

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

"THRUST IN THY SICKLE AND REAP, - - - FOR THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH IS RIPE." Rev. 14:15.

VOL. I.

BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN, MARCH 1, 1886.

No. 3.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE

IS PUBLISHED SEMI-MONTHLY FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

By the Review and Herald Publishing Association,
Battle Creek, Michigan.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

URIAH SMITH, GEO. I. BUTLER, W. H. LITTLEJOHN,
D. M. CANRIGHT, AND R. F. COTTRELL.

For Terms, - - - See Last Page.

LIVE FOR SOMETHING.

LIVE for something, be not idle,
Look about thee for employ !
Sit not down to idle dreaming ;
Labor is the sweetest joy.
Folded hands are ever weary,
Selfish hearts are never gay ;
Life for thee hath many duties—
Active be, then, while you may.

Scatter blessings in thy pathway ;
Gentle words and cheering smiles
Better are than gold and silver,
With their grief-dispelling wiles ;
Pleasant sunshine ever falleth
On the grateful, smiling earth,
So let sympathy and kindness
Gladden well the darkened hearth.

Hearts there are oppressed and weary ;
Drop the tear of sympathy,
Whisper words of hope and comfort,
Give, and thy reward shall be
Joy unto thy soul returning.
From the perfect fountain-head ;
Freely as thou freely givest
Shall the grateful light be shed.

—Sel.

Notes & Comments.

SPECIAL.—Parties receiving this Paper, not having subscribed for it, may know that it is sent to them by the courtesy of some friend. Do not hesitate to take it from the Office, for none will be called upon to pay for any numbers they have not ordered. We invite candid attention to the Contents of the Paper, and when you have read it, please hand it to a Friend or Neighbor.

WITHIN the last fifty years, great changes have occurred among religious teachers and churches. Many things which were once considered important truths are now questioned or openly rejected ; while other doctrines which are thought to be strange and new are found to have the sanction of the wisest and best teachers of the past. It has been found that some doctrines widely held and long believed, have no foundation in the Bible nor early Fathers. Each generation since the Reformation has examined and rejected some one or more of the old pagan doctrines adopted by the Catholic Church during the Dark Ages, and retained by the first Reformers. No one believes them now. But is this work all done ? Do we not still hold errors of which more light would make us ashamed ? Who is really willing to examine candidly and learn ?

THE power and influence of companionship is very forcibly illustrated by an incident related by Henry M. Stanley. He says that when he started for Africa in search of Livingstone, he was "as prejudiced against missionaries as the biggest atheist in London." But a great change came over him. Livingstone's piety and zeal impressed and converted him. His close companionship with a Christian hero, away from a selfish, civilized world, led him to inquire, "How on earth does this old man stop here ? Is he insane, or what ? What is his inspiration ?" He discovered the secret ere long, and became fired with a similar zeal to help open up the Dark Continent to Christ.

AN IMPORTANT FACT.—The reader's attention is called to the following interesting summary : The word "soul," or more properly the Hebrew and Greek words from which it is translated into English, occur in the entire Bible EIGHT HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-THREE TIMES,—seven hundred and sixty-eight times in the Old Testament, and one hundred and five times in the New. Also, the original Hebrew and Greek words that are translated "spirit," occur in both Testaments EIGHT HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN TIMES,—four hundred and forty-two times in the Old Testament, and three hundred and eighty-five in the New. Their aggregate use is SEVENTEEN HUNDRED TIMES. But notwithstanding the frequent use of the words *soul* and *spirit*, occurring as they do in connection with almost every conceivable phase of human experience, they are never once qualified by such expressions as "immortal," "deathless," "never-dying," etc., which are so frequently encountered in theological writings. Though the word of God speaks to us eight hundred and seventy-three times of the soul, it never in a single instance calls it an "immortal soul ;" and though it tells us eight hundred and twenty-seven times about the spirit, it never in a single case speaks of it as a "deathless spirit." From this statement the thoughtful reader will please deduce his own inferences.

RABBI SOLOMON SCHINDLER, of Boston, in a recent series of lectures on "Messianic Expectations," says that the Jews no longer expect a Messiah, and have not the faintest desire to return to Palestine. Israel itself is the Messiah. The old, unfounded notion of a personal Messiah is dead and buried beyond a resurrection. How true the warning of Christ, "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" ! John 12:35. The Jewish nation rejected Jesus, and have been walking in darkness ever since till they have landed here. It is a dangerous thing to reject light from heaven upon any subject.

HOW does the astronomer proceed to get the image of a star formed in his telescope ?—He points the instrument toward the star, adjusts the lenses, and the image is formed by the assistance of the rays of light from the sun. Just so with man in getting the divine impress upon his life. He must first raise his heart heavenward, and do his part toward adjusting his desires and actions, and God will send the Holy Spirit to help perfect the work. God does not compel any one to receive his divine impress, no more than the star compels the astronomer to secure its image ; but when man has a desire to come into harmony with him, a prompt and effectual response is met with. It is just so in getting a knowledge of truth, especially the truths pertaining to man's nature, destiny, duties and obligations of life, and prospects beyond the grave. If he first has a desire for those truths, and endeavors to place himself in the way of being enlightened thereon, God has promised the "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send" in Jesus' name, and he will teach us all things.

JOSEPH COOK says that the peril of the hour is the semi-Universalist preaching in the evangelical churches. He is right. The thunders of Sinai, the majesty of God's law, the day of Judgment, the wrath of God, damnation and hell, are seldom mentioned, and when referred to are so softened as to lose all their force. The love of Christ, free salvation on easy terms, is made so prominent as to overshadow all other truths of the Bible. With scarcely an exception, every one who dies is sent straight to heaven. Beware, friends, of those who in the words of the prophet "sew pillows to all armholes." The most terrible threatenings fell from the lips of Jesus himself, and the most awful description of the day of wrath is in the New Testament, even in the last book. God does not change.

THERE is not a promise in the Bible that the world shall be converted before Christ comes. On the contrary, every reference to the last days represents it as a time of great wickedness. The tares and the wheat are to grow together till the harvest, Matt. 13:24-43 ; in the last days perilous times are to come, 2 Tim. 3:1-5 ; men are to turn from God to Satan, 1 Tim. 4:1 ; 2 wicked men are to grow worse and worse, 2 Tim. 3:13 ; it is to be as it was at the flood, Matt. 24:37-40 ; and as at the time of Lot, Luke 17:28 ; the apostate papacy is to continue till the end, 2 Thess. 2:8 ; when Jesus comes the great men of earth will call to mountains to cover them. Rev. 6:12-17. How, then, can all be saints in the last days ? It is a delusive hope which is deceiving many, while the day of wrath is about to burst upon the world.

MAN is prone to extremes. In the time of Christ, with religious teachers it was all law, form, doctrine, a deep sense of God's sovereignty, and of divine justice. There was little sympathy with weak humanity. That was one extreme. Now the Church is rapidly swinging to the other extreme. Doctrines, forms, and the plain letter of God's law, are held to be of little importance. The glory of God, justice, and even truth itself, are made secondary to the good of men. To save men, to convert souls, to benefit society by any and every means—this is the thing to do. Little matter what you may believe, little thought about divine law or justice, or the majesty of God, only work with us and save men. Man and his good first, God and his glory second. Beware ! This is not the doctrine of the Bible. God and his glory must be first, man's salvation secondary.

MARY JONES keeps the seventh-day Sabbath, Saturday, and on the authority of the Bible stubbornly refuses to believe that any other day will do. But Elder Wood very lucidly showed her that one-seventh part of the time, any one day in seven, was all that the law required. Meeting Mary a few days after this, he said :—

"So, Mary, I hear you are married."

"Yes, sir."

"Married into Mr. Brown's family, I believe ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mr. Brown has a fine family of boys, anyway, seven I think. Which one did you marry ?"

"Oh, no one in particular, just one-seventh of them !" said the girl with a roguish twinkle.

"Ah ! Oh—why—yes—I see, I see."

IT is not sufficient to try to prevent the youth from forming bad habits ; they should be taught to form good ones. Their natures should be studied, and wherever a tendency to evil is discovered, extra precautions should be taken to strengthen the character against future liabilities in that particular. Prevention is better than cure in the formation of a child's character, the same as in any other matter, and nowhere should it be more zealously practiced. Thousands of human souls are engulfed in ruin, who might have been saved if some slight preventive had been taken in childhood.

IT is painful to observe, as we read in the four Gospels the accounts of the life and acts of Christ, with how much more eagerness many sought to see the miracles that Christ performed than they did to hear the truths that he taught. Human nature has not changed much, and at the present time men are far more anxious to know the particulars of the latest wonder than to obtain a knowledge of the special truths that belong to this day and generation. If this results in the final sentence, "Behold your house is left unto you desolate," our condition will indeed be lamentable.

THE hammer of custom forges the link of habit.

DOCTRINAL.

"Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Titus 2:1.

THE WORLD'S PROPHETIC HISTORY.

2.—DANIEL, CHAPTER SEVEN.

BY U. SMITH.

If the reader will do us the favor to read the 7th chapter of Daniel, he will find a scene described with many interesting particulars which may be briefly epitomized as follows: Daniel stood upon the shore of the sea. Suddenly the four winds of heaven came down in a mighty tempest on the waters. In the prolonged strife which followed between wind and wave, four great beasts were brought up; one after another, from the depths of the sea. Each succeeding beast overthrew the one before it, and took his dominion. The fourth beast had ten horns, among which there came up another that was particularly blasphemous and defiant against God. In the days of this power the Judgment took place, and the beast was utterly destroyed in the burning flame. Then the saints of the Most High took the kingdom, under the whole heaven, and possessed it forever and ever.

Such are the main features of this vision. Here we have evidently some great truths which are intimately connected with the welfare of mankind taught us under a series of beautiful figures. What do these symbols represent? The Bible itself explains every one of them. Thus "waters" denote peoples and nations. Rev. 17:15; Isa. 8:7. "Winds" denote political strife and war. Jer. 25:32, 33. The "beasts" denote four great leading kingdoms to arise on the earth one after another. Dan. 7:17, 23. The fourth beast, says the record, is the fourth kingdom; therefore the other beasts denote kingdoms, though they are, like this one, sometimes called "kings." The sea at length changes to a lake of fire, and the destruction of this last symbol therein, represents the overthrow of all wicked earthly governments, when the kingdom of God shall be set up and his people possess it forever and ever.

How beautifully these figures illustrate the great facts of human history is at once apparent. Thus, from the earliest known times, Western Asia, Northern Africa, and Southern and Western Europe, regions lying around the Mediterranean Sea, have contained those multitudes, peoples, and nations which are represented by the waters of the sea. Among these nations, during the time covered by authentic history, political strife and revolution—"the four winds"—have run riot. As the result there have appeared in that territory, one after another, four kingdoms which have arisen to such power as to be denominated in history, the "four universal kingdoms."

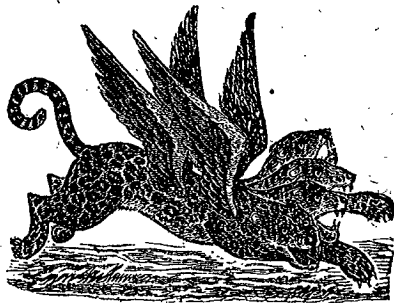
What kingdoms were these? History shows that from the day when this vision was given, B. C. 555, four such kingdoms have existed upon the earth; hence these must be the same as the four kingdoms represented by the great image of Daniel 2, inasmuch as we cannot have two series of universal kingdoms covering the same time. These kingdoms, as we have seen by an examination of that chapter, were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome. Let us see how the symbols fit these kingdoms.



The first was like a lion with eagles' wings. Such was Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar. With the wings plucked, and a man's timorous heart given to it, this lion well represented the empire in its decadence under Belshazzar, when it was overthrown by the Persians.



The second beast was like a bear, representing the second kingdom—Medo-Persia. It raised itself up on one side; that is, the Persian element ranked the Median in the government. "Three ribs," that is, Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt—three provinces which the Persian kingdom oppressed, as a bear would gnaw the ribs of its victim. The dates belonging to this kingdom are B. C. 538 to 331.



The third was like a leopard, with four wings and four heads. The third kingdom, Grecia, under Alexander the Great, was fitly symbolized by the leopard with four wings; for that magic conqueror, with a celerity like that of the swift-footed symbol now before us, aided in his progress by the remarkable addition of four wings, flew over the nations of all the East from his capital to the verge of civilization, and conquered the world in a single campaign. The Persian empire fell before him on the plains of Arbela, Oct. 1, 331 B. C. Eight years thereafter, B. C. 323, Alexander drank himself to death; and within fifteen years from that time his vast empire broke up into just four parts, these divisions being represented by the four heads of the leopard. Alexander's two infant sons were easily disposed of, and his four leading generals seized these fragments of his empire and erected kingdoms for themselves. Cassander took Macedon in the West; Lygimachus had Thracia in the North; Seleucus erected the kingdom of Syria in the East; and Ptolemy had Egypt in the South.



The fourth was a great and terrible nondescript beast, fit symbol of rapacious, relentless, all-conquering Rome. The ten horns on this beast are declared to be ten kingdoms which should arise out of that fourth empire. These were the Huns, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Heruli, Burgundians, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards. This division of the Roman empire into ten parts was accomplished between the years 356 and 483 A. D.

This brings us to the last phase of this power, the rise of another horn among the ten, with its long career of blasphemy and blood, and its final overthrow in the lake of fire. An exposition of this part of the prophecy would bring us to our own time, and carry us a little beyond; but a discussion of this point would overrun the present limits of our space, and must be deferred to a future number.

It is a sad blunder to think that the human belief can alter the eternal truths of God. Dives may have persuaded himself that he was a "liberal," and did not believe there was any hell, or future punishment; but if he did, that fact did not save him from liability to suffer for the deeds done in the body, as is evident from Christ's testimony. A blind man may doubt the shining of the stars, but their shining is undisturbed by that doubt, and he only is the sufferer.

IS IT REASONABLE?

1. Is it reasonable to suppose that God created man an immortal being, and yet has never informed us of the fact?

2. Is it reasonable to suppose that if man naturally possessed immortality, God would require us to seek for it, as he does in Rom. 2:7?

3. Is it reasonable to suppose that if men were naturally immortal, God's word would so plainly assure us that God "only hath immortality"? 1 Tim. 6:16.

4. Is it not far more reasonable to believe that immortality is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, as stated in Rom. 6:23?

5. Is it reasonable to suppose that words, when found in the Bible, must have a meaning attached to them which no man in his senses would ever think of attaching to them in any other book? For instance, the words *life* and *death*, when found in the Bible, must (as theologians tell us) mean *happiness* and *misery*; but, if found in any other book in the world, they would simply mean "existence" and "cessation of existence."

6. Is it reasonable to suppose that in all the vast multitude of passages in which Christ promised *life*, *eternal life*, to his followers, he did not literally mean what he said? This he could not, if all men have immortal life by nature. In that case, the wicked will live through eternity as well as the righteous.

7. Is it reasonable to suppose, in all the vast multitude of passages in which *death* is threatened as the punishment of the sinner, that *loss of happiness* is all that is meant? An unhappy man is as truly alive as the most happy being in existence.

8. Is it reasonable to suppose that Infinite Wisdom would invariably use language which was or calculated to mislead mankind, or which none of the doctors of divinity could unravel?

9. Is it not more reasonable to suppose that he would give his creatures such a revelation as plain, common-sense people could easily understand?

10. Is it reasonable to believe that men go to heaven or hell immediately at death, and then hundreds or thousands of years afterward are taken out to be judged, to determine which fate they deserve? Should we deem it right to send a man to the State prison for ten years, and then bring him out for trial to see if he deserved such a punishment?

11. Is it reasonable that such prominence should be given in scripture to the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, if *the soul* is as capable of happiness or misery without the body as with it?

12. Is it reasonable to talk about a "death that never dies," when there is not a word in scripture to sanction such a contradictory phrase? Would it not be equally reasonable to speak of the reward of the righteous as a "life that never lives"?

13. Is it reasonable to use so constantly, both in sermons and prayers, such terms as "immortal souls," "never-dying souls," "deathless spirits," and similar expressions, when there is not from Genesis to Revelation *one single passage* to warrant the use of such language?

14. Is it reasonable to say that eternal death and eternal torment are synonymous expressions (as theologians tell us)? for how then can it be said, in Rev. 21:4, "There shall be no more death?"

15. Is it reasonable to believe that a hell of fiery torment and ceaseless misery is to exist forever, when God says (Rev. 21:5), "Behold I make *all things new*"?

16. Is it reasonable to believe in the eternal torment of the wicked, when more than two hundred passages of scripture plainly affirm that they shall "die," be "consumed," "devoured," "destroyed," "burnt up," "be as though they had not been," etc.?

17. Is it reasonable to believe that the righteous in their glorified state can be indifferent to, and unaffected by, the endless sufferings of countless millions of their fellow-beings, among whom would probably be found parents, children, husbands, wives, etc.?

18. Is it reasonable to believe that God is such a vindictive being that his justice cannot be satisfied with the *death* of the offender, but that he must be constantly pouring floods of fiery wrath upon the wretched being through the ever-rolling cycles of eternity?

19. Finally, "1. The apostle Paul is the only writer in the whole Bible who makes use of the word *immortal* or *immortality*."

"2. He never applies it to sinners.

"3. He never applies it to either righteous or wicked in this world.

4. He never applies it to men's souls at all, either before or after death.

5. He speaks of it as an attribute of the King Eternal. 1 Tim. 1:17.

6. He declares that he is the only possessor of it. 1 Tim. 6:16.

7. He presents it as an object which men are to seek after "by patient continuance in well-doing." Rom. 2:7.

8. He speaks of it as revealed, or "brought to light" (not in heathen philosophy, but) in the gospel of the Son of God. 2 Tim. 1:10.

9. He defines the period when it shall be 'put on' by the saints of God, and fixes it at the resurrection, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear. 1 Cor. 15:52, 54; Col. 3:4.

10. Therefore he never taught the immortality of the soul as it is now taught, and hence, when he declared that sinners should be destroyed, or perish, or die, or be burned, or devoured by fire, he did so without any 'mental reservations,' or 'theological definitions.' In other words, he said what he meant, and meant what he said.—*Pauline Theology.*

I might multiply questions of this kind, but forbear.

Men of reason and common sense, give your serious attention to these points. Read your Bibles again. Read carefully—read prayerfully. See whether these things are true or not. Dare to think for yourselves. Do not trust to commentaries. Do not build your faith on bodies of divinity. Go to the fountain-head of truth. "The words of the Lord are pure words." "The law of the Lord is perfect." This cannot be said of the writings or opinions of any man or number of men, however wise and holy they may be. To err is human. God and his truth are alone infallible. Show yourselves true Protestants, and cast away the "traditions of men." Have the Bible. The wisest and holiest of the Fathers had no more. Your ministers have nothing else to guide them—at least they ought not to have. "THE BIBLE, AND THE BIBLE ALONE, IS THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS." Go, then, to your Bibles, and see whether the God-dishonoring doctrines to which I have directed your attention are found there or not. Excuse me if I tell you that, however full of these doctrines human books and human sermons may be, God's book does not contain them.

Rather believe that man is mortal and condemned to die, but Christ is come that men may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. John 10:10.

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is ETERNAL LIFE through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23.

MAN'S FIRST INVENTION.

BY G. W. MORSE.

"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Eccl. 7:29. A very natural inference from this text is, that because of the inventions man has sought out, he is no longer upright, but has become degenerated.

When our first parents were placed in the garden of Eden, they were in a state of moral rectitude.

They possessed mental faculties susceptible of development, and there were two directions in which they could be developed,—one in accordance with, and conformity to, God's will, and the other in opposition thereto. The direction chosen and the extent it should be followed, were to decide the duration of Adam's life, and that of his posterity, and the degree of happiness or unhappiness that should be experienced.

Unfortunately, the inventive genius of our first parents was turned in the wrong direction to insure the most favorable results to themselves and their posterity. There were plenty of opportunities for them to experiment in directions conformable to the will of their Creator, and in so doing, progress would have been made in development toward a higher plane. Had such a course been pursued, and always maintained by the human race, the heights attained would have been immeasurably greater and grander than those that have been reached. And yet we continually hear men boasting of the wonders that have been attained by man's inventive genius. How insignificant in the comparison must these inventions appear to God, as he sees what might have been accomplished had not man placed himself under the curse!

Adam's first departure from the state of moral rectitude in which he was placed, was in making an ex-

periment. An experiment is made with a view of leading to an invention. Satan suggested to Adam that there was a very desirable condition to be reached by a certain process, or rather this suggestion was first made to Eve, though it is probable equal success would have been reached had the suggestion been first made to Adam. That fatal suggestion should not have been entertained for a moment. Had it been immediately rejected, future attempts of Satan to demoralize the human race would have been more easily resisted.

But the suggestion was acted upon, the experiment made, which resulted in a wonderful invention, and that discovery has cursed the whole human race. In one sense, the experiment resulted just as Satan said it would—they knew both good and evil. Satan always seasons his falsehoods with truth, although the seasoning is sometimes exceedingly scarce. He never puts in more truth than is necessary to succeed in accomplishing his purpose, and he varies the amount to correspond with the strength of resistance possessed by the subject acted upon. Happy is the man who can detect the difference between adulterated and unadulterated truth.

As Adam and Eve lived on from year to year, they no doubt thought sometimes that possibly the second part of Satan's promise might prove true, and no doubt Satan tried to make them think that it was proving true. But when they realized the trouble and perplexity that had come to them in consequence of that fatal experiment, they must have denounced Satan as a miserable cheat, a lying fraud. And when Adam came to his death-bed, we may fancy him as saying, "Oh, that abominable lie that Satan told me!"

But Adam and Eve added to their knowledge; they knew more than they did before acting upon Satan's suggestion, but that increase of knowledge did not bring increase of happiness; no, far from it. And so it has ever been. An increase of knowledge mixed with evil is sure to bring sorrow. Hear what the Preacher saith: "He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Eccl. 1:18.

Satan succeeded so well with his first attempt to induce man to make an invention, that he has continued to work in that line ever since. He has taken good care that the inventions for evil should keep pace with those for good, and that those for good should be turned to evil uses as extensively as possible. In this manner he has made man forge the weapons for his own destruction, and the more inventions he has made, the farther has he departed from that state of pure simplicity and moral rectitude in which he came from the hand of God.

From these reflections, we see how exceedingly important it is to give the keenest scrutiny to every suggestion that comes to us, every plan that is presented for our consideration, every doctrine that asks our attention. If a grain of error is mixed with it, or that which has the semblance of error, great caution should be used. Take it to the detector—the word of God—and thereby test its genuineness. Do not accept of it, even though it be an almost perfect imitation, for it is a counterfeit, and came from the father of lies. We may be sure that anything that is of a doubtful nature does not emanate from God. He has no occasion to mix Satan's error with his truth to make it suitable for man's use. That which comes from God is pure and unadulterated. The more difficult it is to deceive a person, the more truth will Satan mix with his plan to deceive such an one. The only safety is to promptly reject everything that is of a doubtful character. True, we must be careful that Satan does not blind our eyes so as to prevent us from comprehending truth when it is presented.

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

BY M. WOOD.

"Yes, how do you know but that you are mistaken, as the Millerites and all other time-setting Adventists have been in the past? You Seventh-day Adventists speak as though you could see into futurity. But why speak so positively about your Sabbath, and the coming of the Lord, and other views entertained by you?" So says an inquiring friend.

God's ancient people spoke in the most positive terms. Job says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job 19:25. And Paul is just as emphatic when he says, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." 2 Tim. 4:8. Another apostle says: "We know that when he [Jesus] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." But how do you know all

this?—By faith. This to the child of God is absolute knowledge. When the blessed Saviour said (Matt. 5:18), "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law" (God's moral law), his children are credulous enough to believe that he meant just what he said. And when he says to his disciples, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also," consecrated, God-fearing men and women take hold of this blessed promise with a loving faith, and believe that the signs of the times indicate the soon coming of their blessed Lord. Yet many, even of those who profess faith in Christ, prefer to live in ignorance concerning this grand and awful event. Those only will receive a crown of life who love the appearing of the Saviour.

TEXTS EXPLAINED.

"Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit." Prov. 26:5.

A SKEPTIC once asserted his unbelief before Sir Isaac Newton, and immediately after, seeing a new and magnificent globe in the philosopher's study, asked him, "Who made it?" "No one," was the prompt reply. The sad irony of the philosopher silenced the cavilings of the doubter.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, . . . I will harden Pharaoh's heart." Ex. 4:21.

BUT in what way did God harden Pharaoh's heart? A glance at the history of this man will show him to have been naturally a cruel, haughty, vindictive monarch; and that he had repeatedly hardened his own heart against the groans and cries of the oppressed Israelites, and wholly shut up the bowels of his compassion from them; and so God now in a way of righteous judgment hardens his heart against the conviction of Moses' miracles and the terrors of the plagues. But how did he do this? It is answered; Not by being the direct cause of his sin, but by withdrawing from him, as a just punishment for his wicked course, the dew of divine grace that might have softened his heart, and so suffering him to grow harder and harder. He had persistently resisted the softening influences of the Holy Spirit, had held Israel in the iron furnace, and now God gives him over to judicial blindness, and he rushes on to swift destruction. An old divine observes, "God does not harden men by infusing malice into them, but by not imparting mercy to them." But the Lord never withholds his mercies until men first resist his intreaties. Says the Saviour, "No man can come unto me except the Father draw him." John 6:44. Surely the case of Pharaoh need not be a stumbling-block to any, and his example is left on record as an awful monument of the folly of daring to fight against Heaven.

"And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of mine house to meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering." Judges 11:31.

SKEPTICS generally are quite uncharitable in treating of Jephthah's vow. Here is a solution of this matter: 1. Vows were not commanded of the Lord, but laws were given to regulate them; 2. Some vows are better broken than kept—as the case of the forty Jews who bound themselves under a great curse to kill Paul, and Herod's vow, which cost John Baptist his head; 3. When Jephthah vowed that he would offer the first thing that met him on his return, it was implied that he would do this if it was an object suitable for an offering. Would he offer a dog, or cat, or camel, or horse, or a neighbor's child, if either of these had met him?—Certainly not. All these were particularly forbidden in the law. The last part of this verse is thus rendered by Dr. Adam Clarke, and is quite largely sanctioned by Hebrew critics: "I will consecrate it to the Lord; OR I will offer it for a burnt-offering; that is, if it is an object suitable for a burnt-offering, it shall be made one; if fit for the service of God, it shall be entirely consecrated to him. And so, many divines suppose that the maiden was devoted to perpetual virginity, with no hope of being an honored ancestor of the Messiah, or the joyful mother of sons and daughters. But even if Jephthah had literally sacrificed his own child, Christianity would not be responsible for it,—for so rash a deed, resulting from a plain misunderstanding of his own duty, and a positive violation of the law and the prophets.

"THOUGH thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." Prov. 27:22.



The Gospel Sickle.

"The fields are white already to harvest."—John 4:18.

BATTLE CREEK, MICH., MARCH 1, 1886.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SABBATH.

OUR Saviour says, "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. The term *man* must here be used in its generic sense, comprehending the whole race. If the Sabbath, then, was made for mankind, it must have been made at the time when man himself was created; hence we must go back to the creation for the institution of the Sabbath.

The first part of Moses' record of the creation, in Gen. 1 and 2, is devoted to the origin of the weekly cycle and the Sabbath institution. Here God sets before us the result of each day's work, carefully distinguishing between them, stating that each was composed of an "evening and a morning," a dark part and a light part, thus describing the twenty-four-hour day. After carefully enumerating the labor of six of these days, he declares the work of creation completed. What he did on the next day, the seventh of this first week of time, is stated in chap. 2:2, 3. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Here we have the origin of the weekly cycle, the Sabbath institution, and the distinction between the days of the week. The Bible speaks of "the six working days" and "the Sabbath day." Eze. 46:1. This brief narrative in the very first record of the world's history, makes this distinction plain. God himself employed six specific days of the first week in the labor of creating, and the seventh day of that week in resting. The word "Sabbath" means rest.

Why did God choose to work just six days and rest the seventh? He might have made the world in a moment, or he could have employed any other amount of time in doing it. He did not rest because he was weary, for "he fainteth not, neither is weary." Isa. 40:28. No other reason can be assigned but this: He was laying the foundation of that glorious institution which our Saviour declares was made for the race of men, the Sabbath of the Lord.

But to bring out this point still more clearly, let us notice carefully the language we have quoted. Gen. 2:2, 3. The first act of God on the seventh day was to rest; it thus became God's rest day, or Sabbath. His second act concerning it was to place his blessing upon it; thus it became his "blessed" rest day. His third act was to "sanctify" it. Sanctify signifies "to set apart, or appoint, to a sacred or religious use."—Webster. By this appointment, the seventh day of the week became the day of holy rest and religious observance for those for whom it was designed, until such appointment should be revoked. Notice how definite is the language: "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." The blessing and sanctification of the seventh day was not, therefore, bestowed upon it until that particular day on which he rested was in the past. The blessing bestowed pertained to its future recurrence as it returned in the weekly cycle. Every time it returned after this blessing was placed upon it, it was to be understood by those who revered God that it was his blessed day, and must not be treated as the other six days were treated. It was also "sanctified," that is, it was now the appointed day for religious uses. While it was proper to use the other six days for secular work and ordinary business, the seventh day of the week, every time it returned, was only to be used for religion. All this occurred according to the inspired record at the close of the creative week.

It is sometimes objected that we have no command for the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath till the giving of the law to Israel on Mount Sinai. Such objectors fail to comprehend the record in Gen. 2:1-3. When God sanctified the seventh day, thus appointing it to a sacred use, he must have made known this fact to Adam and Eve, those who were to use it. They stood as the representatives of the race, through whom God's instructions were to be given. We can-

not conceive how God could appoint this day to this special purpose in any other way than by informing them of it.

The Hebrew verb *kadash*, here rendered *sanctified*, is defined by Gesenius, "to pronounce holy, to sanctify, to institute any holy thing, to appoint." The use of this word in the Old Testament commonly implies a public appointment by proclamation. When the cities of refuge were set apart for that particular purpose, the record states (Josh. 20:7) "they appointed (margin, Heb. *sanctified*) Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtali, and Shechem in Mount Ephraim," etc. Here we see a public announcement was made of the fact to all Israel. In Joel 1:14 another instance is furnished: "Sanctify," (i. e., appoint) "ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders," etc. This could not be done without a public notification of the fact. When King Jehu wished to entrap the worshipers of Baal and destroy them, he made this public announcement: "Proclaim (margin, Heb. *sanctify*) a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it." 2 Kings 10:20. It would not have been possible to make this appointment otherwise than by making the people acquainted with the fact.

But the most remarkable instance of this use of the word is found in the record of the sanctification of Mount Sinai. Ex. 19:12, 23. When the Lord was about to speak the ten commandments, he sent Moses down to command the people not to touch the mount, lest they be destroyed. "And Moses said unto the Lord, the people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount and sanctify it." Going back to verse 12, we learn how this was done. "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the borders of it." Here we see that to *sanctify* the mount was to tell the people that God would have them treat it as sacred to himself.

From these and many other instances of the use of the word *sanctify* in the Scriptures, we must understand that when God sanctified the seventh day at creation, he told Adam and Eve it was sacred unto the Lord. The statement that "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it" positively proves that the Lord commanded our first parents to treat the seventh day as holy time. It is a record of that fact; for in no other way could it have been "appointed" to such a use. This fact—that God gave a commandment to the representative heads of the race, to keep holy the seventh day of the week at the creation of the world—has an important bearing upon the Sabbath question for every succeeding age. G. I. B.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

In the New York *Independent* of Feb. 18, 1886, appears a very edifying article on this subject from the pen of Samuel T. Spear, D. D., of Brooklyn. Although an occasional expression betrays a little tinge of embarrassment in the adjustment of the two antagonistic doctrines,—the continued existence of a disembodied soul, and the future resurrection of the body,—the article on the whole is so direct and so scriptural as to be nothing less than a pleasant surprise. He argues for a literal resurrection of the body; he connects this inseparably with the second literal coming of Christ in power and glory; he gives to the expressions, "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," and, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," etc., their evident scriptural meaning, and applies them, not as some try to do, to the generation living in the days of the apostle, but to Christians who will be alive on the earth when the second advent of Christ takes place; and he acknowledges that then, and then only, will be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory," and the song can then be sung, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" Such propositions as these are conceded with too much reluctance in the religious world.

We should be glad if we had space to quote largely from the article. The desire to present a few extracts is embarrassed only by the difficulty of deciding what selections to make. In proving the resurrection of the body by the resurrection of Christ as brought to view in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, Dr. S. says:—

"The resurrection of Christ is here treated, not only as an example of an actual resurrection, and hence, as a proof of the doctrine, but also as a guaranty of the resurrection of those who are Christ's. There is no question as to whether his was a bodily

resurrection, any more than whether his was a bodily death. The fact that his body, though dead, saw no corruption, did not, in Paul's view, make its restoration to life less an instance of resurrection, or less the 'first fruits' of those who sleep. As mortality came through Adam, so all the righteous dead will be made alive through Christ. As he rose from the dead, so will they. Such is the reasoning of Paul; and this settles the question that those who are Christ's are destined to be the subjects of a bodily resurrection. It was to a bodily death and restoration to a bodily life that the apostle referred when speaking of Christ as rising from the dead, and also when he said that 'as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.'"

On the time of the resurrection he says:—

"This great and wonderful event, designated in the Bible by the term 'resurrection,' is, as to the time of its occurrence, identified with the second coming of Christ. On this point the apostle says: 'But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.' . . . This connects the second coming of Christ, the completion of his mediatorial work, the resurrection of the dead, and the termination of the present mundane system, as events associated in time. The resurrection has its place in a group of august events."

Again: "The resurrection with its attendant facts, will, in the conception of this inspired writer, cancel and eternally abrogate the apparent victory of death and the grave. Death will then be swallowed up in victory. The dead will hear the voice of Christ 'at his coming;' and as he rose from the dead, so will they be raised 'incorruptible,' and in their bodies be fitted to dwell in heaven. Christians then living will 'be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye;' and, also, in their bodies, be fitted to the heavenly world. . . . We need not wonder that Paul, who thoroughly believed in his own teaching, should exultingly exclaim, 'O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?' The resurrection as he saw it, and as he presents it, fills the Christian's future with transcendent glory."

Referring to Paul's epistle to the Thessalonians, and the comfort he there offers to the bereaved in view of the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, Mr. S. remarks:—

"Here are essentially the same thoughts that we find in the 15th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. Paul regarded the words containing them as being adapted to alleviate the sorrows of bereavement, and for this purpose used them. He reminds the Thessalonians of the fact that Christ is coming back to this world personally, in great glory and in mighty power; and that when he comes, he will raise the dead. The dead in Christ will rise first, and Christians then living will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and both classes will ever be with the Lord. Such was the theology of Paul; and this is a good reason why it should be ours. The resurrection of Christ, and that of his people at his second coming, were cardinal points in the preaching of the apostles. They gave to these points a prominence that does not exist in the ministrations of the modern Christian pulpit."

We would that every pulpit in the land might be made to feel the force of these words.

Finally the article closes with the following solemn and eloquent thoughts:—

"This 'day of the Lord' mentioned by Peter, is the period mentioned by Christ himself, when he 'shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,' and when 'all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.' The second coming of Christ is no fable. The resurrection of the dead, both of 'the just and the unjust,' . . . is no fable. The judgment of the world by him is no fable. The dissolution of the present earthly system is no fable. All these great events have their date in what Peter calls 'the day of the Lord,' which 'will come as a thief in the night.'"

"That 'day' may not come in our lifetime; but whether it does or not, it is in the plan of God as a part of the history of this world. He has so declared it in his word, and so it will be. We shall be in existence when that 'day' comes, and all share in its events. Happy will it be for us if God in Christ shall then recognize us as 'heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.' This will make it to us a day of great joy, glory, and honor. Inconceivably ill will it be with us if our character on earth shall then consign us to the 'perdition of ungodly men.' May God by his all-sufficient grace, cause our names to be 'written in the Lamb's book of life,' and secure to us that 'holy conversation and godliness' referred to by Peter, that will prepare us for 'the day of the Lord,' whether it greets us as the risen dead, or those who are to be 'changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.'"

In view of the importance and the glorious results of this great event to those who are ready for it, it is not the question of the nearness of that glorious era, and the evidences which indicate its approach, a very natural and commendable subject of study? The

Scriptures make this as prominent as any other feature of the subject. According to Matt. 24:34, the very generation in which the Son of man will appear, is to be known. A few will understand when that generation is reached, and will prepare, while the multitude will oppose, pass on in their unbelief, and perish. The world has at least reached an era when they should beware lest they expose themselves to such an overthrow as befell the Jews, because, as Christ told them, they knew not the time of their visitation. Luke 19:44. U. S.

"SIGNS IN THE EARTH BENEATH."

CHRIST and the apostles, and the prophets before them, often declared that there should be signs given to mark the end of the world and the advent of Christ near. See Luke 21:25-32; Acts 2:19, 20; Joel 2:10, 11. Jesus commands his people to watch these signs, and, when they appear, to know that the end is near. It seems as though those who really love Jesus would hail with joy any evidence of his coming, and many do. In every denomination there are some devout students of the Bible who believe that the end is very near. They talk about it, write about it, and preach about it. Mr. Barnes, the great scholar and commentator, in his note on the papacy, which is to fall at the second advent, says: "It would seem probable, then, that according to the most obvious explanation of the subject, we are at present (1866) not far from the termination and fall of that great power, and that events may be expected to occur at about this period of the world which will be connected with its fall."—Notes on Daniel, p. 333.

If these things are so, we ought to know it. But how shall we know unless we pay attention to it, and study it. There are no less than thirteen lines of prophecy, all reaching to the end and culminating at the Judgment or second advent, such as the image of Dan. 2, the four beasts of Dan. 7, the seven seals of Rev. 6 and 7, and others. All these have been wholly fulfilled except the very last events in each of them. See the exposition of the four beasts in this paper, and others which will follow. We will notice a few of the special signs which were to mark the time of the end.

We find one of these signs in Dan. 12:2-4. It will be seen that the event spoken of is the resurrection, and the time, the time of the end. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," etc. Verse 2. "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Verse 4. "The time of the end" would be a short period just before the end, but reaching to it, as the time of the flood, the time of the first advent, etc. The time of the end will cover the last generation, the one to whom the signs of the end will be given. The prophet gives here two signs that will then be seen to mark that time: 1. Many shall run to and fro, and, 2. knowledge shall be increased. It must mean that these two things will be seen in a remarkable degree; for men have always traveled more or less, and have been learning some. But at the time of the end, there will be such a great change in these respects as to mark that period as different from all before it.

Now this is precisely what has come in our own day. From the creation of the world till the present century, the most rapid mode of traveling was by means of animals. The means being slow, tedious, and costly, most people stayed at home, or went but seldom, and then only short distances. But now behold the sudden change in all this! The invention of the steam-boat and railroad has so facilitated and cheapened travel that almost everybody avails himself of the advantages thus afforded. The whole country is one net-work of roads; the waters are covered with boats, all teeming with the millions of people, "running to and fro" everywhere! In this respect our own age stands out in marked contrast with all the previous history of the world. Could the men of past ages wake up and behold it, to them it would be a tremendous miracle. To the holy prophet it was shown in vision as a sign of the end of the world. That sign has come. All can see it. The rumbling cars and the steam-boat's whistle proclaim the end at hand, and happy are they who "can discern the signs of the times."

The second item in the prophecy is, "knowledge shall be increased." Since the fall of man, there has been a slow but almost steady increase in knowledge. Some ages have shone out brighter than others, and

sometimes there has been a progress backwards; but in the present century there has come a sudden and wonderful change, so great, so universal, so marvelous, that all stand and look on with amazement. The change did not come gradually as a natural and healthy growth; but it has just burst upon the world all of a sudden, like a great conflagration at midnight. As in a moment, the race has awakened to powers of invention, to resources of nature, to activity of mind, and to the possibility of deeds of which it never dreamed before, and the realization of which seems more like the work of the gods than of men. Hear what leading journals say on this subject. The London Spectator says:—

"Few phenomena are more remarkable, yet few have been less remarked, than the degree in which material civilization—the progress of mankind in all those contrivances which oil the wheels and promote the comfort of daily life—has been concentrated in the last half century. It is not too much to say that in these respects more has been done, richer and more prolific discoveries have been made, grander achievements have been realized, in the course of the fifty years of our lifetime, than in all the previous lifetime of the race."

The "Union Hand-Book," 1870, says:—

"The great facts of the nineteenth century stand out so conspicuously above the achievements of any preceding century, that it would be affectation of humility not to recognize and speak of them."

HORACE GREBLEY, in the N. Y. Tribune, said:—

"In the education of the intellect, mankind has made great strides since the birth of this century. Whether we regard the number taught, or the knowledge imparted, the progress made has been marvelous."

Now look at the list of only a few of the inventions of our own century:—

- 1800. Cast-iron plow, first used in America, in New York.
- 1808. Steel pen, by Mr. Wise, England.
- 1807. Steam-boat, by Robert Fulton.
- 1811. Steam printing-press, printed the London Times.
- 1813. Electric light, Sir Humphrey Davy.
- 1823. Gold pen, John P. Hawkins, America.
- 1825. Railroad cars.
- 1825. Kerosene first used for lighting.
- 1829. Lucifer match, John Walker, England.
- 1830. Steam fire-engine, Ericsson, Swedish-American.
- 1833. Reaper and mower, Obed Hussey, Cincinnati, Ohio.
- 1837. Telegraph, Prof. Morse.
- 1837. Phonography, Pitman, England.
- 1839. Photography, Daguerre, France.
- 1846. First complete sewing-machine, Elias Howe, Jr.
- 1858. Shoe-pegging machine, Gallahue.
- 1876. Telephone, Elisha Gray, A. G. Bell, A. C. Dolbear, and Thos. A. Edison.

These are only samples out of thousands in every line of activity. If these had come a few in a century, stretching over hundreds of years, it would be no marvel; but when they all are centered in one age, then it is a wonder.

Now is not this just what the word of God foretold, viz., at "the time of the end" knowledge should be increased? Dan. 12:4. Yes; it is fulfilled. We see it. There is no denying it. Shall we take timely warning by it, as God has told us to do; or shall we close our eyes, rush on with the great mass, and neglect to "discern the signs of the times," as did the Jews of old? D. M. C.

"THE LAW OF THE LORD IS PERFECT."

Too much cannot be said in praise of the moral law, the ten commandments. In these brief words every branch of man's duty to God and to his fellow-man is comprehended. To "fear God and keep his commandments" is "the whole duty of man."—Ecc. 12:13. Every sin which it is possible for a person to commit, is a violation of some principle or principles inculcated in these commandments; hence the definition of sin as given by an apostle, namely, "Sin is the transgression of the law," is a perfect definition. In the language of another, "I have been looking into the nature of that law. I have been trying to see whether I can add anything to it or take anything from it, so as to make it better. Sir, I cannot. It is perfect. The first commandment directs us to make the Creator the object of our extreme love and reverence. That is right. If he be our Creator, Preserver, and supreme Benefactor, we ought to treat him, and none other, as such. The second forbids idolatry. That certainly is right. The third forbids profanity. The fourth fixes a time for religious worship. If there is a God, he ought surely to be worshiped. It is suitable that there should be an outward homage, significant of our inward regard. If God be worshiped, it is proper that some time be set apart for that purpose, when all may worship him harmoniously and without interruption. One day in seven is certainly not too much; and I do not know that it is too little. The fifth defines the pe-

culiar duties arising from the family relations. Injuries to our neighbor are then classified by the moral law. They are divided into offenses against life, chastity, property, and character. And I notice that the greatest offense in each class is expressly forbidden. Thus the greatest injury to life is murder; to chastity, adultery; to property, theft; to character, perjury. Now the greater offense must include the less of the same kind. Murder must include every injury to life; adultery, every injury to purity; and so of the rest. And the moral code is closed and perfected by a command forbidding every improper desire in regard to our neighbor." R. F. O.

THE LAW TO THE GENTILES.

2.—THE LAW DATES BACK TO CREATION.

THE gospel in types and shadows existed from the time of Adam. Was the law of God also taught from Adam's time?—Most certainly it was. Can we believe that God leaves the world at any time without a law to govern it? Can we believe that God never informed Adam and his children that it was wrong to steal, lie, murder, etc.? That would be charging God with folly. The whole record of Genesis, and all references in the Bible to that time afterwards, plainly show that God did teach them his law and commandments, the same ones that he wrote out for his people afterwards. Thus we have already seen that Eve, in the first transgression, violated three of the ten commandments. Look at the case of Cain; how was it with him? God himself says, "Sin lieth at the door." Gen. 4:7. What is sin? "Who-soever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Sin, then, is the transgression of the law. This was the trouble with Cain; he lifted his hand and slew his brother, and thus committed murder. But Paul expressly says that "where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15. This principle is sound in law the world round. Certainly there can be no transgression where there is no law. If, then, God had given no law against murder, Cain could not have been a transgressor; but did not God try him as a transgressor?—Yes; and this shows that God had previously declared to them his law against murder, as, without doubt, he had against all other sins.

But some ask, Why, then, do we not have a law fully written out in Genesis? The answer is very simple and easy: Genesis is not a book of law, to tell what man ought to do, but simply a very brief history of a few leading men of the patriarchal age, telling what they did do. Just a few chapters cover the history of the world for 2,000 years. It was written after the men were all dead, and hence no code of laws needed to be given. But it does very plainly refer to laws as though they had been given. Moreover, God could only have given his law to Adam and the patriarchs orally, for the simple reason that no man knew how to write or read before the time of Moses. Hence, if God had written them out in a book, no one could have read them. So God must have given them his laws orally, as he communicated to them everything else. But when we come down to the time of Moses, where men had learned to write and read, the law of God was written out,—the same law that they had before received by word of mouth.

No one of the ten commandments is directly given in the book of Genesis. Shall we conclude, therefore, that God had never given a law to the world forbidding idolatry, blasphemy, adultery, murder, etc.? Well may we ask with Abraham, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" No human ruler would neglect such a vital point as that, much less would God. But we do have many plain references to the existence of this law long before Moses' time. We have seen one in the case of Cain. Thus we read another: "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Gen. 13:13. If these men were sinners, they must have violated the law; for the word of God expressly says that "sin is the transgression of the law," and "where no law is, there is no transgression." Furthermore, Peter says of Lot: "For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." 2 Pet. 2:8. Those Sodomites committed unlawful deeds; then they certainly violated the law. There must have been a law, therefore, for them to violate.

Look at the case of Noah. What was the trouble with the antediluvians? The Bible says: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great." Gen. 6:5. Wickedness is the same as sin; and that, as we have seen, is a violation of the law. Why did God choose

Noah and reject the others? The Lord himself gives the reason. "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Gen. 7:1. The others were sinners and he was righteous. What is righteousness?—"All unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17), and "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Righteousness, then, will be the opposite of unrighteousness, that is, keeping the law. So God chose Noah because he kept the law, and rejected the others because they broke it.

Coming down to the time of Abraham, it is plainly declared that God had a law and commandments. "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." Gen. 26:5. This shows that God had given to the patriarchs a law and commandments. God chose Abraham because he kept them while the rest did not. That God had a law before he proclaimed it on Sinai is plainly shown in Ex. 16. In verse 4 God says that he will give them bread from heaven, "that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no." Then he had a law, and when they broke the Sabbath God said, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" Verse 28. Thus we have plainly shown that God had given his law and commandments to the world before the time of Moses, and that men were blessed who kept it, and cursed who broke it.

But who were these patriarchs? Jews? Was Adam a Jew? Was Abel? or Noah? The Jews were the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob who did not live till over 2,200 years after creation. So, then, God's law existed for thousands of years before the first Jew was ever born. And that law, as we have seen, was given to a people who were not Jews, to Adam and to Noah, who were the fathers of all the Gentile world. Thus we have the law to the Gentiles long before it was given to the Jews. And, as the future will show, the reason why God rejected the Gentiles was because they would not keep that law; and the reason why he chose the Jews was because they would keep it.

D. M. C.

IMMORTALITY TO BE SOUGHT FOR.

"Who will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." Rom. 2:5, 6.

The apostle here teaches that God will reward all men according to their deeds. To those who do right, and continue patiently to do so, and who seek (*i. e.*, "go in search of, or try to find."—*Webster*) three things; viz., 1. glory; 2. honor; 3. immortality,—to such he will give eternal life. The "glory" for which they seek is that glory which is revealed when Christ comes in the "glory of the Father and the holy angels." The "honor" they try to obtain is that honor which cometh only from above, when God takes from them the reproach with which a wicked world has regarded them. What is the "immortality" for which they seek? Popular theology tells us it is something man has always had, that which has descended to us from Adam, which every creature in human form possesses, and which no man can possibly remove from him; something he has received as a legacy whether he desired it or not, and must continue to have, no matter how much he may desire to cast it aside. Evidently, the great apostle Paul and popular theology disagree. He would not represent a man as seeking for something he already had. We sometimes see old people who have become very forgetful, looking after their spectacles when they have them on, and we always laugh. Popular theology would make the apostle guilty of a far more ridiculous blunder,—seeking for immortality when he had always had it. How plainly this language demonstrates that immortality is not something now enjoyed, but that which is to be given only to the faithful! and how sensible this conclusion seems! Wicked men, then, do not possess the priceless boon of immortal existence.

G. I. B.

WHAT IS RIGHTEOUSNESS?

A FRIEND, writing on the subject of the Sabbath, says, "I believe he that feareth God and worketh righteousness will be accepted of him." Now, we wish to determine the meaning of the term righteousness. In John 5:17 we read that "all unrighteousness is sin." And what is sin?—"Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. If unrighteousness, then, is transgression of the law, righteousness is obedience to the law, or right doing. The law of God is the truth, and Jesus says, "For this cause came I into the world that I should bear wit-

ness unto the truth." He testifies as follows: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

This is the law by which our actions are to be regulated, and characters formed. It is a moral law; for it is the standard of our righteousness. A rule of righteousness can only be fulfilled by obeying it, and obeying such a rule does not abolish it. The righteousness of a person consists in right doing, that is, in his obeying what is commonly called moral law. "He that doeth righteousness, is righteous." 1 John 3:7. And we have not forgotten that David said, "All thy commandments are righteousness." Ps. 119:172. He does not say nine of the commandments are righteousness, but *all* of them; and it is clearly evident that Jesus ratified them all.

Who are they, then, who fear God and work righteousness?—"The people in whose heart is my law." Then they who obey unrighteousness transgress the law, while they that obey the truth, do not transgress it; and the wrath of God will come upon every soul, Jew or Gentile, who does not obey the truth. *And what is truth?*—"All thy commandments are truth." Yes, the law of God is the truth, and how beautifully does it harmonize with the last benediction of the coming One: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" 1 Rev. 22:14.

How valuable is the truth! I thank God that I have ever been led to behold the truth, and had a heart given me to obey it. Such, if they continue therein, will soon hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

C. P. W.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

THE PRODIGAL SON.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

THE prodigal son made a request that his father should give him his portion of the estate. He desired to separate his interest from his father's, and manage his share as best suited his own inclination. His father complied with the request, and the son selfishly withdrew that he might not be troubled with his counsel, reproofs, or advice.

The son thought he should be happy when he could use his portion according to his own pleasure, without being annoyed with advice or restraint. He did not wish to be troubled with mutual obligation. If he shared his father's estate, his father had claims upon him as a son. But he did not feel under any obligation to his generous father, but braced his selfish, rebellious spirit with the thought that a portion of his father's property belonged to him. He requested his share, when rightfully he could claim nothing, and should have had nothing.

After his selfish heart had received the treasure, of which he was so undeserving, he went his way at a distance from his father, that he might even forget that he had such a parent. He despised restraint, and was fully determined to have pleasure in any way and manner that he chose. After he had, by his sinful indulgences, spent all that his father gave him, the land was visited by a famine, and he felt pinching want, and he began to regret his sinful course of extravagant pleasure, for he was now destitute, and needed the means he had squandered. He was obliged to come down from his life of sinful indulgence to the low business of feeding swine.

When the prodigal son had come as low as he could, he thought of the kindness and love of his father. He felt then the need of a father. His position of friendlessness and want he had brought upon himself through disobedience and sin, which had resulted in his separating himself from his father. He thought of the privileges and bounties of his father's house, that the hired servants of his father freely enjoyed, while he, who had alienated himself from his father's house, was perishing with hunger. He was humiliated through adversity, and decided to return to his father by humble confession. He was a beggar, destitute of comfortable, or even decent, clothing. He was wretched in consequence of privation, and was emaciated with hunger.

While at a distance from his home, his father saw the wanderer, and his first thought was of that rebellious son who had left him years before to follow a course

of unrestrained sin. The paternal feeling was stirred. Notwithstanding all the marks of his degradation, he discerned his own image. He did not wait for his son to come all the distance to him, but he hastened to meet him. He did not reproach him; but with the tenderest pity and compassion, knowing he had in consequence of his own course of sin brought upon himself so much suffering, he hastened to give him proofs of his love and tokens of his forgiveness.

Although his son was emaciated and his countenance plainly indicated the dissolute life he had passed, and although he was clothed with beggar's rags, and his naked feet were soiled with the dust of travel, the father's tenderest pity was excited as the son fell prostrate in humility before him. He did not stand back upon his dignity. He was not exacting. He did not array the past course of wrong and sin before his son to make him feel how low he had sunk.

The father lifted up his son and kissed him. He took the rebellious one to his breast, and wrapped his own rich robe about his nearly naked form. He took him to his heart with such warmth, and evinced such pity, if the son had ever doubted the goodness and love of his father, he could do so no longer. If he had a sense of his sin when he decided to return to his father's house, he had a much deeper sense of his ungrateful course as he was thus received.

His heart, before subdued, was now broken that he had grieved his father's love. The penitent, trembling son, who had greatly feared that he would be disowned, was unprepared for such a reception. He knew he did not deserve it. He acknowledged his sin in leaving his father. "I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." He begged only to be accounted as a hired servant; but the father requested his servants to pay him especial tokens of respect, to clothe him as if he had ever been his own obedient son.

The father made the return of his son an occasion of special rejoicing. The elder son in the field knew not that his brother had returned, but he heard the general demonstrations of joy, and inquired of the servants what it all meant. It was explained that his brother had returned whom they thought dead, and his father had killed the fatted calf for him because he had received him again as from the dead.

The brother then was angry, and he would not go in to see or receive his brother. His indignation was stirred that this unfaithful brother, who had left his father and thrown the heavy responsibilities upon him of fulfilling the duties which should be shared by both, should now be received with such honor. He had pursued a course of wicked profligacy, wasting the means his father had given him until he was reduced to want, while he had been faithfully performing the duties of a son; and now this profligate brother comes to his father's house, and is received with respect and honor beyond anything he had ever received.

The father entreats his elder son to go and receive his brother with gladness because he was lost and is found; was dead in sin and iniquity, but is alive again; has come to his moral senses, and abhors his course of sin; but his eldest son pleads, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son was come which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf."

He assured his son that he was ever with him, and all that he had was his, but it was right that they should show this demonstration of joy; for "thy brother was dead, and is alive again, and was lost, and is found." This fact overbears all other considerations with the father,—the lost is found, the dead is alive again.

This parable was given by Christ to represent the manner our heavenly Father receives the erring and repenting. The Father was the one sinned against, yet he, in the compassion of his soul, all full of pity and forgiveness, meets the prodigal and shows his great joy that his son whom he believed to be dead to all filial affection, had become sensible of his great sin and his neglect, and had come back to his father, appreciating his love and acknowledging his claims. He knew that the son who had pursued a course of sin and now repented, needed his pity and his love. He had suffered. He felt his need. He came to his father as the only one who could supply his great need.

The fact of his son's returning was a source of the greatest joy. The complaints of the elder brother were natural, but not right. Yet it is frequently the course brother pursues toward brother. There is too much effort to make them feel where they have erred, and to keep reminding them of their error. The

who have erred need pity, they need help, they need sympathy. They suffer in their feelings, and are frequently desponding and discouraged. Above everything else, they need free forgiveness.

THE CHRISTIAN'S FRIEND.

THE wicked may say: "God maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; wherefore, then, is there any gain in being a Christian?"—Much, every way. There are certain blessings that God gives to all alike, whether they ask for them or not. But there is an immense store-house of treasure and wealth that none draw from without asking. It is the Christian's privilege to receive the blessings from this store-house, in addition to those given impartially by God to saints and sinners alike. It is one thing to have a friend on general principles, but quite another to have one who comes into that close relationship where we can feel that he thoroughly appreciates our every sentiment, and sympathizes with our every sorrow and grief. God is the sinner's friend on general principles, but he is the Christian's bosom friend. This rule holds good in the acquirement of truth. There are certain general truths that come alike to all, whether they seek for them or not; but there is a great ocean of valuable and beautiful truths that can be drawn from only by those who seek in the right manner, and such efforts are repaid a thousand-fold. Reader, let us try to draw from this boundless reservoir, and obtain the imperishable riches.

G. W. MORSE.

A PRECIOUS THOUGHT.

ONE sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I'm nearer my home to-day
Than I have been before.

Nearer my Father's house,
Where many mansions be,
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the crystal sea.

—Phoebe Cary.

THE FIELD.

"THE FIELD IS THE WORLD."

PROGRESS OF THE CAUSE.

Brief mention of work done and results accomplished by Seventh-day Adventists, in different parts of the field, according to reports received since our last issue:—

ARKANSAS.—Meetings in Hot Spring and Pike counties by J. G. Wood.

DENMARK.—Labors at Copenhagen, by J. G. Matteson, result in a church of thirty members; Knud Bronson labors in Jutland.

DAKOTA.—G. H. Smith reports meetings with the churches at Iroquois, Brookings, and Estelline; at the latter place seven have decided for the truth, and crowded meetings are still in progress.

ITALY.—Mrs. E. G. White, A. C. Bourdeau, and Bro. Geymet labor in the Piedmont valley, the result being several conversions and baptisms.

IOWA.—New church dedicated at Sandyville, where general meetings are held by Eld. G. I. Butler, assisted by others; several conversions result; liberal pledges of means made, one person pledging \$1,000 for the cause.

INDIANA.—Profitable meetings at Denver, Walkerton, Marion, Bunker Hill, and Akron, by Wm. Hill; also by the same at Gilead, where several conversions result; Wm. Covert holds meetings at Forest Chapel, and in Madison county, the result being encouraging; churches at Northfield, Noblesville, Forest Chapel, Unionville, Patricksburg, Dugger, Middletown, and Posyville, visited by D. H. Oberholzer; several new converts at the last-named place.

ILLINOIS.—Churches at Woodburn, Litchfield, Carbondale, Duquoin, and Webber Grove, visited by R. M. Kilgore, and profitable meetings held, resulting favorably; J. F. Hanson reports a course of sermons begun in Chicago, with several conversions as the result thus far, also the opening of a Scandinavian mission school Feb. 1.

KANSAS.—Sabbath-school organized at Beloit, and regular weekly meetings established by N. J. Bowers.

KENTUCKY.—I. H. Evans labors at Litchfield, Rio, Glasgow, and Madisonville; a company of ten brought out at the first-named place, and ready for organization.

MICHIGAN.—Meetings continue at Quincy with unabated interest; Elds. Edgar, A. Smith, and Mrs. Lane hold meetings at Grandville, one result being twelve additions to the church membership; third edition of "Helps to Bible Study" issued by College printing office at Battle Creek; organization of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Association completed, according to the laws of the State.

MINNESOTA.—Wm. Schram reports meetings at Gresham; C. M. Chaffee labors at Bragdon, where a Sabbath-school is organized, also a company of eight believers brought out; meetings at Albion, Middleville, and Corinna, by D. P. Curtis and D. C. Burch; J. S. Brower and E. A. Curtis report meetings at Birchdale and Alden's Mill, respectively, with ten conversions at the former place; H. F. Phelps reports meetings with good results at Minneapolis, Sauk Rapids, and Fair Haven.

MISSOURI.—J. W. Watt holds meetings at Carthage, one result being five converts; D. T. Jones reports meetings with the churches at Half Rock, Emporia, Hamilton, Gunn City, Sedalia, Pleasant Hill, and Kansas City, with encouraging results at each place; R. S. Donnell reports the conversion of six at Gunn City, as the result of meetings just closed in that place.

MAINE.—Workers' institute held at Norridgewock by A. O. Burrill and J. B. Goodrich, the same being largely attended and successful.

NORWAY.—Labors at Drømmen, Laurwig, Skien, Kragerø, and Arendal, by E. G. Olsen, at each of which places additions to the churches are reported.

NEW YORK.—Course of lectures at Syracuse, in connection with mission work, by A. E. Place; J. V. Willson, at Buffalo, engaged in mission work, and establishing regular Sabbath services; M. H. Brown visits churches at Adams Center, Mannsville, Pulasaki, Roosevelt, Syracuse, Newfane, Buffalo, West Pierpont, and Bangor, doing successful work; mission established at Watertown; J. E. Swift reports successful meetings at Silver Hill, Bucks Bridge, Adams Center and West Pierpont.

NEBRASKA.—Meetings held at Richmond, Wilsonville, Culbertson, and Beaver City, by H. Schultz. At Culbertson four entire families are added to the church membership; twenty converts reported at Decatur as the result of meetings by O. A. Johnson; Sabbath-school attendance increased to ninety, \$900 pledged to mission work, and \$800 for the erection of a new church.

OHIO.—Elds. Gates and Stone hold meetings at La Grange, and several conversions result; at Nova meetings are also held with good results; O. J. Mason and J. S. Iles hold meetings at Hartford where the interest is good; C. A. Mevis reports favorably from Payne; G. W. Anglebarger reports from Springfield that five have united with the church, and others are deeply interested; W. J. Stone reports meetings at Camden, with good results.

OREGON.—C. L. Boyd holds meetings at St. Johns, the result being several conversions.

RUSSIA.—Several colporters of the British and Foreign Bible Society embrace the S. D. Adventist faith through reading of denominational works.

TEXAS.—W. A. McCutchen reports meetings with a good interest at Cleburne, Johnson Co.

VERMONT.—I. E. Kimball and H. Peebles hold meetings with the churches at Saxton's River, Brattleboro, Jamaica, Weston, and Andover; a club of seventy-five Signs of the Times raised at Jamaica.

THE THEOLOGICAL WORLD.

... Moody and Sankey have had their usual success in New Orleans.

... There are eleven Y. M. C. A. organizations among the Christian Indians of Dakota.

... The Parliament of Bavaria proposes to give half the Sunday to all the men employed on its railways.

... In Ireland 859 Presbyterian congregations have expressed themselves as opposed to the home-rule system.

... It is reported that there are now forty men in Cambridge University who design to enter foreign missionary fields.

... C. T. Studd, the recently converted athlete of Cambridge University, has given £100,000 for Chinese missions recently.

... In Spain, the Jesuit schools have been abolished by the government, and the State resumes control over educational matters.

... In Northern Alabama, Mormon elders have been plying their nefarious vocation, which has resulted in their making

many converts. They were warned to leave, but refused to do so, saying that the Government would protect them.

... News has been received at London, from Zanzibar, to the effect that a missionary and fifty of his helpers have been killed recently.

... The question of revising the prayer-book is being discussed with renewed interest among many prominent Episcopallians.

... The Christian Union advises all clergymen to preach at least one sermon per quarter on the question of "Religion and the State."

... The last week of February was observed as a special week of prayer at all the mission stations of the American Board in Turkey.

... Reports are that the Mexican government has shown a disposition to favor the Mormons, who have purchased large tracts of land there.

... The Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists of Boston, have been holding union revival meetings with marked interest.

... At Cameron, W. Va., a lady revivalist is reported to have been very successful, the result of her work in six weeks being 200 converts.

... The Catholic archbishop of Quebec has demanded from the Legislature a settlement of Jesuit claims to lands valued at \$60,000,000.

... The Executive Committee of the American Congress of Churches, recently met at Pittsfield, Mass., to arrange for the next annual meeting.

... Prague, in Bohemia, where Jerome was born, and John Huss preached, has elected a Protestant mayor, for the first time in two hundred years.

... The Japanese government has forbidden the "Yaso Taiji," or "Jesus opposers," to lecture against Christianity, or to use the word "Taiji," which means "to expel the Christians."

... A project is on foot in Scotland to unite the established church with the United Presbyterian and the Free church. This is presented as a feasible compromise for church disestablishment.

... It is reported that the Hindus are complaining bitterly of the quality of the idols now furnished them by the manufacturers in England, the material being of inferior quality, and the workmanship defective.

... At a recent Sunday evening evangelical service in Denver, after many had manifested an interest in their personal salvation, one of the clergymen announced that if any of the converts thought they could serve God better by joining the Roman Catholic church, he would give their names to the priests.

... Iceland was recently visited by a German statistician, who has furnished interesting data of that land. The Icelanders are all Lutherans. Some French missionaries tried very hard to make converts of some of them, but without any success. There are, it is said, one Roman Catholic, one Methodist, four Unitarians, and three Mormons, to be found among a population of 72,445 souls (census of 1880). The island contains 299 churches, 217 of which are built of imported timber, 75 of peat, or turf, and only seven of stone.

CONDENSED LIST OF TRACTS.

Five Cents Each.—Our Faith and Hope—Justification by Faith.

Four Cents Each.—Redemption—The Second Advent—The Sufferings of Christ—The Present Truth—Origin and Progress of S. D. Adventists—Ten Commandments not Abolished—An Address to the Baptists—The Two Thrones—Spiritualism a Satanic Delusion—Samuel and the Witch of Endor—The Third Message of Rev. 14—Scripture References—Titles and Offerings—Seventh Part of Time—The two Covenants.

Three Cents Each.—Second Message of Rev. 14—End of the Wicked—Lost Time, Question—S. D. Adventists and S. D. Baptists—Signs of the Times—Who Changed the Sabbath—The Spirit of Prophecy—The Millennium—Sabbaton.

Two Cents Each.—Christ in the Old Testament—The Sabbath in the New Testament—The Moral Code not Abolished—The Sanctuary of the Bible—The Judgment—Much in Little—The Two Laws—Seven Reasons—The Definite Seventh Day—Departing and Being with Christ—The Rich Man and Lazarus—Elihu on the Sabbath—First Message of Rev. 14—The Law and the Gospel—God's Memorial—The Sabbath Made for Man—Seven Reasons for Sunday Keeping Examined.

One Cent Each.—The Coming of the Lord—Perfection of the Ten Commandments—Without Excuse—Thoughts for the Candid—Which Day and Why?—Can We Know; or, Can the Prophecies be Understood?—Is the End Near?—Is Man Immortal?—The Sleep of the Dead—The Sinner's Fate—The Law of God—What the Gospel Abrogated—One Hundred Bible Facts About the Sabbath—Sunday not the Sabbath—"The Christian Sabbath"—Why Not Found Out Before?—Coming of the Lord—Sign of the Day of God.

The Association has 45 different works in Danish-Norwegian, 24 in Swedish, 31 in German, 15 in French, and several tracts in Holland.

Full Catalogues of all our publications in English, and the various foreign languages, furnished free, on application.

The foregoing will be mailed, post-paid, on receipt of price.

Address, REVIEW & HERALD, Battle Creek, Mich.; Or, PACIFIC PRESS, Oakland, Cal.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE.

Battle Creek, Mich., March 1, 1886.

Many words of commendation have been received from those who have seen the previous numbers of the SICKLE. These words are appreciated. They encourage us to hope that this paper will be just what is needed in its special field. It will be seen that the SICKLE gives no uncertain sound. It designs to speak as plainly and pointedly as possible upon the great truths of the soon coming of Christ, the resurrection, the nature of man, the punishment of the wicked, the new earth, the law of God, the holy Sabbath, and kindred doctrines. It will do this in the tenderest spirit of Christian charity. We ask for the assistance of all those who love these blessed truths, in the circulation of this paper.

Read it, examine it, see if it is not just what you and your friends need. No pains shall be spared to make it such. Look at the articles in this number. They cover Prophecy, the Signs, the Advent, the Law, the Sabbath, the Resurrection, Christian Life, News from the field, Quotations from eminent authors, many pointed notes and other matter,—all for 2 cents! Circulate it. Do not destroy it as soon as read, nor throw it aside, but hand it to some friend, and call his attention to some article that will interest him. Get subscribers for it. Try. Almost any one can get ten names in his vicinity at 40 cents each. Try it. Pray for it and for its editors. Sample copies will be sent free to those willing to use them to get subscribers.

The SICKLE is printed from electrotype plates, thus enabling the publishers to supply back numbers in any quantity desired, at the regular rates.

Subscribe for the Sickle.—We desire to obtain a large list of subscribers for the GOSPEL SICKLE. The price is exceedingly low, considering the quality and make-up of the paper. Why should it not go to tens of thousands of readers? It will, if its friends will show interest in its circulation. A brother with whom we are stopping at this writing, obtained twenty-five subscriptions, nearly all at the full price, fifty cents per year, by a few hours' labor among his neighbors. He has been a farmer all his life, and is not a professional canvasser. Many might do the same, or even better. We feel sure that the readers of the SICKLE have been interested and edified by every issue thus far. The SICKLE is a live paper, presenting only live and interesting themes. It is pointed, clear, and forcible. Let it out its way through the chaff and straw of error, and let in the light of eternal truth.

G. I. B.

Mr. Spurgeon, in the *Christian Herald*, thus speaks of England and of London:—

"A general indifference to all religion is creeping over the country, at least over this vast metropolis. Ask those who visit from door to door among our crowded population, and they will tell you that never before in their lifetime were there so few people attending upon the means of grace. Street after street of this city scarcely possesses more than one regular attendant upon the preaching of the word."

What is true of London is also true of New York, Chicago, and most of our great cities, yes, and large portions of the country too. The number who attend no church is rapidly increasing; while the church itself is becoming less spiritual and more worldly. Come Lord Jesus, for this is the only hope for the world.

The Best Book on the Sabbath Question.—The following sketch from the experience of Eld. W. M. Jones, Editor of the *Sabbath Memorial*, referring to the time when he was investigating the Sabbath question, in 1847, will bear repeating:—

"Two months later we met again, and called on the Rev. Eli S. Bailey, M. D., in Brookfield, N. Y. It was Sabbath evening with our host. The conversation turned upon denominational questions. I inquired for a book on Seventh-day Baptist doctrine and history—One containing a summary of arguments. The Doctor replied, 'Yes, sir, we have a book on those subjects—a very good book we think it is; indeed we know of no better one, and if you haven't one, I shall take great pleasure in presenting you

with a copy. It is the *Bible*, sir!' This was felt to be a pithy and pertinent speech. . . . It recalled the words so often used by Baptists, 'The Bible is the only rule of faith and practice.' The incident was the second call to look into this matter. To be driven into a corner in this style, without Scripture texts to defend my position, was not at all pleasant."

APPROVING VOICES.

In another column will be found an explanation of the symbols of the four prophetic beasts of Dan. 7. The position there taken is not peculiar to the S. D. Adventist people. It is the same as is held by the great body of Protestants. In proof of this, read the following from the leading commentators:—

THE LION.

"The beast like a lion is the kingdom of the Babylonians; and the king of Babylon is compared to a lion (Jer. 4 : 7 ; Isa. 5 : 29), and is said to fly as an eagle. Jer. 48 : 40 ; Eze. 17 : 3, 7. The lion is considered the king of beasts, and the eagle the king of birds; and therefore the kingdom of Babylon, which was signified by the golden head of the great image, was the first and noblest of all the kingdoms."—*Clarke*.

Of the lion, Dr. Barnes says:—

"All, or nearly all, agree that it refers to the kingdom of Babylon."—*Note on Dan. 7 : 4*.

Scott says:—

"The Chaldean empire, as advanced to its summit of prosperity under Nebuchadnezzar, and as declining under Belshazzar, was intended by this beast."

Bagster, speaking of the first beast, says:—

"The Chaldean Monarchy, as raised to the pinnacle of glory by the rapid and extensive conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, and as declining and ruined under Belshazzar."

The "Cottage Bible," commenting on the same subject, contains the following:—

"The first of these beasts (like the golden head in Nebuchadnezzar's dream) evidently intends the Babylonian monarchy, and is described as a lion with eagles' wings."

THE BEAR.

"This represented the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Its emblem was a bear, less noble and courageous, but more voracious and savage, than a lion."—*Scott*.

Of the bear, Bagster remarks:—

"The empire of the Medes and Persians, forming one kingdom, compared to a bear from their cruelty and thirst for blood."

The "Cottage Bible" bears the following testimony:—

"The second animal here named was a bear, and represents, as did the silver part of Nebuchadnezzar's image, the combined kingdoms of the Medes and Persians."

Barnes speaks of the symbol thus:—

"It is evidently [applied] to that which succeeded the Babylonian,—The Medo-Persian."

THE LEOPARD.

"The bear having disappeared, the prophet saw an extraordinary beast rise up in its stead. This was the emblem of the Grecian, or Macedonian, empire, which, for the time, was the most renowned in the world."—*Scott*.

Barnes, speaking of the third symbol, says:—

"The comparative nobleness of the animal, a beast of prey, the celerity of its movements, the spring or bound with which it leaps upon its prey,—all agree well with the kingdom of which Alexander was the founder."

THE FOURTH BEAST.

"The fourth kingdom, symbolized by the fourth beast, is accurately represented by the Roman power."—*Barnes*.

Scott says:—

"This fourth beast! evidently accords with the legs and feet of iron which were seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his visionary image, and which were at length divided into ten toes. . . . This was doubtless an emblem of the Roman State."

Bagster testifies:—

"A fourth beast, the Roman empire, which destroyed the Grecian, and became the mistress of the world."

The "Cottage Bible" describes it as follows:—

"The fourth beast, which represents the Roman empire, was anonymous and nondescript."

DISBELIEVED BECAUSE MISREPRESENTED.

The Bible is disbelieved, because its teachings are misrepresented by those who profess to believe it. Infidels in general know but very little of the Bible. They take its doctrines second-hand, as they find them in the creeds of the professed believers; and if they can show the inconsistencies of these false doctrines, they fancy that the Bible is exploded.

The Jews are unbelievers in the doctrines of Christ; and they have good reason to be, provided that he taught that one of the ten words spoken by God himself at Sinai, has been abolished or changed. But Jesus ratified every jot and tittle of that law. Matt.

5: 17. God says, "I change not;" and reason would teach the same to any one who had learned the character of God as revealed in the Scriptures. Jews must be greatly demoralized, before they can accept a change of the moral law of the all-wise and eternal God.

Again, it is no wonder that unbelievers rebel against the doctrine of an eternal hell of fiery torment, inflicted by the Creator upon the creatures to whom he has given life and being, and whose lives, as a consequence, are in his hand. And when they find fault with this terrible doctrine, they think they are finding fault with the Bible, but they are not; for no such doctrine is taught in it.

A diligent study of the Scriptures would remove much of the existing unbelief, and save a multitude of souls; hence Bible readings are a means of grace of the first importance. The false doctrines alluded to above, are two of the greatest fables extant. If these can be exposed, as they can be by the reading of the Scriptures, many souls now in the darkness of unbelief may be rescued and saved in eternal life.

R. F. C.

BOOKS & PERIODICALS.

No question challenges the interest and attention of mankind more completely than the Atonement; for this concerns the decision of all cases for eternity. To receive the benefits of an atonement that will insure an endless existence of happiness, should be the highest aspiration of human beings. An intimate knowledge of this wonderful scheme is of the utmost importance, and to aid in getting that knowledge, consult a book on the subject by J. H. Waggoner. It is a critical and exhaustive treatise on the plan of salvation as revealed in the Scriptures, showing its harmony with the principles of justice and mercy, its consistency with reason, and its final results in affecting the destiny of the human race. The book contains 368 pages, is bound in muslin, and furnished for \$1.00.

"MATTHEW TWENTY-FOUR" is very completely expounded in a pamphlet bearing this title, and its relation shown to other scriptures, as bearing upon the subject of the second advent. A very interesting treatise upon a subject of thrilling interest. By the late Eld. James White. 64 pp., 12 mo., paper covers, 10 cents.

"LIFE OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES" is the title of a series of eight pamphlets, under the general title of REDEMPTION, portraying the first advent of Christ, his temptation, his miracles, his teaching, his sufferings, and his resurrection, and the teachings and labors of Peter and Paul. By Mrs. E. G. White. 728 pages, 12 mo., paper covers, 90 cents.

"THE LIFE OF WM. MILLER," is a book of great interest, giving a sketch of the Christian experience and public labors of this apostle of the Second Advent faith, explaining the mistakes in his theories, and defending that which was correct. There is no book better calculated to clear up popular doubts relative to the great work of the first message, of Revelation 14. 416 pp., 12 mo., cloth, \$1.00.

"MATTER AND SPIRIT," or The Problem of Human thought. This is a philosophical argument upon this topic, that has ever excited the interest of scientific minds. The question of the relation of matter and spirit, the dependence of thought upon organization, and other topics of vital interest, are treated in a plain, logical style and attractive manner. It cannot fail to interest and profit all readers. By D. M. Canright. 66 pp., 12 mo., paper covers, 10 cents.

The books mentioned above are published and for sale by REVIEW AND HERALD, Battle Creek, Mich., or PACIFIC PRESS, Oakland, Cal.

THE GOSPEL SICKLE,

AN EIGHT-PAGE SEMI-MONTHLY JOURNAL,

Devoted to important Bible doctrines which are especially applicable to the present time,—the Second Coming of Christ, the Nature of Man, the Signs of the Times, Law of God, Plan of Salvation, State of the Dead, and other questions of general interest.

Price, per year, post-paid, 50 cts.
In Clubs of 10 or more, to separate addresses, 40 cts.
In Clubs of 100 to one address, 35 cts.

ADDRESS, REVIEW & HERALD,
Battle Creek, Mich.