sacrifice, that all might see there was no deception on his part. Then he calmly looked toward heaven and prayed: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and



"Every Eye Shall See Him"

that Thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, *and the stones*, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God." 1 Kings 18:36-39.

Descending Fire to Prove a Falsehood

This wonder is again to be used as a sign, just before the coming of Christ, in

that time when Satan is permitted to work with all his power. But then it will be used as a "lying wonder." "Why, how shall this be?" you ask. The Lord in His Word foretells it.

The prophet John writes: "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles ["signs" and "wonders"] which he had power to do." Rev. 13: 13, 14.

This scripture is in the midst of a prophecy the Lord, in His mercy and goodness, has given us, foretelling some of the events to take place down at the time of the end, just prior to the close of the gospel in all the world.

We shall not attempt, in this article, to state further than to say that the conditions leading up to the fulfilment of this scripture are already here, preparing the way for this wonderful sign to take place.

These Wonders Performed Under the Guise of Christianity

Remember, these delusions, these signs and wonders, may be expected along the lines of religion; for Satan is to appear as "an angel of light," not of darkness. To deceive, therefore, he must assume religious robes, and appear engaged in the doing of commendable deeds, much as was the Master while on earth. Here will come in the terrible deception of it all. He knows how to assume the livery of heaven. He has been there. He knows how the angels look. He knows how they talk and act. So it is no wonder that he can appear like them. Angels are not commonly seen here on earth, either the good ones or the bad ones. Therefore his appearance will cause a sensation. No doubt the wonderful news will quickly be flashed over the entire world, and the message go forth: "The Lord is here. We have seen Him." But it will be a deception. There will be no salvation in it. It will be a "lying wonder."

As an angel of light, Satan met Christ in the wilderness. But when he began talking *contrary to the Word of God*, Christ recognised his identity. By that Word,

Jesus prevailed over him. We may do the same to-day, through the same Word. But without the Word of God, we shall be overpowered by his masterly temptations.

Our Only Refuge in God's Word

Absolutely our only safety lies in clinging to the *truth* of God's Book. We must study that to learn what God *says*. Knowing what He *says*, we must have confidence in it, and obey. Every soul thus relying on God, wholly trusting in His Word, shall be able to meet the foe and come off conqueror.


"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." Prov. 3:5. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know *Him that is true*, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." 1 John 5:10.

"I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them." "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name." "I have given them Thy word." John 17:8, 12, 14.

Signs and wonders prove nothing, therefore, if that which they seek to prove has no foundation in the Word of God—the truth itself. We are to believe them not. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

Not Worth Perpetuating

SAID Lecky in his Map of life: "Few greater curses could be imagined for the human race than the prolongation for centuries of the life of Napoleon." Yet the Corsican was a mighty conqueror, and he wrought some results for Europe which tended to advance civilisation. But the good he did was more than counterbalanced by the evil that his ambitions hurled upon the age. Every year his achievements look less splendid, in the light of modern intelligence and political morality. There is no demand for another Bonaparte in Christendom.—*Selected*.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

143—Was Melchisedec the Holy Spirit?

Please explain who Melchisedec was? Some say he was the Holy Spirit, while some say he was Adam. A. A.

No, Melchisedec was not the Holy Spirit, neither was he Adam. Adam died when he was 930 years of age, in the year 3074 B.C. Nothing has been seen or heard of him since, so far as we know, nor will there be till the resurrection. The Holy Spirit is the divine agency that operates on the hearts of all men, but in no sense has it ever been a man.

Melchisedec is distinctly called a "man" by Paul. Heb. 7:4. He was just as much a real man as any other historic Bible character. He was simply "Melchisedec" and nothing else and nobody else. Being a Canaanite no record was kept of his birth or parentage, and among the Jews that was expressed in the words "without father or mother."

Josephus speaks of him as being a "potent man among the Canaanites." No doubt he was the best man that God could find in the world at that time. He was the "king of Salem," which afterward became "Jerusalem." He is introduced as the first universal priest ordained among men. Heb. 7:15 16. He was evidently translated about the time the Aaronic priesthood was introduced. Heb. 7:8.

144—Labour and Rest

Explain Matt. 11:28-30. Does Christ here refer to the trampled down condition of the people of His time, or is He speaking to the soul laden with sin? F. E. M. C.

It is soul-rest that Christ offers, for with His offer there goes the "yoke," and that is the symbol of labour. As a rule man lives in a wrong way and acts in a wrong spirit. Christ invites those weary of human methods to take His yoke—join in labour with Him, learn His way, and so find rest for the soul. Christ did not advocate any revolutionary or political methods of emancipation for man. He knew that rest could not come in that way. While the heart of man remains unchanged no real rest can be found. Isa. 57:20, 21. The spirit of Christ will give ease under all conditions; without it true rest cannot be found under any conditions. Christ calls all to service—the "yoke"—but in His service there is rest. The service of self and Satan is slavery.

145—Man's Free Will

How was it that God made Adam perfect, in the divine likeness, and yet he committed sin? F. E. M. C.

Man was created upright, and perfect in character, but to prove himself worthy of confidence he had also to be given a "free will." Apart from that he would have been a machine. There was no need for Adam to sin; he chose the wrong, and God was in no way responsible for that choice.

Christ stood on the same ground and met the same temptations, but by rejecting the evil He maintained His holiness of character, and proved Himself worthy the confidence of every being in the universe. He came as the second Adam, and in His life of obedience fully demonstrated that the first Adam need not have sinned. Man still possesses the free will, and God is still asking him to make choice as to which master he will serve.

146—Taking the Kingdom

Kindly explain Matt. 11:12 where it speaks of men taking the kingdom by force.

R. E. G.

Up to the time of John, church life in Israel appeared as a national thing. They were born, circumcised, instructed in the ritual, and belonged to the church. But there a change came in. John began to preach repentance, and then personal decisions had to be made. The kingdom was seen as a thing apart from nationality or church ritualism, and then every earnest soul made a determined effort to enter. This was pictured by Christ as "taking the kingdom by force."

147—Forbidden Flesh

Would you please state in the Question Column of the SIGNS whether ibis and duck are forbidden in the ancient law? R. E. G.

Neither of these birds is mentioned by name in the list of forbidden things as seen in Lev. 11:13-19. But the swan, stork and heron are mentioned, and it would appear that the ibis and duck hold a relationship to the swan family and the family of the stork. There are about thirty species of the ibis known, and they inhabit many parts of the earth. Both the duck and swan belong to the order *Anseres*. In the duck family there are over 180 varieties, while the swan family contains ten species. Wanting direct mention it must be left as a matter for personal decision in regard to the use of these birds. We are sure the Lord has good reason for prohibiting all that He has forbidden, but there is some perplexity in deciding concerning some of the ancient and modern names given to these creatures. In this case each individual must make his own decision.

148—Prophetic Time

I would like you to explain how our year consists of 365 days while the prophetic year had only 360 days. What became of the other five days? If they lost five days every year, what became of the seasons? C. R.

The most ancient measure known for the year was 360 days. At the time of the deluge 30 days were reckoned to the month. Noah was in the ark for five months (Gen. 7:11; Gen. 8:4), but the period was reckoned 150 days. Gen. 7:24. This would give 30 days to the month. This ancient measure was taken for prophetic time. We find that 1260 days is equal to 42 months. See Rev. 12:6; 11:2, 3.

In regard to the seasons, the difficulty was obviated by adding an additional month every three years. Among the Hebrews this additional month was called *Veadar*, or second Adar. In this way the seasons were kept in their place with the annual changes. All the prophetic measurements were given according to the ancient measure of the year, 360 days, but the seasons were kept in place by this additional month.

149—False Worship

Will you please explain Isa. 66:3? It seems by this text that we have not even the right to kill a snake. O. I. C.

This text is not dealing with the question of killing but of Israel's false worship. So selfish and rebellious had they become that all their sacrifices were objectionable to Jehovah. The offering of an ox was no more acceptable than human sacrifice, while the lamb offered was as though the heathen had sacrificed a dog. Israel had chosen their own ways, and these were all objectionable to Jehovah. The man, dog, and swine's blood are used to show how hateful the offerings of their ritual had become.

150—Sons of God

Were the angels that fell called "sons of God" before their fall? Jude 6. Where is the text that states a third part of the angels were cast out with Satan? A. P.

We do not recall any passage in which the term "sons of God" is applied to the angels. In Job 1:6 it is given to the representatives of the unfallen worlds, and in Gen. 6:2 it is applied to the descendants of Seth as distinguished from the line of Cain.

In 2 Peter 2:4 we are told that God cast down "the angels that sinned." The number is not stated, but in Rev. 12:9 we are told that Satan was cast out of heaven and his "angels were cast out with him." In verse 4 the "third part" is spoken of as having fallen. Christ also mentions the time when Satan was cast out. Luke 10:18.

151—Land of the Demon-Possessed

Kindly explain Matt. 8:28. The place here spoken of is called the "country of the Gergesenes." Mark says, of the Gadarenes. Matthew speaks of two men, Luke and Mark only tell of one. H. E. G.

There was a city and fortress on the south-east of the Sea of Galilee called "Gadara." This gave name to the surrounding country, and it was called by Mark the "country of the Gadarenes." A little to the north there was another city called "Gergesa," and the people are described as "Gergesenes," but they were living in the country of Gadara, so might at the same time be called "Gadarenes."

Matthew speaks of two men, Mark and Luke of one, but neither of the latter writers say there was "only" one. One man may have been more desperate than the other, and hence his more definite description by Mark and Luke.

152—The Prophecies of Ezekiel

I often see the book of Ezekiel used in connection with prophetic exposition—chapter 25 for instance. How do we know whether these prophecies have not been fulfilled? Do we take this for granted, because there are no records of such having happened? W. M.

There is much in the book of Ezekiel that applies to the present time, but the most of its predictions belong to the past. Chapter 25 has long ago found its complete fulfillment. The Ammonites, the Moabites, and the land of Edom have long since shared in the ruin set forth in that prophecy. Today that strange country lies desolate, and those two nations, the descendants of Lot's transgression, have both disappeared from the earth.

153—Baptism and Salvation

If a man or woman who truly believes in the gospel of the kingdom, and is yet not baptised, can they be saved? The thief on the cross was not baptised, yet he died in hope of the kingdom. W. H. J.

The mere rite of baptism will save no one, but as a demonstration of faith in a risen Christ it takes an important place in the plan of God. The man or woman who truly believes the gospel of the kingdom will just as truly get baptised, for that gospel teaches baptism as one of its essential features. Mark 16:16; Acts 16:30-33.

God does not ask impossibilities of man. The thief could not get baptised, but had he lived he surely would have done so. Where the thing is impossible Jehovah will not urge the demand. God can make up for the impossibility, while He cannot accept a wilfully defective service. When love meets the divine command it does not ask, "If I must," but rather, "If I may?" No doubt there is many a baptised hypocrite in the world, but God's plan is not responsible for that.

God declares, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." It would take a very bold man to say, "He that believeth and is not baptised shall be saved." Baptism is a part of the gospel that we are to believe.

"HOME should be a place of repose, of peace, of cheerfulness, of comfort, where the soul can renew strength to encounter the labour and troubles of life."



GROWING OLD

A LITTLE more tired at close of day;
A little less anxious to have our way;
A little less ready to scold and blame;
A little more care for a brother's name;
And so we are nearing the journey's end,
Where time and eternity meet and blend.

A little less care for bonds and gold;
A little more zest in the days of old;
A broader view and a saner mind,
And a little more love for all mankind;
A little more careful of what we say;
And so we are faring a-down the way.

A little more love for the friends of youth;
A little less zeal for established truth;
A little more charity in our views;
A little less thirst for the daily news;
And so we are folding our tents away,
And passing in silence at close of day.

A little more leisure to sit and dream;
A little more real the things unseen;
A little bit nearer to those ahead,
With visions of those long-loved and dead;
And so we are going where all must go,
To the place the living may never know.

A little more laughter, a little more tears,
And we shall have told our increasing years
The book is closed, and the prayers are said,
And we are a part of the countless dead.
Thrice happy, then, if some soul can say,
"I live because He has passed my way."

—*Rehoboth Sunday Herald.*

Mrs. Gray's Extravagance

MRS. GRAY had been baking all the morning—delicious soft brown ginger cakes for the children's lunches. Three plates full were spread out on the kitchen table to cool, while Mrs. Gray went upstairs to snatch a little rest before meal-time.

I was in the sitting-room, sewing, when I heard "the patter of little feet" first on the back verandah, then in the kitchen, and then hurrying into the hall and up the stairs.

"Mother," came Tommy's gentle boyish voice, "may I have a cake?"

"Yes, Tommy," answered his mother. "Take from the middle plate, dear; those were baked first and are coolest."

"The patter of little feet" came downstairs and into the kitchen again, and finally died away on the back verandah. Happening to glance out of the window a moment later, I saw half a dozen boys walking across the lawn, everyone with a cake in his hand. Tommy was not with them, and for a moment I thought they must have slipped into the house and stolen the cake. I went to the kitchen, and, sure enough, the middle plate was empty. Just then, Mrs. Gray came in and I told her what I had seen.

She went to the back verandah, and called to Tommy, who was digging in the garden. "Tommy," she said, as he approached, "you didn't take more than one cake, did you?"

"Oh, yes," Tommy answered. "You see, the fellows came around when I was eating it, so I thought they'd like some too. I just took off the middle plate."

To my astonishment, I saw Mrs. Gray smile, and Tommy ran back to his gardening.

"Helen," I demanded, "aren't you going to reprimand that boy? Why, the whole plate is gone—and if you could have seen the ragamuffins!"

"My dear," she said, "if I should reprimand Tommy for giving away the cakes, he wouldn't do it again."

"Well, you don't want him to, do you?" I asked in amazement.

Mrs. Gray took up the empty plate and began to wash it. "I suppose it does seem extravagant," she said.

I was just growing acquainted with Mrs. Gray's children, and the way they gave things to everybody was a revelation to me. It was after the following

incident of the umbrella that I could not refrain from expressing my opinion to the indulgent mother.

Mildred, the daughter, a little girl of nine, was standing by a window one very rainy evening when a working man passed the house, evidently homeward bound. The man had no umbrella and the rain was beating down upon his head and shoulders. Without a moment's hesitation, Mildred opened the window and asked him if he didn't want an umbrella. The man replied that he did, and unchecked by her mother she went into the hall and loaned him one from the rack. The incident was accepted without comment, as though nothing unusual had happened.

That evening, when the children had gone to bed, I asked the mother why she let them do such impractical things.

"They are too young to understand," I said, "and if you let them go on giving everything away whenever they have the impulse, they will be as poor as church mice when they grow up."

"I know," said Mrs. Gray, gently, "that I can't always afford the things they do; but if I checked the desire, it would die. I have seen it happen so many times. And that," she said, looking at me with her grave mother wisdom in her eyes, "that I could afford still less."

"But just a little restraint," I urged. "It isn't sensible. Now, think of making an absolute stranger a present of an umbrella!"

Mrs. Gray smiled. "Even looking at it from a sensible point of view," she said, "I have the memory of what my mother told me once. She lived to be very old, and she had always been the way the children are, always straight through her life, and she said just a little while before she died: 'Whenever I have cast my bread upon the waters, it has come back to me toasted and buttered on both sides.'"

And that made me a little ashamed, and I said no more. I began to reflect that I, who had never been particularly drawn to children, had grown in a very short time to love Tommy and Mildred as though they were my own. And I was forced to admit that everyone who knew them loved them, and that they were quite the happiest children I had

ever seen. And I had other reflections, also, when early the next morning an umbrella was left at the front door.—*Selected.*

A Girl in Poor Company

COMING down to the office on a train a few mornings since, we noticed a girl of our acquaintance eagerly reading a book. Our seat was just behind the one occupied by her, and it was almost impossible not to see the title of the volume she was devouring. It was a well-known sentimental novel of questionable moral teaching. That evening we chanced to meet this young friend, just as we reached the station, and upon entering the carriage, we sat down together. Presently I said:—

"I was sorry to see you in questionable company on the train this morning."

The young woman looked startled and said:—

"Why, you are certainly mistaken; I was alone."

"No, not alone," we said; "and you seemed to be very much delighted with your company."

"What do you mean?" our young friend demanded, her eyes flashing with indignation.

"Simply this," was the reply; "you were reading a silly book. You were reading it with evident relish. You were held so by its fascinations that you noticed nothing that was happening about you, and looked up in real surprise when you found yourself at your journey's end. A book is a companion. A silly book is a silly companion. A silly companion is a questionable one. A questionable one is a dangerous one. You judge people by the society they seem to enjoy. Is it not fair to judge them also by the books they choose?"

The question was not pressed, and we passed on to more agreeable themes.

The books and periodicals we read influence us tremendously. Next to the people with whom we mingle, the literature we devour shapes our sentiment, determines our convictions, and makes us what we really are. We cannot afford to spend one day, one hour, one minute, in the company of a questionable book.—*Selected.*



KNOWING HOW

I'VE sometimes heard my grandpa tell
That folks who know just how to smell
Can get the summer from one rose,
Or from a little breeze that blows.

And father says, no matter where
You live, if you will just take care
And make the best of your two eyes
You'll see so much you'll grow real wise.

And then, my mother's often heard
One little pleasant-spoken word
Has made somebody smile and smile,
And feel cheered up for quite a while.

They say it doesn't matter much
Whether a child has such and such;
It's how she'll learn to "make things do;"
And p'r'aps it's so with grown folks, too.
—*Congregationalist.*

Mary's Prayer

LITTLE Mary's mother had occasion to correct her the other night. Mary was very angry, and when she said her prayers, instead of asking God to bless papa and mamma, as she usually did, she said, "God bless papa, and don't bless mamma."

Her mother took no notice, and Mary jumped into bed without her good-night kiss. By and by she began to breathe hard, and at length she whispered: "Mamma, are you going to live a great while?"

"I don't know," was the answer.

"Do you think you shall?"

"I cannot tell."

"Do many mothers die and leave their children?"

"A great many."

"Mamma," said Mary with a trembling voice, "I am going to say another prayer;" and clasping her little hands, she cried, "God bless papa, and the dearest, best mamma any little girl ever had in the world."

Remember that every wrong committed against loving parents will, when they have passed from earth, bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder.—*The Myrtle.*

The Sparrow's Plea for Help

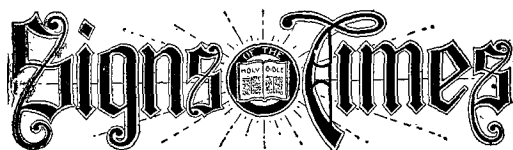
A LITTLE sparrow was seen to enter the kitchen of a country home, and perch upon the window-sill as if in distress. Its feathers were ruffled, and its head now and then turned round and up. It seemed to be looking at something out of the house and above the window. In and out it hopped, again and again, until the shutters were closed at twilight. The family wondered at the bird's strange action, for it did not notice the food which was placed on the window-sill. The next day the bird acted in the same strange manner, and no one could guess the cause of its distress.

On the third morning, the mute plea for aid was continued, and one of the family, thinking of the bird's curious way of turning the head upward, caught a new idea from it. Perhaps it might have a nest in the ivy that grew over the window, and something might be wrong with its little household.

Going to the second storey, and looking down, the cause of the trouble was seen. A thick limb of the ivy had become loosened by the wind, and fallen directly across the sparrow's nest. It was in the way of her getting in to feed her young—now almost lifeless.

The branch was quickly removed, when the mother bird, pausing only a moment to look at her brood, started in search of food. Her mate soon joined her, and both were busy as glad hearts and quick wings could make them. Once only did the mother bird pause in her work. As if to express her thanks, she perched upon the window seat, and poured forth a short, sweet song, then hurried away. The birds returned three seasons, to be noticed and fed at the same spot where they had received such kindly aid.—*Selected.*

LET prayer be the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening.—*Matthew Henry.*



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THE newly discovered Bear's Dip Cave in Shasta County, California, is soon to be electrically equipped and thrown open to the public. It is said to contain the most highly coloured and extremely beautiful copper formations found anywhere in the world.

MR. HUDSON STUCK, who has journeyed far into the regions of Alaska, says that one seldom encounters such intense cold as in northern Alaska. He declares that no amount of clothing worn when on the trail will keep a person warm when standing still. It is absolutely necessary to be in constant motion. The bare hand if exposed for a few seconds will begin to freeze. Mr. Stuck also says that to breathe the air into the lungs for any length of time without a muffler over the mouth is dangerous.

THE earliest English newspaper, Nathaniel Butter's *Weekly Newes*, had several predecessors abroad. The first of these in point of time was the *Ordinarij Avisa*, the publication of which began at Strassburg in 1609—14 years before the appearance of Nathaniel Butter's venture. In 1620 Abraham Verhoeven founded the *Nieuwe Thijdingen* at Antwerp, and this continued to appear weekly for 227 years. The oldest existing newspaper is apparently the Swedish official gazette, which dates back to 1644.

It is appropriate that the first official aerial mail service should start from Paris; for Paris was the scene of the early unofficial attempts to carry letters through the air. During the siege of Paris in 1870 the mail bags were successfully carried by balloon from the city to Tours and Metz, so successfully in fact that England made postal experiments with balloons at the Crystal Palace in the same year. Twenty years before that there had been talk of an aerial post, but nothing had come of it. Now we shall devise letter-boxes in our roofs to save the postman's legs.

UPON what trifles the destinies of the world hang! The most momentous event of 1789, anybody would say offhand, was the fall of the Bastille. But it is well also to recall that on a summer day of the same year a young artillery officer, completing his course of instruction at Auxonne, went bathing in the Saone, was seized with cramp, and was nearly drowned. If the stream had not luckily carried him to a shallow, where he just managed to recover himself, Napoleon Bonaparte would never have added a line to history, and everything would have been totally different to-day.

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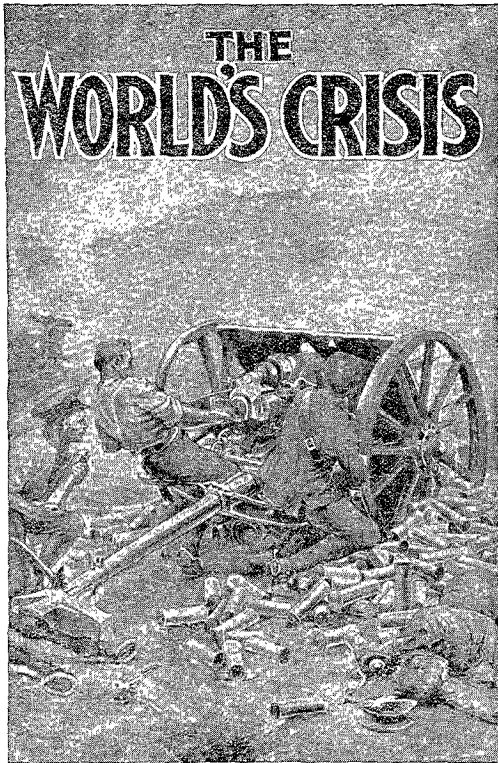
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