

# THE Present Truth.

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."—St. John 17: 17.

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ONE PENNY.

## THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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### BUILDING ON THE SAND.

'T WAS the strangest sight—that earnest face,  
And weary form with the eager hands,  
As he moved about from place to place,  
So busy, building upon the sands.

Many the mansions that he had reared,  
But he never ceased, by night or day;  
It was all the same, he built and planned  
For the future that before him lay.

He would say to travellers as they passed,  
These sands will go with the ebbing tide;  
But they said, "The man is surely crazed,  
Or he'd place his treasure the other side."

Not one could believe the words he spoke,  
And said, "If you think it really true,  
Why not go across and build on stone?  
You are only doing as others do."

Not a word he said by the silent stream,  
As he hid in the sand the shining ore,  
And scarcely looked for the light that gleamed  
Across the tide from the other shore.

Alas! alas! when the time shall come  
That the rich and great in terror hide,  
And the hungry waves around us foam,  
We shall want our treasure the other side.  
But 'twill take some faith, and works, and prayer,  
As well as talking, to place it there.

MARY MARTIN.

## General Articles.

"Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things."—Prov. 8: 6.

### FAMILY PRAYER.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

IF ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now. Infidelity and scepticism are prevailing. Iniquity abounds, and in consequence, the love of many waxes cold. Corruption flows in the vital currents of the soul, and rebellion against our heavenly Father breakes out in the life. Depravity spreads its loathsome canker over the entire heart. The moral powers, enslaved by sin, are under the tyranny of

unholy appetites and passions. The soul is made the sport of Satan's temptations; and unless some mighty arm is stretched out to rescue him, man goes where the arch-rebel leads the way.

It is Satan's regular employment to work for the destruction of the race. Says the Apostle Peter, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Here Satan is represented as prowling about, hoping to find some poor soul off his guard, separated from God, that he may make his prey. And man in his pride is utterly helpless. He may well tremble at the awful power, cunning, and deception exercised by Satan over all who are not by faith holding fast the hand of Christ.

And yet in this time of fearful peril some who profess to be Christians have no family altar. They do not honour God in the home, nor teach their children to love and fear him. There are persons who attempt to teach the Bible who open their meetings without prayer; and there are not wanting some who profess to be followers of Jesus, and yet argue that there is nothing in the Word of God that teaches the duty of vocal prayer. These things grieve me; for I know that continual watchfulness and unceasing prayer are necessary for every soul that would successfully resist the wiles of the great deceiver. Those who maintain such positions are not sincere Christians. There are many, who, like unruly children, have separated themselves so far from God that they feel under condemnation in approaching him. They cannot "come boldly unto the throne of grace," "lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." They have not clean hands; they have not pure hearts; they have no living connection with God. Theirs is a form of godliness without the power.

The idea that prayer is not essential is one of Satan's most successful devices to ruin souls. Prayer is addressing the mind to God, the Fountain of wisdom, the Source of strength and peace and happiness. Prayer includes acknowledgment of the divine perfections, gratitude for mercies received, penitential confession of sins, and earnest entreaty for the blessing of God, both for ourselves and for others. Jesus prayed to the Father with strong crying and tears. Paul exhorts believers to "pray without ceasing." "In every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." "Pray one for another," says James. "The effectual fer-

vent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." God has a right to command our devotions; his authority is sacred and unquestionable. We are under obligation to pray because he requires it; and in obeying his requirements we shall receive a gracious and precious reward.

I know of nothing that causes me so great sadness as a prayerless home. I do not feel safe in such a house for a single night; and were it not for the hope of helping the parents to realize their necessity and their sad neglect, I would not remain. The children show the result of this neglect; for the fear of God is not before them. Parents should make a hedge about their children by prayer; they should pray with full faith that God will abide with them, and that holy angels will guard themselves and their children from Satan's cruel power.

In every family there should be order, and regular habits. There should be a fixed time to rise in the morning, a time for breakfast, and a time for prayer, either directly before or directly after the morning meal. How appropriate it is for parents to gather their children about them before their fast is broken, and direct their young minds to our heavenly Father, who bestows upon us the bounties of his providence. Let them thank God for protecting them during the night, and ask for help and grace and the watchcare of angels through the day. Man should not be as unmindful of God as the beasts of the field, that eat and drink, but render no tribute of prayer or grateful praise to their Maker. Beasts have no reason; but men should understand the great condescension of God to finite, sinful mortals.

Fathers and mothers, at least morning and evening lift up your hearts to God in humble supplication for yourselves and your children. Your dear ones are exposed to temptations and trials. There are frets and irritations that daily beset the path of old and young; and those who would live patient, loving, cheerful lives amid daily annoyances, must pray. This victory can be gained only by a resolute and unwavering purpose, constant watchfulness, and continual help from God.

The father, who is the priest of his household, should conduct the morning and evening worship. There is no reason why this should not be the most interesting and enjoyable exercise of the home-life, and God is dishonoured when it is made dry and irksome. Let the seasons of family worship be short and spirited. Do not let your children or any member

of your family dread them because of their tediousness or lack of interest. When a long chapter is read and explained and a long prayer offered, this precious service becomes wearisome, and it is a relief when it is over.

It should be the special object of the heads of the family to make the hour of worship intensely interesting. By a little thought, and careful preparation for this season, when we come into the presence of God, family worship can be made pleasant, and will be fraught with results that eternity alone will reveal. Let the father select a portion of Scripture that is interesting and easily understood; a few verses will be sufficient to furnish a lesson which may be studied and practised through the day. Questions may be asked, a few earnest, interesting remarks made, or incident, short and to the point, may be brought in by way of illustration. At least a few verses of spirited song may be sung, and the prayer offered should be short and pointed. The one who leads in prayer should not pray about every thing, but should express his needs in simple words, and praise God with thanksgiving.

Abraham, the friend of God, set us a worthy example. His was a life of prayer and humble obedience, and he was as a light in the world. Wherever he pitched his tent, close beside it was set up his altar, calling for the morning and evening sacrifice of each member of his family. When his tent was removed, the altar remained. The roving Canaanite, as he came across that altar, knew who had been there before him; and when he had pitched his tent, he repaired the altar, and worshipped the living God.

From Christian homes a similar light should shine forth. Love should be revealed in action. It should flow out in all home intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy. There are homes where these principles are carried out,—homes where God is worshipped and truest love reigns. From these homes morning and evening prayer comes up before God as sweet incense, and his mercies and blessings descend upon the suppliants like the morning dew.

We must have more religion. We need the strength and grace that are born of earnest prayer. This means of grace should be diligently used, in order to gain spiritual muscle. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to him. It makes us realize more and more our great needs, and hence our obligation to God and our dependence upon him. It leads us to feel our own nothingness and the weakness of our judgment.

God has made earnest prayer the condition of the bestowal of his richest blessings. Prayer brings us nearer and nearer to Jesus. However fully we may have given ourselves to God at conversion, it is of no avail unless we renew our consecration in each separate duty as it presents itself. Dear reader, consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first business, even if you have to rise half an hour earlier, in order to find time. Let your prayer be, "Take me, O Lord, as wholly thine. I lay all my plans at thy feet. Use me to-day in thy

service. Whatever errand I may do, send me. Whatever I may say to honour thee, or lead souls to Christ, help me to say it."

This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself and your family to God for that day. Make no calculation for months or years; for they are not yours. One brief day is given you, and that one day work for yourself and your family as though it were your last. Surrender all your plans to God, to be carried out or given up, as his providence shall indicate. In this manner you may, day by day, be giving your life with its plans and purposes into the hands of God, accepting his plans instead of your own, no matter how much they may interfere with your arrangements nor how many pleasant projects may have to be abandoned. Thus the life will be moulded more and more after the divine Model; and "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

#### SUNDAY BOATING ON THE SERPENTINE.

THE announcement has been made that the Ranger of Hyde Park and the First Commissioner of Works have decided to permit boating on the Serpentine after two o'clock on Sundays. And, as usual, some one is ready to interfere with the liberties of the people, so an M.P. has given notice that he will call the attention of the House to the matter.

The *Standard* has anticipated some of the objections which may be brought against the permission now granted, and, in its issue of Feb. 22, presents some facts which are well calculated to counteract some of the Puritanical regulations concerning Sunday observance. From an editorial I quote the following:—

"It must be remembered that afternoon amusements (if restricted to the afternoon) would prevent hardly anybody from attending church who desired to do so, not because they do not go even as it is, but because there are now so very few afternoon services intended for adults. The rich go to church in the morning, the children in the afternoon, and the poor in the evening. None of those who are likely to row about on the Serpentine would be found in church on Sunday afternoon, if there were no place of amusement within a hundred miles of them. We see, therefore, no practical objection to allowing the use of the Serpentine to boating parties for a few hours every Sunday. Of the other class of objections a plentiful crop may be expected, and some from persons whose views are entitled to respect. But we have no patience with those narrow-minded formalists who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, and who, while they offer no opposition to the driving a four-in-hand down to Richmond on Sunday, hold up their hands in horror at the notion of a few young tradesmen or apprentices handling an oar on that day. Mr. Atkinson has given notice that he will call the attention of the House to the permission now granted by the Ranger and the First Commissioner. We shall be curious to see on what ground he justifies his interference. He lives at Gunnersbury, and has only to go a little way up the river on Sunday afternoon in summer

to see all classes of society amusing themselves as if the very name of the day had been forgotten. Higher up the stream, from Henley to Maidenhead, and from Maidenhead to Marlow, we see the broad surface of the Thames covered with pleasure boats not occupied exclusively by the indifferent classes, but by men and women who are as good Christians as the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, and yet see no harm in dividing a religious festival between attendance at divine service and indulgence in innocent amusements. The persons who would be publicans themselves, yet act the Pharisee toward their humbler neighbours, combine the faults of both without the redeeming points of either.

"But we should always bear in mind that Sabbatarianism in this country is of very recent growth. Many of the very ladies who indulge in these Sunday recreations pride themselves on being good Churchwomen, and on belonging to the High Church Party. How can they desire, or wish their husbands and brothers to desire, that we should revert to the theories of Peter Poundtext and Nehemiah Solsgrove? How can the descendants of the Cavaliers, as Lord Beaconsfield once asked in the House of Commons, sympathize with the principles of the Puritans? This excessive rigidity in the observance of what is wrongly called the Sabbath is no legitimate tradition of the English Church, and for the English aristocracy to adopt it is contrary to all the liberal and generous ideas in which their ancestors were educated."

How true it is "that Sabbatarianism in this country is of very recent growth," as it relates to the religious observance of the first day of the week. The only laws for the observance of Sunday are human ordinances. Constantine's famous edict of the fourth century was for Sunday, not as the Christian Sabbath, but as a purely heathen festival. This is the first law for Sunday observance of which we have any knowledge. Since then it has been palmed off on uninformed people as a holy day, and enforced by human enactments, which have varied according to the superstition, bigotry, and dogmatism of succeeding ages.

The Reformers of the sixteenth century gave no sanction to Sunday sanctity. "If anywhere any one sets up its observance upon a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to do anything that shall reprove this encroachment on the Christian spirit and liberty."—*Luther*. See *First-Day Sabbath not of Divine Appointment*, p. 13. The early English Sunday laws were vague. "In 1359 Sunday was a day of fairs, and feasting, and fighting, at least in some places; and so it long continued." "A statute of Edward VI. forbade working on Sundays, but excepted harvest workers, labourers, and fishermen. In Queen Elizabeth's time a chief justice was reported to have said that it was contrary to law to enforce Sunday austerity. And at that date plays used to be performed in theatres on Sundays. . . . James I. and Charles I.—the latter at the instigation of Laud—issued declarations forbidding persons who wished to enjoy the usual sports on that day from being disturbed, the opinion being, that the Puri-

tans were over strict, and alienated the people, leaving them exposed to the influence of Jesuits and Papists. The statute of Charles I., still in force, while allowing lawful games, or May-poles, and morris dancing out of people's own parishes, at the same time forbade the unlawful sports of bear and bull baiting, and plays within one's own parish."—*The Liberty of the Press, Speech, and Public Worship*, pp. 355, 356, Edition 1880.

"*Legal Business on Sunday*.— . . . The early Christian judges purposely sat on that day, in order to show their opposition to the heathens, who superstitiously observed some days as lucky, and others as ominous and unlucky, and also in order to enable plaintiffs to come to their courts in preference to the heathen courts. Then after the sixth century canons of the Church gradually introduced a contrary practice. These canons were adopted and ratified by Saxon and Norman kings, and carried the prohibition too far; and then again statutes began to relax such prohibition in some points. It was therefore treated as a part of the common law, that no courts should sit and no judicial acts be done on Sunday." *Ibid.*, p. 360.

Inasmuch, therefore, as there is no scriptural sanction for Sunday observance, all laudable efforts should be made to show up the matter in its true light, and by so doing check the growing tendency to enforce its religious observance by civil laws. Shall the "liberal and generous ideas" of our English ancestors be perpetuated unsullied? or shall we fold our arms and close our lips while a class of religious zealots—contrary to every principle of the law of God, as well as the teachings of the gospel—deliberately take from us our God-given liberty to labour on the "six working days," for the sake of honouring the first day of the week, which is "wrongly called the Sabbath"? God forbid that we should so do.

A. A. JOHN.

#### THE ENTRANCE OF DEATH.

"BECAUSE thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, . . . cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3 : 17-19.

We have in these words the exact sense of the penalty of the law which was threatened in the probation under which Adam was first placed. The very first act of disobedience must bring this period of probation to a close; for it could last only while man maintained his innocence, and when he committed his first transgression, he made the penalty of the law inevitable. Now he was a fallen being under sentence of death. He was excluded from Paradise, and he must henceforth lead a dying life till he should return again to the ground from which he was taken.

Adam now possessed a sinful nature, and because of God's curse upon him for his sin, he bore within himself the seeds of death. The irrevocable sentence of death

was pronounced upon him in the day of his transgression; but before passing this sentence on him, the Judge promised a Redeemer, and of necessity with that Redeemer did secure to man a second probation. To show that God was in earnest with man he makes death his certain portion. But in giving man the opportunity to recover his lost innocence and to regain Paradise, the execution of the penalty was deferred till space for repentance could be first secured.

Adam's nature being sinful, he could transmit to his posterity no purer nature than himself possessed. In the loss of Paradise he stood as the representative of his race. When he was excluded from it, we also were excluded. Paul says that "it is appointed unto men once to die." Heb. 9 : 27. This appointment was made when God said to Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," which proves that this sentence of death concerned Adam and his posterity alike. He now possessed only a dying life, and all who are descended from him can by nature possess no higher life than this. The sentence of death is upon all mankind, not for the actual transgression of each person, but because they possess only a forfeited life, the right of the race to live being lost when man lost his innocence, and when his first probation ended in having sentence of death passed upon him.

Now he lives by sufferance, the sentence of death hanging over him, but its execution being deferred in the case of each generation to give space for repentance. The entrance of death was an attestation that his innocence was lost and that the first probation of the race was a failure. And as death has been the portion of mankind without respect to character during the whole period of man's fallen state, it is plain that its present infliction upon men is not the punishment for their own personal transgressions. They are upon a second probation, and this involves a day of judgment at its close which shall determine the case of each individual, and shall award immortality to those who are worthy to receive it, and shall consign all others to the lake of fire and the second death. Rev. 20 : 14, 15; 21 : 8. This second death is the penalty for personal transgression under the second probation of our race. Rom. 6 : 23. We shall hereafter see that it is, in the measure of suffering involved, incomparably awful, and in no measure to be placed on a level with the death which comes in consequence of Adam's transgression.

We believe these statements respecting the origin of death, and concerning the relation which mankind sustains to it to be so just that Bible students will acknowledge their truthfulness. But there are important questions involved in this which some are not able to treat with candor.

What place had death in our world while man was innocent? Not any. What brought death into the world? Sin. On what ground does sin occasion the death of man? Simply this, that when man violated the law of God, he forfeited his right to live. God told Adam that disobedience would bring death. His innocence was his title to life. Sin was the occasion of death. If sin gives death admission to our world, is it reasonable to

think that death gives admission to heaven?

Death was not the doorway to heaven while man was innocent, for then there was no death. If Adam had continued in his uprightness, and God had seen fit to take him to heaven, we have in the translation of Enoch an example of the manner in which he would have done it. Translation is the door by which Enoch and Elijah entered, and by which all shall enter who are alive at the coming of Christ. There was no occasion for sin to make a new door to heaven by introducing death. Moreover, the character of death, which is that of an enemy, is no better fitted to inspire our confidence than is its parentage. And can we believe that death is the gate to endless joys when it has such an *origin* and such a *character*, and when Paul and John declare that *it shall be destroyed*? 1 Cor. 15 : 26; Rev. 20 : 14. That death is not the doorway of heaven will be further evident when we study the doctrine of the resurrection.—*J. N. Andrews*.

#### FROM FAITH TO INFIDELITY—BY A DESCENT OF FOUR STEPS.

1. THE day of the Sabbath has been changed.
2. The Sabbath has been abolished.
3. The ten commandments have been abolished.
4. The Bible has been abolished, superseded, and is of no more value than a last year's almanac.

To leap at once from faith to infidelity would be fearful. But by the use of these four steps the descent is made easy; the distance from step to step being so small that a person walking in sleep (as most are) would not be awakened by the slight jar. The fourth step is no longer than the first; for the first is a denial of the truth of revelation.

The descent is perfectly natural too. To a person standing on the first step, it is much easier to descend the remaining three than to climb up the one to the platform of truth. Wanting Bible evidence to sustain him where he is, he takes the second step. He finds it easier to *say* that the Sabbath has been abolished than to prove that it has been changed. He now claims Bible testimony; for he finds the word "abolished" in the Bible. 2 Cor. 3. But the testimony says nothing of the Sabbath, only as it was one of the precepts "written and engraved on stone;" therefore he must take the third step, and say the ten commandments are abolished. This is but a short step; for if one of the ten is dead, why not all? And now, having plucked away the very heart and vitals of the Bible,—its only moral code,—and finding no evidence that any one of the commandments has ever been re-enacted, it is but a very little step from this to deny the Bible *in toto*.

Reader, are you standing upon the platform of truth? Have you faith in the Word of God, believing it means what it says, and practising in accordance with the same? If so, hold fast; for you are built upon the rock. But, are you standing upon one of the steps below, let me entreat you, as one who loves you, to make a mighty effort, imploring help from God, to reach the platform above. It will

require a mighty effort; for though the distance from step to step is small, the platform is very high above them all. It can only be reached by "repentance toward God," whose holy law you have violated, and "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," through whom alone you can find pardon and acceptance. Do be persuaded to make the effort. The lions which you see in the way will vanish at your approach, while by faith you walk steadily forward.

And oh, the prize! the rich reward! 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. Have faith in God! for this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.

R. F. COTTRELL.

—♦♦♦—  
"IT'S JEWISH."

WHEN we present God's holy law,  
And arguments from Scripture draw,  
Objectors say, to pick a flaw,  
"It's Jewish."

Though at the first Jehovah blessed  
And sanctified his day of rest,  
The same belief is still expressed—  
"It's Jewish."

Though with the world this rest began,  
And thence through all the Scriptures ran,  
And Jesus said 'twas made for man,  
"It's Jewish."

Though not with Jewish rites which passed,  
But with the moral law 't was classed,  
Which must endure while time shall last,  
"It's Jewish."

If from the Bible we present  
The Sabbath's meaning and intent,  
This answers every argument,—  
"It's Jewish."

Though the disciples, Luke and Paul,  
Continue still this rest to call  
The "Sabbath day," this answers all—  
"It's Jewish."

The Gospel Teacher's plain expression,  
That "sin is of the law transgression,"  
Seems not to make the least impression—  
"It's Jewish."

They love the rest of man's invention;  
But if Jehovah's day we mention—  
This puts an end to all contention—  
"It's Jewish."

O ye who thus God's day abuse  
Simply because 't was kept by Jews,  
The Saviour, too, you must refuse—  
He's Jewish.

The Scriptures, then, may we expect  
For the same reason you'll reject,  
If you but stop to recollect  
They're Jewish.

Thus the apostles, too, must fall;  
For Andrew, Peter, James, and Paul,  
And Thomas, Matthew, John, and all,  
Were Jewish.

So to your hapless state resign  
Yourself, in wretchedness to pine,  
Salvation surely you'll decline—  
It's Jewish. Jno. 4:22.  
—Selected.

SEEK to be natural in your religious work as in every other part of your life. Many men seem to think that religious conversation must be conducted in the softest and most honeyed tones—why? Be the man God has made you, and endeavour to present to your fellow men the highest type of a creature found on earth, *i. e.*, a Christian man.

THE HALF, OR THE WHOLE?

AMONG my half-dozen favourite characters in the Old Testament is Caleb, the grand old Puritan of the Hebrew commonwealth. Noah and Lot fell into sensualities; Moses lost his temper sometimes, and David came very near losing his soul. But the splendid eulogy of Caleb is repeated three times—"He hath followed me faithfully," "he followed me wholly," and "he hath followed me wholly." While the murmurers and the cowards perished in the desert, steady and loyal old Caleb lived to reach Canaan and became the possessor of the verdant acres around Hebron. After the long wars were over, he tasted of the grapes of victory.

Caleb is a type of the out-and-out Christian. Periodical piety is plenty and cheap. A sensational announcement of some novelty, or "extra attraction," calls such spasmodic professors out in swarms; but when the sensation is over, they subside. Such sheet lightning never strikes; such vapours bring no rains. What the churches of Christ need to give them vigour and solid success is not bustle, but business; not parade and pious puffery, but steady patience, prayer, and persevering work. The tendency to transient "spurts" of enthusiasm is a weakness of the American character, and it is painfully apparent often in our moral and religious enterprises. We need more thorough-going service of Christ—that never surrenders or sleeps on its arms. We want the full following of Jesus, with the whole heart and for the whole campaign. Christ inaugurated his church on the principle of entire consecration. "He that is not with me is against me." Over the doorway of admission to the kingdom he inscribed—"Whosoever will follow me, let him leave all!" It was out-and-out discipleship or nothing. "Sell all that thou hast and come and follow me," frightened the poor rich young ruler back to his farm and to his fate. Jesus allowed no compromise. He sifted his followers by severe tests, and out of the whole number there remained about one hundred and twenty of the Caleb stamp, who went up into the upper room and organized Christianity.

To become an out-and-out Christian, requires a thorough regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. We must not only work with the Spirit but let the Spirit work in us. Half-way converts make half-way Christians. Too many professors hang their boughs over on the church side of the wall, but their roots are on the world's side. Such yield nothing but leaves. Unless conversion be radical and thorough, unless the surrender of the soul to the Saviour be unconditional and uncompromising, there will be half-heartedness and halting to the last. It takes a great many of such half-Christians to make a single whole Christian. Caleb followed his God wholly, because "he had another spirit within him." He loved his God with all his heart and all his mind and might.

There is a prodigious power in this single-eyed love of Jesus. A man of very moderate talents soon becomes a leader in every good work when Christ gets complete hold upon him. In calling over the roll of my church I can point to more than one plain, modest, unselfish Christian who

has attained to a great propelling power simply from the *momentum* of his piety. He follows the Master in such projective and whole-souled fashion that he moves others by his sheer momentum. Brain power and purse power have their place, but *heart power* reaches God through prayer, and reaches men through sympathy, and outweighs all the rest.

The first requisite for the pulpit, for the Sunday-school teacher, for the leadership in any good work, is thorough-going godliness. When a certain young minister was lauded for his brilliant eloquence, etc., a thoughtful lady asked very significantly, "Is he Christ's man?" If not, all else was a sounding cymbal. Thorough-going piety never whimpers, "I pray thee, have me excused;" never commutes with the Master for half-fare; never puts off God with half a Sabbath; never interprets the Bible in the loose latitudinarian sense; and on all doubtful questions gives conscience the casting vote. This sort of Christian can stand both pressure and pinch; he "loves duty, even in all the wholesome severities of it." There are quite too many imitators of Peter Pindar's pilgrim, who, having been commanded to make a long journey with peas in his shoes, took the sly precaution to *boil* his peas before he started. These self-indulgers are very willing to go heavenward provided they can have a cushioned seat in the parlour car. Their attendance upon God's house often depends upon the state of the barometer, and upon the two vital questions, "Who is to preach?" and "How is the music?" Caleb's little finger outweighs a regiment of them.

The best Christians are those who are as good in ordinary times as they are in the warm, stimulating atmosphere of a revival. It is easy to catch fire and sparkle then; wet wood will burn in a great bonfire. It was easy for Caleb to exercise faith when he was feasting on the vineyards and ripe fruits of Canaan; but to keep his faith alive amid an army of mutineers, and through forty years of desert marches, demanded both pluck and principle. Half a heart would soon have made him a whole coward.

Revivals are precious blessings; God send us more of them! But they also exhibit in a sad light the indolence and worldliness of those church members who never lift an ounce at any other time. Revivals fill up a church; but ordinary seasons sift them. We pastors find out who are our Calebs in the seasons of dryness and drouth; they are the men and women who keep up a strong and steady pull in all weathers, without any need of a bribe or the stimulus of an excitement. Their lamps never go out; their salt never loses its savour.

To which of these classes belongest thou, my friend? Does Christ own but half of thee? Then look out lest Satan does not get all of thee. A whole heart for Jesus here, will insure a whole heaven with him hereafter.—T. L. Cuyler, D.D.

A LITTLE piety is a burden; entire, devoted piety a triumph. We are then borne on the tide.—Olin.

EVERY duty we omit obscures some truth we should have known.—Ruskin.

## WEAK POINTS MAY BECOME STRONG.

AND then in Paul's final epistle, and in almost the last words of it, we read his request to Timothy. "Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry." His first introduction is: "They had John to their minister;" the last word about him is: "he is profitable for the ministry." The Greek words in the original are not identical, but their meaning is substantially the same. So, notwithstanding the failure, notwithstanding the wise refusal of Paul to have anything to do with him years before, he is now reinstated in his old office, and the aged apostle before he dies would like to have the comfort of his presence once more at his side. Is not the lesson out of that, this eternal gospel, that even early failures, recognized and repented of, may make a man better fitted for the tasks which once he fled from? Just as they tell us,—I do not know whether it is true or not, it will do for an illustration,—just as they tell us that a broken bone renewed is stronger at the point of fracture than it ever was before, so the very sin that we commit, when once we know it for a sin, and have brought it to Christ for forgiveness, may minister to our future efficiency and strength. The Israelites fought twice upon one battlefield. On the first occasion they were shamefully defeated; on the second, on the same ground, and against the same enemies, they victoriously emerged from the conflict, and reared the stone which said, "Ebenezer!" "hitherto the Lord hath helped us."

And so the temptations which have been sorest may be overcome, the sins into which we most naturally fall we may put our foot upon; the past is no specimen of what the future may be. The page that is yet to be written need have none of the blots of the page that we have turned over shining through it. The sin which we have learned to know for a sin and to hate, teaches us humility, dependence, shows us where the weak places are; sin which is forgiven knits us to Christ with deeper and more fervid love, and results in a larger consecration. Think of the two ends of this man's life—flying like a frightened hare from the very first suspicion of danger or of difficulty, sulking in his solitude, apart from all the joyful stir of consecration and of service; and at the end of it made an evangelist to proclaim to the whole world the story of the gospel of the servant. God works with broken reeds, and through them breathes his sweetest music.

So, dear brethren, take with you these words, and return unto the "Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously." And the answer will surely be: "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely; I will be as the dew upon Israel."—*Alexander Maclaren, in Christian Commonwealth.*

DO N'T live your life alone, without forming friendships and love; poor nature needs love; you were made for it, and other natures need you. You are robbing yourself, you are robbing others, if you live like a hermit. Therefore go into God's world, and live your life for others.

## "SEARCH THINE OWN HEART."

"BUT Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground." John 8: 6. It was an action brimful of significance. He had come to draw, not drive, men unto him, to reveal as men used the light they possessed. It was as though he said, "You appeal to the law, my finger, as the Creator Word of the Father, wrote that law; ye believe in God, believe also in me," and again he stooped and the sacred finger traced out on the table of stone of the temple floor a root principle of the new covenant in the words, "Let him that is without [this] sin amongst you cast the first stone." . . . It implies that one living the life of Christ by mystical union with him should estimate every display of the carnal principle of sin in another as an occasion not for triumph or censorious judging, but of immediately and searchingly "considering himself lest he also be tempted." The eye, which, as Cicero says, sees every thing except itself, discovers a mote in a brother's eye, some fault of temper, some inconsistency between profession and practice. The discovery stimulates your religious zeal, you hasten to rebuke that brother for his fault. Possibly you are intended to do so, but the Lord's injunction implies that he has a lesson for you first. Provide yourself with a mirror (Rom. 3: 10-18 is exceptional in its reflecting power), and closely scrutinize your own eye. Montaigne has said, "I find that the best virtue I have has in it some tincture of vice." If you are honest you will probably discover your own need of the Spiritual Oculist. Thank God, that as we can take a disordered watch to its maker, we can take a disordered spiritual eye to "Him who made the eye, and shall he not see" to correct, chasten, and heal? Fresh from the salutary visit to the great Physician our eye will be clear and our hand steady in "meekness and fear" to extract our brother's mote-like fault.—*Canon Wilberforce.*

## THE PLACE OF DUTY: TRUE SAFETY.

IT is an easy matter to accept the ascetic solution of life's problem, and to think that we must fly from a place or a work or a pleasure, or a material element which may lie round us in the sphere of our daily duty, in order to escape from a sin. But it is as weak as it is easy; and while it may seem to work deliverances for the moment, it will exact in time a dread compensation, by enfeebling the moral stamina and lowering the tone of the moral energy of mankind. The Lord would have none of it; he trusted alone and absolutely to one principle of reformation—the work of his truth in human consciences and hearts. By the conflicts and perils and burdens of duty in which the being in the world would involve them, he would educate them for heaven. . . . The wilderness is no sanctuary for tempted spirits; the world is their true training-school, and their sanctuary is God.—*Baldwin Brown.*

MEN are responsible for the light which they might have, as well as for that which they actually enjoy.—*President Finney.*

## NOTHING LACKING ON GOD'S PART.

"WHAT could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" Isa. 5: 4. God asks, as it were, whether he can blame himself; whether anything has escaped Omniscience; whether he has failed in blessing that might have resulted in abundance of luscious fruit: then mentally he goes over the whole situation; he remembers the selection of the hill, the fencing, the gathering-out of the stones, the planting of the choicest vine, the building of the tower in the midst of it, and the erection of the wine-press; and as he reads the history of his own doings he seems to challenge the vineyard and the universe to suggest one omission. Let me judge myself! Could anything more have been done to me than has been done? I am constrained to answer, There has been nothing lacking on the part of God. It is not for me to compare myself with other men, and to say their advantages have been greater than mine; possibly that may be so: yet I have had advantages enough to have brought forth an abundance of grateful fruit. How much have I produced? Are mine lifeless branches? Are my grapes wild grapes? These are the questions that tear the life, these the songs the music of which we forget in the terribleness of their judgment. But this is healthy investigation; this is the kind of heart-searching which if properly received ends in edification. We cannot repent sooner than to-day; behold, now is the accepted time for repentance, now is the chosen hour for the real improvement of our innermost life.—*Jos. Parker, D.D.*

## PRAY FOR YOUR PREACHER.

WE recently heard a clergyman speak of the temptation to a perfunctory discharge of the duties to the sacred office that so often assails the minister. We are sure that clergymen in general feel this. If those high duties are gone through with in a merely perfunctory way, the life is gone out of them, and they accomplish but little. How then can this evil be guarded against? Of course the minister will earnestly pray himself that he may realize the solemn and weighty character of his calling and discharge its duties in the spirit of his Master. But we are persuaded that there is by no means enough earnest prayer put up by congregations on the behalf of their pastors. The prayers of God's people are necessary that the minister be most effective. We do not mean simply or mainly the public prayers of the prayer-meeting. The closet prayers of the devout are needed too. In this way some saints who may be debarred partially or wholly from public worship can nevertheless be helping their pastor most powerfully in the work he has to do. Such prayer—from any and all of the people—will be answered in the pastor's insight into the Scriptures, in his communication of the truth out of a full heart, in his personal ministries to souls in trouble or in darkness or in sin. The people of our churches ought to realize how much the efficacy of the ministry of the Word depends upon their prayers.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

## Home and Temperance.

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

### SAVE THE BOY.

ONCE he sat upon my knee,  
Looked from sweet eyes into mine,  
Questioned me so wondrously  
Of the mysteries divine;  
Once he fondly clasped my neck,  
Pressed my cheek with kisses sweet.  
Oh my heart! we little reck  
Where may rove the precious feet.

Once his laugh with merry ring  
Filled our house with music rare,  
And his loving hands would bring  
Wreaths of blossom for my hair.  
Oh the merry, happy sprite!  
Constant, ceaseless source of joy!  
But to-night, O God! to-night,  
Where, oh! where's my wandering boy?

'Midst the glitter and the glare  
Of the room where death is dealt,  
Scarce you'd know him; but he's there,  
He who once so reverent knelt  
At my knee and softly spoke  
Words into the ear of God.  
Oh my heart! 't is smitten, broke;  
Crushed, I bend beneath the rod.

O this curse! that spoiled my boy,  
Led him down and down to death,  
Robbed me of my rarest joy,  
Made a pang of every breath.  
Mothers, fathers, hear my plea!  
Let your pleadings pierce the sky;  
Pray and work most earnestly;  
Let us save our boys or die!

—Rev. L. F. Cole, in *Youth's Temp. Banner*.

### DID SHE LOVE HIM?

A BOY fell from one of the high beams of a barn, and was carried to his mother, sadly crushed and broken. A skilful surgeon was called. He came, looked the boy over, and only gave him a soothing dose.

"You are doing nothing to cure him," said the mother. "Why don't you set his bones?"

"It would be useless, madam. Your son has received fatal injury; we will not add to his sufferings by useless treatment of his fractures."

"Fatal!" cried the mother, indignantly; "To what purpose then is your skill? Set every bone in his body."

The surgeon obeyed. It was before the use of anæsthetics, and when many mechanical surgical appliances now in use were unknown. The boy was tortured, but the mother looked on, aided and abetted in the torture, denied all her son's piteous pleadings, yet shed not a tear. She nursed him with almost superhuman patience and endurance through months of misery, during which he lay bound, and often reproached her that she did not let him die of his pain. He did not die, nor become a helpless cripple, but recovered the full use of his entire body. And that body had no common mind. He was a genius, a well-known American author, who lived seventy-eight years.

A thought awakened by these facts, however, not the man's history, is our subject.

We suffer; in our agony we wish we

were dead, or had never been born. We cry to God for help, and think he does not hear us because our pain is not removed. Again, we behold the suffering of those we love better than ourselves, and our heart's wail for their anguish is more piteous than for our own. We say, "How can a God of love, a heavenly Father omnipotent, see it without interposing; nay, more, order it, and deny our pleadings?" Satan tempts us, "Can there be a God of love?" and we are in danger of saying in our heart—like the fool—"There is no God."

Is there a suggestion of help for all this in the history of those broken bones and that mother's relation to them? Has our heavenly Father taken the desperate cause of our fallen, disjointed humanity in hand, because he would have life, not death, our portion? Can Omnipotence, even, interpose? That mother could have interposed to save her son from suffering, yet did not. Did she love him? Answer, every mother who has stood beside a son's cross, with the sword "through thine own soul also." Does God love us though we suffer, though we cry and he is silent? Let his Word answer:—

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son;" "The Lord is not willing that any should perish;" "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth;" "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted."

Oh, well is it for us, with our broken bones, that we have a Father whose love, tender as a mother's, is wiser for us than are our doctors, or than we are for ourselves!—*Christian Weekly*.

### "THE BEST THINGS ARE THE CHEAPEST."

"THE best things are the cheapest;" that was what Uncle John said the other day when we were all assembled in the sitting-room, watching the curling flames of the cheery wood-fire.

"Why, the best things I find the dearest," remarked Nephew John.

But Uncle John did not heed the interruption, and we listened while he discoursed as follows:—

"Of things that are commonly desired for use, the prevailing idea is, that the best things always cost the most and are clear beyond the reach of poor people, so that only the rich can obtain them. This is a great mistake. Facts show that what is the best is the cheapest and most easily obtained. But what things are the best? Not those which are commonly reckoned as wealth, but those which are most needful and most useful. These are furnished by the Creator in such abundance that they are easily obtained and cost but little. Let people have their choice in what they want, and they would make such poor selections that they would soon be poor and miserable enough. A man might soon starve to death with a peck of diamonds by his side. A lady might shiver in the cold and freeze, with a costly gold ring on every finger, and as much glitter about the ears and neck as vanity and human weakness would desire. So with any amount of money in the banks, and bonds in the safe, a whole family can play bed-am in living earnest and know nothing

of the sweet peace and comfort of a good and happy family. It so happens that the best things are those of which the most are needed, and these are so abundant as to be very cheap indeed.

"The first thing a human being needs on entering this world is plenty of pure air, and this he needs till the last moment of his life. An ordinary man with a pair of good lungs will use from fifty to sixty hogsheads of air in twenty-four hours. What an untold quantity there must be to supply every human being, and all the birds and animals that breathe. As it is unfit for use after it has once been breathed over, the Creator has so arranged that by a natural process, which is all the time working a change, the air is purified. So necessary is this wonderful element that cubic miles of it fill the firmament above already for use. It comes unsought, and is better in its natural state than it could be made by any artificial means. Artificial perfumery is always expensive and never so good for health and common use, as the free, fresh air of heaven. Light can be made by artificial means, yet it is always expensive, and never half so good as the rich sunlight which comes free of cost to all who will open their eyes and see. If we go among the metals, we shall find that iron, which is so plenty and so cheap, is of far more value to all parties than gold or silver. We could get along without the gold and the silver, and some other fine metals, but not very well without the iron and the steel. In food, the rich, costly delicacies are not the best. They cloy and enervate, while the cheap, plain dishes, which are more easily obtained, such as God has abundantly provided, give tone and strength to the system. The pure cold water, free and plenty, is better for health and happiness than all the wines and strong drinks that were ever made. Above all other human wants is the need of deliverance from sin and its terrible effects. This is as free as it is needful and glorious. With so many good things so abundantly provided for this life, and the gift of eternal life hereafter, people can afford to be cheerful and happy, and ought to be very thankful to the great Giver."

When Uncle John had ended we saw what he meant, and we all said, even to little Johnny, the best things are the cheapest. And what should we do if they were not?—*Selected*.

### A DRUNKARD'S FATE.

A GRADUATE of one of the universities of Great Britain came to me, shaking and trembling. He said he had "come to me as he would go to a physician."

I said, "You must stop drinking."

"I cannot."

"You will die."

"I am afraid I shall. I give it up? I cannot."

My wife and two gentlemen were present. I said, "What good does the drink do you?"

"No good."

"Why do you drink?"

"I must have it."

Thinking that, being an educated man, he might give me some ideas, I asked him, "Will you tell me how you feel before you begin to drink, and afterwards?"

I shall never forget. He stood up and said, "All I can say is, I *must* have it."

"Why?"

"I feel as if there were *insects in my veins!* Oh, it is horrible! horrible! I touch my coat, I touch my hands, and I jump! Oh, I shall go mad! mad! mad! If I could not get it without having a sound tooth drawn out of my jaw, bring the instrument and wrench it out; I must have the drink. So I get it. And then I stand still, that I may not disturb its effect. That's what I want; I want relief, and I feel it. Quick! quick! how it sends the blood through my veins! the insects are gone, and I begin to perspire. Yes, I am better, better, better! It's what I want—it's coming, it's coming, it has come to me—relief—like a flash of summer lightning, and it has gone, and I get another."

"Then," said I, "you will die."

"I am afraid I shall. Can you save me?"

"Not unless you stop drinking."

"I cannot die; I have not offered a prayer to God for sixteen years."

"You must give it up."

"I cannot."

I said, "God will help you."

"No, he won't."

"I will," said I; "my wife and I will take care of you for four days, if you will. I have just four days to spare for you."

"We took him, though we could get no promise from him. We nursed him night and day. The third afternoon he sat with me, his hand in mine, and I spoke to him of God, and Christ, and eternity.

He said, "I am a man of some common sense, I believe; and am very well aware that I can never be happy in another world."

He then went out, and cut his throat from ear to ear. Oh, my friends! shall we not try to save our fellow men from such a fate?—*J. B. Gough.*

#### COMMON RESPONSIBILITY.

WIVES are accepted in a general way as the moral educators of their husbands. And from the force of habit, when a man is reported to have failed morally, the question comes to the mind, What kind of a wife had he? Too often must the answer be, "Extravagant," "Socially ambitious," "Determined to dress and live as well as or better than her associates." But it certainly will be acknowledged that when a man allows his wife to be his tempter, allows her weakness to lead him to sin, he has given positive evidence of moral infirmity, and is one who would yield with little effort of will to temptation outside of home.

It is not true that women are the divinely appointed moral guardians of men. A true woman can, and does, influence a man for good, but so does a good man. Personal influence is not a question of sex, but of character, of force.

It is an unexpressed thought in the minds of many, that woman is a sort of moral shears, designed to clip and cut off the fungous and superfluous growth on a man's moral nature. This is one of the reasons why we find young men living fast lives, and justifying and excusing themselves on the ground that they will soon marry, settle down, and become good men under a wife's influence. Our divorce

courts testify too frequently to the fallacy of this doctrine.

How rarely is the educating influence of a husband referred to! and yet, a strong, good man is a wondrous power to educate, inspire, and help the woman whom he has made his wife. The fact that the wife is a woman does not insure infallibility. She has her faults, which he can help her to overcome; her weaknesses, which he can help her to remove; and false standards of life and its responsibilities, which it is his duty to remedy.

The oak and ivy idea of the relation of husband and wife is beautiful in poetry, but most unfortunate in life. And more than one oak sapling which promised to grow to equal any of its fellows, has been strangled to death, or left to a puny, stunted living by the ivy that smothered it by its too clinging tendencies. No husband does his duty as a husband, as a man, who allows a wife to throw on him the cares that it is her duty, and should be her privilege, to assume; and it is weak and unmanly for a husband to shirk the burden of helping a wife to see and take to herself that part of the business of life that belongs to her as a wife.

Hundreds of girls marry with no thought of the solemn duties that are theirs by right of their position as a wife. They have been educated to the oak and ivy theory, and immediately put it to practice.

Let every husband kindly, gently, lovingly help his wife to fill her place. What right has he to prevent her reaching her highest stature as a woman? None.

It is one of the severest temptations of a deep, strong love to stand between the object of that love and every trouble. But it is the highest privilege of true love to help the loved one bear every responsibility, meet every trouble that tends to develop strength of character and high purpose in life.

Men marry helpmates, not infants; women with souls, not dolls. And it is a weak, selfish love that refuses to help a wife to attain her highest altitude as a woman.—*Christian Union.*

#### "IS GOD HERE?"

A YOUNG man had been extremely profane, and thought little of the matter. After his marriage to a high-minded, lovely wife, the habit appeared to him in a different light, and he made spasmodic efforts to conquer it. But not until a few months ago did he become victor, when the glowing evil was set before him, by a little incident, in its real and shocking sinfulness.

One Sunday morning, standing before the mirror shaving, the razor slipped, inflicting a slight wound. True to his fixed habit, he ejaculated the single word "God!" and was not a little amazed and chagrined to see reflected in the mirror the pretty picture of his little three-year-old daughter, as laying her dolly hastily down she sprang from her seat on the floor, exclaiming as she looked eagerly and expectantly about the room, "Is Dod here?"

Pale and ashamed, and at a loss for a better answer, he simply said, "Why?"

"Cause I thought He was when I heard you speak to him."

Then noticing the sober look on his face,

and the tears of shame in his eyes as he gazed down into the innocent, radiant face, she patted him lovingly on the hand, exclaiming assuringly, "Call him again, papa, and I dess he'll surely come."

Oh, how every syllable of the child's trusting words cut to the heart! The still, small voice was heard at last. Catching the wondering child up in his arms he knelt down, and for the first time in his life implored of God forgiveness for past offences and guidance for all his future life, thanking him in fervent spirit that he had not "surely come" before, in answer to some of his awful blasphemies. Surely "a little child shall lead them."—*Pacific.*

#### THY BROTHER'S KEEPER.

A YOUNG man, with an inherited taste for liquor, was at a Masonic festival, where was present also an English clergyman who was in the habit of freely drinking beer. He called for a bottle, and offered a glass to the young man: "Mr. Cushing, have a glass of wine with me." I looked at him and said, "Do n't you touch it." Said the clergyman, sneeringly, "Are you his mental adviser? I hope you are able to take a glass without making a fool of yourself." The young man said: "If my pastor can drink, so can I." He took it. At the end of three weeks he died of strong drink. During his delirium, he exclaimed in his agony, "God won't damn me for drinking unless he also damns Dr. Richmond." That minister murdered my friend, but he walks the earth to-day unhung.—*Mrs. Molloy.*

#### HOME POLITENESS.

A BOY who is polite to father and mother is likely to be polite to every one else. A boy lacking politeness to his parents may have the semblance of courtesy in society, but is never truly polite in spirit, and is in danger, as he becomes familiar, of betraying his real want of courtesy. We are all in danger of living too much for the outside world, for the impression which we make in society, coveting the good opinion of others, and caring too little for that of those who are in a sense a part of ourselves, and who will continue to sustain and be interested in us, notwithstanding these defects of deportment and character. We say to every boy and to every girl, Cultivate the habit of courtesy and propriety at home—in the kitchen as well as in the parlour, and you will be sure in other places to deport yourself in a becoming and attractive manner.—*The Presbyterian.*

GEN. CUTCHEON, of Michigan (U. S. A.), before a Congressional committee, recently said: "The pecuniary loss to the country through liquor drinking is equal to the cost of a perpetual war of the first magnitude. The loss of life is equal to one great battle each month, in which 1,000 men are slain, and four times that number wounded. The loss of moral power to the nation is beyond calculation." And the effects of liquor are the same everywhere.

## THE PRESENT TRUTH.

"And be Established in the Present Truth."—Bible.

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## PROMISES TO ISRAEL.

THERE is perhaps no subject upon which the Christian world is more hopelessly divided at the present time than upon the promises to, and prophecies concerning, Israel. We have the Anglo-Israel theory that the Anglo-Saxon race are literal descendants of the "ten lost tribes," the theory that the Jews are to return and build Jerusalem, and again to be the favoured people of God, while the Gentiles are to be cast off. Some contend that the blessing is to come through Israel to the Gentiles, others that the Gentiles are to be the means of converting the Jews. One class believes in the restoration of the ancient rites and ceremonies, another that they are to be converted through Christ. Others still place the fulfilment of these prophecies in the "age to come." There is still another class who hold that there are no special promises to the Israelites as a people, or nation. And various indeed are the interpretations of the same Scriptures often given by members of the same class.

If we look at the many promises in the prophets they would seem to indicate that the nation of Israel, the literal seed, would be restored again as before. Taking these promises singly it would seem that we could come to no other conclusion. But to do this we would come in direct conflict with some of the most explicit declarations of the New Testament, which declare that there is but "one body," and that in Christ Jesus "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28.

But no true interpretation can be given of a text considered in itself alone. Such an interpretation is only an *opinion*. All true interpretation of any passage, relating to any doctrine, must be considered in its relation to the context, to kindred passages, and to those underlying principles upon which are based all of God's dealings with mankind. Such interpretation, aided by the Spirit of truth, will reach conclusions which will not render the Book of God a mass of contradictions, but a harmonious whole. Ignoring these principles, brings us to the condition of the Christian world to-day. The interpretations of many have been merely *opinions*, and many have accepted these opinions supposing them to be sound doctrine, because, forsooth, they originated in the fertile imagination of some noted man.

Let us look at some of the promises to Israel, the scope of these promises, and how they are fulfilled. We have not the time or space to examine these promises in detail of announcement, or repetition, nor do we deem it necessary. We wish at this time to examine the groundwork and foundation principles of these promises. And if these principles are allowed to control the Bible student, and if the groundwork on which the promises are based is kept in view, they will lead to a harmonious, consistent theory, founded in truth. Of these principles we will notice,—

I. *Many of these promises are conditional*, based on the course pursued by those to whom the promises are made. In fact this is a general principle laid down in the Word of God, which governs all God's dealings with men and nations. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jer. 18:7-10.

The above words are very plain and explicit. They apply to all nations, and certainly to the Jews. They are conditions which will bring from an overruling Providence national blessings or curses. In harmony with this are the conditions of the old covenant. "Now; therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine." Ex. 19:5. This is equally plain, as is also the penalty of transgression in the following passage: "And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God." Deut. 8:19, 20. These conditions are plain and unequivocal. If obedient to God, they would be prospered; if disobedient, they would be destroyed. It was in order that the children of Israel might "serve" God that they were called out of Egypt. Ex. 4:22; and 10:3.

II. *These conditions are always implied*, if not stated in connection with the giving of the promises. This is an important point which cannot be ignored in the examination of the question under consideration. In fact it cannot be ignored as regards individual promises and blessings. The conditions on which eternal life is given to all through Christ are repentance and obedient faith; but these are not always laid down as the conditions in connection with the promise, yet they are always implied. So the Lord told Moses to tell the oppressed Israelites that He would bring them out of the hard bondage, take them to be his people, and would bring them into the land promised to the patriarchs. Ex. 6:6-8. But only two of that responsible generation, to whom the promise was made, crossed the Jordan and entered the promised land, those two being Caleb and Joshua. Deut. 1:35-39.

III. *The return of Israel to the promised land*. The prophecies of return are divided into two classes: one class having reference to the return from the Babylonian captivity, the other having a broader application to the time when all the true Israel of God will be gathered. It is sometimes asserted that there was no return of Israel from the Babylonian captivity. This is repeated again and again by Anglo-Israelites. All of the prophets except Malachi wrote before the Jews returned from that captivity, and many of the promises and prophecies were there and then fulfilled. This was literally true of Isa. 44:26, 28 where the Lord mentions the very individual through whom their deliverance would be effected. The

decree also embraced all *who would return*, and no promise or prediction implies more than this. God grants the gracious privilege on reasonable terms, but he will not force acceptance of those terms. As stated in the decree, the provisions were ample. "Who is there among you of *all his people*? his God be with him and let him go up to Jerusalem, and whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth," etc. See Ezra 1:1-4. It must be a willing return. Every tribe was represented in that return. Josephus says that seventy-two men were sent to Ptolemy to translate the law, six out of every tribe. Ezra 2:70 refers to *all Israel*; Ezra 3:1 to the "children of Israel [who] were in the cities;" Nehemiah (chapter 7:73) uses the same expressions as quoted above. If it be contended that the "children of Israel" refers simply to the two tribes, we would ask what is meant by the terms, "And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity" (Ezra 6:16); "Also the children of those that had been carried away, which came out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, *twelve bullocks for all Israel*," etc. (Ezra 8:35)? See also chapter 6:17 where the offerings correspond to the *twelve tribes*. All did not return, but all had the privilege to return, and some availed themselves of this opportunity, and the full quota of tribes was complete. Jeremiah indicates the same gathering of all the tribes at the close of the seventy years, based on the same conditions. Jer. 29:10-14.

There is another broader, fuller gathering of the true Israel of God which has not yet taken place referred to in Isa. 27:9-13; Ezek. 37, *et al.* There are still other passages which doubtless have a double application; to the return from the Babylonian captivity, and the greater gathering from greater Babylon. There are also promises to Israel according to the flesh given on the condition of returning to God with true repentance and reformation; but Israel never fulfilled the conditions, and hence they forfeited the promises, and of course never can claim them while they remain in rebellion against God's plans. But we will refer to these hereafter.

IV. As there have been *two covenants made with Israel*, and as *these covenants embrace the conditions* upon which God will bestow his blessings, it follows that *his promises to Israel can be fulfilled only in harmony with, or according to, the terms of the covenant* which is in force at the time of their fulfilment. This will be evident to all who understand aught of the nature of the covenants. The terms of the first covenant, which was made at Horeb, were, "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed," says the Lord, "and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people," etc. Ex. 19:5, 6. Disobedience forfeited all claim to the promises and blessings of the covenant. And as that covenant contained in itself no remedy for sin (Heb. 10:1-4), the transgressions of God's law could not be passed over, and the promises became forfeit. The only hope of obtaining those promises under the old covenant after transgression was by a renewal of the covenant; but rebellion and disobedience would again make the promises of the covenant null and void.

The old covenant passed away when the new was ratified, or confirmed, by the death of Christ on the cross. All that Israel can obtain



under that covenant has been obtained. All that they failed to obtain then, under the old covenant, they must obtain, if at all, under the new covenant, subject to its provisions. For that which no longer exists by reason of its being superseded has no power now; and he who would restore it makes himself a transgressor. Gal. 2: 18. But could it be restored it would present no ray of hope; for we have no evidence that Israel would do different than when it was in force. In order to partake of the promises, they must obey God, but their record of the past has been that of a "stiff-necked," "disobedient and gainsaying" people; they forfeited the promises and blessings of the first covenant, and must seek under the new covenant all that the future has for them.

V. *The new covenant, confirmed by the blood of Christ, was also made with Israel, as individuals.* Jer. 31: 31-34; Heb. 8: 10-13. It is a heart work. Its conditions are repentance and faith with all that these terms imply. Mark 1: 15; Acts 20: 21. It was made with Israel, and offered to Israel exclusively (Matt. 10: 5, 6) for three and one-half years before our Saviour's death and for the same period of time after that event (Luke 24: 47), at which time Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was converted. Many of the true Israel of God accepted it, but the greater part rejected it. Then they turned to the Gentiles. The Jews rejected that which God designed should save them. "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13: 46. Says Peter, "Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Acts 3: 26. It was to this bringing in of the Gentiles that our Saviour referred in John 10: 16: "And other sheep [Gentiles] I have which are not of this fold [Jewish]: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be ONE FOLD and one Shepherd." Says the Apostle Paul (Rom. 10: 12): "FOR THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." The "middle wall of partition" has been "broken down" by Christ, he has "abolished" "the law of commandments contained in ordinances;" and this he did "that he might reconcile both [Jews and Gentiles] unto God in ONE BODY by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Therefore those Gentiles who have accepted Christ, who were once "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise," "are made nigh," and "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Eph. 2: 11-22. Nothing could be more positive than that those Gentiles who accept Christ are FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL." Just as truly as one who has taken the proper steps to become a British citizen, who has sworn allegiance to the British crown and laws, is entitled to the privileges and rights of citizenship, from whatever race or nation he may have sprung, just so truly is a Gentile who has accepted Christ entitled to all the rights and privileges of the heavenly citizenship; FOR THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE.

But the basis of all the promises to Israel

are the promises to Abraham. In the examination of these we shall find much which will throw light on this question, and help us to harmonize seemingly conflicting statements. We will examine the Abrahamic promises and covenants in our next.

#### JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT DAY. NO. 12.

WE have anticipated a little in order to follow sin to its final extinction in the person of Satan, the antitypical scape-goat. Let us now return to the cleansing of the sanctuary, the investigative judgment,—a judgment which, as we have seen, must precede the coming of Christ,—a judgment which commenced at the end of the 2,300 days in 1844, and consequently has now been in progress for over forty years.

The view that such a judgment as this must precede the coming of Christ, is not confined to S. D. Adventists. The great fact that the resurrection of the righteous is declarative of their acceptance with God, and therefore proof that the investigation and decision of their cases precede their resurrection and the coming of Christ, has been very distinctly seen and stated by some of the clearest minds in the Adventist ranks. The late Sylvester Bliss, for many years editor of the *Advent Herald*, thus states his view of the matter:—

"We are inclined to the opinion that the judgment is after death and before the resurrection; and that before that event the acts of all men will be adjudicated; so that the resurrection of the righteous is their full acquittal and redemption, their sins being blotted out when the times of refreshing shall have come (Acts 3: 19); while the fact that the wicked are not raised [for 1,000 years], proves that they were previously condemned."—*Advent Shield*, p. 366, published in 1845.

This writer saw with perfect distinctness the fact that there can be no trial of the righteous after they have been made immortal. But it is very evident that he did not well understand how and when the examination of their cases should take place; for the subject of the sanctuary was not then understood.

Pastor Josiah Litch, in the early history of the Advent movement, and then an able writer, states the view even more distinctly than Mr. Bliss. In his "Prophetic Exposition," written in 1842 on pp. 49-54, he says:—

#### "THE MEANING OF THE TERM 'JUDGE.'"

"1. It is used in the Bible in the sense of a trial according to law and evidence, the idea being drawn from a civil or criminal court.

"2. It signifies a penal judgment: or the execution of judgment.

"The terms are both used in reference to the judgment of the human race. All men will be brought to trial, or into judgment, and all their deeds and their moral characters will be examined, and their everlasting states will be determined, by the evidence produced from God's books, including the book of life, which will decide the moral character and everlasting destiny of each individual of Adam's race. If their names are found in the 'book of life,' they will be saved; and if not found there, they will be cast into the lake of fire, the second death. But the degree of reward or punishment will be graduated by what each one has done. . . .

#### "THE TRIAL MUST PRECEDE THE EXECUTION."

"This is so clear a proposition that it is sufficient to state it. No human tribunal would think of executing judgment on a prisoner

till after his trial; much less will God. He will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.

"But the resurrection is the *retribution* or *execution* of judgment; for they that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life. 'We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' 'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.' Here is clearly a retribution in the resurrection. It will be administered when the saints are raised. But no more certainly than that they that have done evil will come forth damned, or 'to the resurrection of damnation.' They will come forth to shame and everlasting contempt. The saints will be raised and be caught up at once to meet the Lord in the air, to be forever with the Lord. There can be no general judgment or trial after the resurrection. The resurrection is the separating process, and they will never be commingled again, after the saints are raised, no matter how long or how short the period to elapse between the two resurrections; it is all the same, so far as the separation which the resurrection produces is concerned. If there is no more than a second which elapses between the two resurrections, the separation it makes is final.

"These two senses of the judgment are recognized in Rev. 20: 12. 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' This is the trial of the dead in the invisible and spiritual world before Jesus Christ comes in the clouds of heaven. The only evidence on which the trial proceeds is, the books and the book of life.

"They tell the whole story; and we must abide the issue of the trial on that testimony. The dead as dead are judged. Then follows, in the next verse, the penal judgment, in connection with the resurrection. 'The sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged [judgment was executed upon them] every man according to their works.' There is no reference here to a trial, or to the opening of the books; but simply a penal judgment. Judgment will be executed finally on each party; the righteous and the wicked, each class at the time of their resurrection; the righteous at the first resurrection, and the wicked at the final resurrection.

#### "GOD, THE 'ANCIENT OF DAYS,' WILL PRESIDE IN THE TRIAL."

"1. Dan. 7: 9, 10, presents the Ancient of days coming on his throne of fiery flame; the judgment is set, and the books are opened. He is distinct from the Son of Man, spoken of in verse 13, when he comes to the Ancient of days.

#### "THE SON OF MAN WILL EXECUTE THE JUDGMENT."

"Thus the Saviour declares, John 5: 27: 'And hath given him authority to EXECUTE JUDGMENT also, because he is the SON of Man.' Also 2 Cor. 5: 10: 'For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' Also Paul's testimony in the

Acts of the Apostles: God 'hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.' What we are assured of by the resurrection of Christ, is the execution in the resurrection of a righteous judgment on all men.

"THE TIME OF THE TRIAL OF THE DEAD.

"It is under the opening of the sixth seal of Revelation sixth chapter, where the servants of God are sealed. . . . And under the seventh seal (chap. 8 : 1), when there is silence in heaven about the space of half an hour; when the great Mediator ceases to plead for sinners, the day of grace ends; then the judgment, or trial, will proceed on the living inhabitants of the earth. That done, Christ will appear in the clouds of heaven, and come to the Ancient of days, and the scene of trial, to announce the verdict with a shout, and deliver all his saints as soon as they are declared innocent, or justified, and raise them to eternal life in the twinkling of an eye. We are now justified by faith; we must however be declared justified at the day of judgment, before the effects of the fall will be taken away, and the saints be restored to God's perfect image and glory."

In subsequent remarks on the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, Mr. Litch even raises the query if this judgment on the dead did not commence at the end of the 1,260 years in 1798, when the dominion of the papacy was taken away. In these extracts the reader must be deeply interested as showing how the minds of men were led in the direction of the solution of some of the great problems connected with the closing up of the earthly scenes. They are not quoted because every idea can be indorsed, because they cannot be; but they are presented to show how the light on the subject of the sanctuary, which has arisen so clearly since that time, relieves of all mystery great conclusions of which they themselves saw the necessity, and for which, in some degree of darkness and confusion, they were eagerly groping. Thus Pastor Litch thought that when Christ descended to this earth, was the time when he came to the Ancient of days; but that, as has been shown in former articles, cannot be. His reasoning, however, relative to the investigation and decision of the cases of the righteous before the resurrection, is weighty and conclusive. It is worthy of notice that he places the judgment of the righteous at the tribunal of the Father, as presented in Daniel 7. He believed that this part of the judgment work was to be fulfilled while the living were yet in probation; for he suggested that it even might have commenced in 1798. These able writers saw the fact that this work must take place before the resurrection of the just, but they did not see the time and place for this work. They did not see the heavenly sanctuary, and therefore had no clear idea of the concluding work of human probation as presented to us in the Saviour's ministration before the ark of God's testament. The temple of God in heaven reveals the very nature of this work, and the great prophetic period of 2,300 days marks the time of its commencement. The stirring proclamation of the angel that the hour of his judgment is come, and his solemn oath to the time gives to mankind the knowledge of this momentous work, and the certainty that the present is the time for the investigative judgment and its eternal decisions.

This doctrine is of the highest practical importance. It shows that we are now in the anti-type of the great day of atonement, and that our chief concern should be the affliction of our souls and the confession of our sins.

U. S.

THE LAW IS RIGHT.

AN article recently fell under our notice in which a professed minister of the gospel finds fault with the law of God because "it never justifies for sins."

The statement is correct; the law never justifies. It is not the province of the law to pardon. It is "a rule of right," or of right-doing. It is holy, and just, and good. Of course it condemns sin. But should any complaint be entered against the law on this account? Are we to understand that those professedly Christian ministers who find so much fault with the law, would like the law better if it did not condemn sin? They seem not to be aware that their course gives rise to a just suspicion that they love sin better than they love the law. If the law approved of sin their objections would not exist.

We do not think it is a defect in a law to oppose and condemn wrong. It condemns, but cannot justify. About the *means of justification* or forgiveness there can be no possible controversy. But what about the *need* of forgiveness? Paul says: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." It would certainly appear that they who oppose the law because it is a reprover of wrong, dislike to have their conscience troubled!

But if they succeed in putting away from their thoughts their frequent violations of the law of God, and refuse to have the knowledge of their sins brought to their minds, it will be only that their disappointment shall be more complete in the coming great day. "Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment." Eccl. 12 : 13, 14.

Now there is option—there is the opportunity for a choice; then there will be none. Now men may shut their eyes against the claims of the commandments of God; then those claims will be pressed upon them with terrible force. Now they may set their hearts to do evil, and choose the pleasures of this world; then the glory of this world will have passed away, then earthly hopes will have died, and evil will appear in all its enormity. Sin looks pleasing now; then it will appear hateful, as it is—always is—in fact. May the Lord help us all to be wise in time, to bring ourselves into harmony with the holy law of God, that the law may not stand against us in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment. May the precious blood of Christ cleanse us from every trace and stain of sin, that we may be "accepted in the beloved" in the coming day.

J. H. W.

SACRIFICE AND PROGRESS.

THERE is a very close connection between sacrifice and progress—more than we discern by human senses. We are ready to agree that, if a sacrificing spirit is seen among those who labour for any object, they will of course make greater efforts to accomplish their purpose than they would if they had not such a spirit; and we of course should expect greater results in a corresponding degree, as their efforts would be more earnest. But this would be an increase

growing out of merely human efforts. This is not what I mean to speak about. I refer to an increase of progress because of sacrifice on our part brought about directly by the Spirit of God, and in no way traceable to human effort only as God witnesses to it that he is pleased with the same.

In our efforts to advance the cause of present truth, we can do very little unless God adds his blessing. But the Lord can and does affect hearts in communities by his Spirit, and prepares the way for his truth. Paul on one occasion undertook to preach the Word in Asia; but the Spirit forbade him. Then he tried to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered him not. After this he had a vision, and a man stood before him, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." He went, and God greatly blessed his labours. Why was he thus directed? Because there were those whom the Lord's Spirit had prepared for the truth. Honest souls were there, but the Spirit of the Lord knew they were there; and as Paul lived near him, his light was communicated to him so that his labour could accomplish most. In our efforts we shall find that "it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." This we must ever realize.

The progress of God's work is always by the union of human with divine effort. He has chosen not to have angels preach to men or write his words on the heavens, but to work through human agencies. But he will not work through such, unless those agents appreciate the sacredness or importance of his work. When they do this, they will feel glad to sacrifice for it. Sacrifices and offerings to God are but evidences on our part that we appreciate his claims upon us and are ready to respond by returning a portion to him. If we do realize that all we have is from God and belongs to him, and if we feel a sense of our obligations to him, we shall stand ready to sacrifice. God delights to work with those who appreciate his blessings and who will show this by works. And he will not work very largely with those who do not. If we all could realize this, it would stir us up to greater exertions.

G. I. B.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

THE simplicity of Scripture is a theme of frequent encomium; nor is there any danger that it will be too highly appreciated; but there is a danger that it may be too exclusively appreciated. The Bible is so simple that he who runs may read; but it is so difficult that only he who sits long and thoughtfully over it may most profitably study it; it yields its ripest and best fruit only to the student. It is like a fruitful field which gives a rich yield even to the hoe, but best repays the deep ploughing; or like a gold country, where the mere superficial traveller may pick up shining particles of the precious metal in the sand, but where only the miner with pick and hammer, breaking up the hard quartz, gets the best nuggets.

We give three reasons why you should make the Bible not merely a reading book, but also a study book:—

1. It does not present truth built into systems, but in fragmentary and isolated forms, which leave us to gather and to put together. There is a system in it, as there is a house in the forest which the wood-cutter and carpenter must construct. If the Apostles' Creed were the whole of Christianity, it would be easy to

commit Christianity to memory. But God has not given us truth thus in epitome. Moses comes bringing it in law; David comes singing it; Isaiah comes bringing the glorious vision of it; Paul comes preaching it; Christ lives it. If any one asks what are the essential principles of our American Government, he must go to the founders, and read and compare the words of Washington and Jefferson and Madison and Hamilton; and if one would know what are the essential principles of the Christian religion, he must go to the Book and cull and compare the various utterances of its various writers. He no more gets the true meaning of the Bible who merely reads without such a process of comparison and construction than he knows astronomy who merely looks at the stars.

2. The Bible is a book of seed thoughts. It is not God's substitute for thought, but God's inspiration to thinking. There are two full-fledged birds in it that sing like the twenty-third psalm; but there are also nests of eggs, like the book of Proverbs, that need our incubation. It abounds with apothegms, parables, proverbs, and paradoxes, which do not reveal their meaning at a glance. The sermon on the mount is a model of simplicity in preaching. But there are verses in it which do not disclose their meaning without much pondering and comparison with other scriptures. Take, for example, the precept, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." It is but a superficial view which sees in this command only a warning against censorious judgments. What more does it mean? Take your concordance, examine every passage, where the verb "judge" appears, and decide for yourself.

3. The themes of which the Bible treats are the grandest in the realm of thought. They transcend the reason; they transcend the imagination. It deals with experiences which defy description, with a heart-life which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the imagination of man conceived. It deals with the invisible world, in which every new discovery opens boundless fields for further discovery still beyond.

Take the simplest and most fundamental truth in the Bible, the existence, character, and attributes of a living, personal, present God, a God regnant in nature, a God dwelling in the hearts of those that will humbly receive him. The utmost study never can fathom the depths of the Divine Being; never can measure the length and breadth and depth and height of the love of God. The mere reader of the Bible is like the mere traveller on the ocean, who sees the surface of the waves. The student of the Bible is like one who takes measuring instruments and sounds the ocean depths, and studies its hidden currents, and brings from its depths its secret treasures. It is only by the study of the Bible that its teachings concerning the character of the incomprehensible God can ever be understood; and no study can ever exhaust the theme.—*Sel.*

"My will, not thine, be done" turned Paradise into a desert. "Thy will, not mine be done," turned the desert into a paradise and made Gethsemane the gate of heaven.—*Dr. E. de Pressensé.*

MEN are sometimes accused of pride, merely because their accusers would be proud themselves, were they in their places.

## The Watch Tower.

"Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."—*Isa. 21: 11, 12.*

### "LOOK ON THIS PICTURE AND ON THIS."

THIS age is called the Christian age. The great powers of Europe, notably the British Empire, and the great Republic of the Occident—United States—are called Christian governments. We would understand by these terms that Christianity was the dominant, moulding, controlling influence in the lands governed by these powers. But by what are we to measure the Christianity of these nations? By the profession of a few individuals, or by the term *Christian* applied to them? Rather should not their Christianity be measured by their deeds, by the purposes for which their means are expended, by the interest taken in those things which tend toward righteousness or sin? Let us candidly look at one or two evidences. Look on *this* picture:—

The great Republic of the United States smokes yearly enough cigars to reach nine times around the earth if extended in a single line, or fifty-nine for every person in the country. This would cost at an average of five cents each, \$2.95 for each man, woman and child; or it would cost the whole country over \$175,000,000, or £35,000,000. Besides this the same people use about \$10,000,000 or £2,000,000 more in tobacco. The same country pays as its whisky bill about \$750,000,000 more, or £150,000,000. And what for? To minister to appetite, the results of which burden and curse mankind, blasting their fairest and fondest hopes, wrecking homes, and filling prisons. And much of this, especially in the matter of tobacco, is paid by church members. Besides these poisons \$11,000,000 or £2,200,000 more is paid for the not only useless but harmful luxuries of tea and coffee. England's expenditure for these things is about the same. Here are two Christian (?) countries spending for that which only brings disease and misery the vast sum of not less than *two hundred and ten million pounds sterling* (£210,000,000).

Now look on *this* picture: These countries spend for foreign missions less than three million pounds. Two hundred and ten million of pounds sterling for selfish lusts, and three millions only toward carrying out the commission of the Master (Matt. 28: 19, 20) whom they profess to serve! "The bets in the week of the 'cup carnival' at Melbourne are declared by trustworthy authorities to have reached this year," says the *Christian Leader*, "the frightful total of £1,650,000! That is £150,000 more than the Protestant churches of the United Kingdom raise for missions. Missions are in want, and small indeed are the funds to support them; but Allsopp and Sons convert their brewery into a limited liability company with a capital of £3,800,000, and it is taken thirty times over." Intemperance on one side. Foreign missions, Christ's cause and commission on the other. "Look on this picture and on this," and tell us, optimistic friends, to what conclusion shall we come? Shall we not conclude that the "tares" will remain with the "wheat"? that the last days will be like the days of Noah and Lot? that the God of this world still rules and "blinds the minds of them that believe not"? that "the prince of

the power of the air" still "works in the children of disobedience"? that the term "Christian" as applied to nation or individual is a sham and a cheat, unless that nation or individual does the works of Christ? Look on the two pictures, reader, and decide.

### PUBLIC HOUSES VERSUS CHURCHES.

THE following item from a recent number of our bright Scottish contemporary, the *Christian Leader*, is but an indication of what is found in many places:—

"At Maybole [Ayrshire] on a recent Saturday it was found that no fewer than 1,065 people, including 140 women, entered two public-houses; and there are other thirteen in the town, besides six shops having grocers' licenses. It is inferred that there must have been 3,000 visits for drink in Maybole that day. 'The bare fact' says Rev. R. Lawson, one of the parish ministers, 'is astounding, and ought to startle the most apathetic.' If each visit involved an average outlay of only fourpence, the drawings of the two public-houses would amount to £17 15s.; while throughout the town a total of £50 would be spent in this fashion. The population is 5,000. Next day the five churches had an attendance of 1,078, being only 13 more than the public-houses secured. 'Why,' exclaims Mr. Lawson, 'the churches are nowhere in the race! The drinkshops have left them behind. We had got to believe that the working people were becoming abstainers, while the truth is that the great mass of our working men are drinkers, and the women are fast joining them.' And Mr. Lawson does not think that Maybole is worse than other towns where trade is good."

Here we have only thirteen less persons entering *two* public houses in *one day* than entered *five* churches on Sunday. And when we take into consideration that the public houses are open at least six days in the week, and well patronized, the naked facts are sufficient to arouse every true Christian. And this is the way we suppose the world is to be converted, by "ardent spirits," rather than by the truth of God and the Spirit of Christ.

### THE COMING OF THE LORD DRAWETH NEAR.

THOSE who view in the light of Scripture that which is transpiring in the world at large, can but be impressed that the coming of the Lord is near—"even at the doors." Never before in times of peace were there such active and extensive preparations for war as now. Certainly war is imminent, and were it not that the winds of strife are being held (Rev. 7: 1-4), all Europe would be involved in war.

Luke, in speaking of the state of the world just prior to Christ's coming, says (Luke 21: 25): "And upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity." How truly is such the case at the present time. There is not a single nation in the world but what has some perplexing question with which to deal, so difficult that it demands the attention of the best statesmen, and they are at their wits' end to determine what measures to adopt to pacify a discontented and restless populace.

Our Saviour, in Matt. 24, in a sermon concerning his second coming, when stating what may be looked for during the Christian dispensation, declares that there shall be "wars and rumours of wars," and "famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places." The Saviour does not mention these things as definite signs of his coming, but says of them, "All these are the beginning of sorrows," plainly indicating that these things would increase to that extent before the end that

they would fill the world with sorrow. Seemingly we are reaching that time.

During the past few months earthquakes have disturbed many parts of the world. The *Times*, in commenting on them, says as follows:—

"It is evident that the forces which sleep below the surface of the earth are as restless just now as are those that agitate the human world above. Probably there never has been recorded so prolonged a period of terrestrial disturbance as that through which we are now passing. We know nothing of its origin, or of the causes which make it active, or of the probability of its coming to an end; but the records of the last few years are full of stories of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, occurring at irregular intervals of time all over the central zone of the world. We have mentioned some of them, especially the first and perhaps the most terrible, that which laid waste the lonely Island of Ischia at the moment when the Italians were thronging its pleasant shores for the sea-bathing. Spain followed, and seldom has a country been more cruelly tried than were the provinces of Granada and Seville by their appalling disaster. Last August and September witnessed a frightful series of contemporaneous shocks in different quarters of the world; for not only was north-western Greece seriously damaged, with the loss of very many lives, but Charleston, in the United States, suffered in a manner that is fresh in the memory of all. Of course all these recurring instances have excited the scientific interest of the seismologists, as the professors of the new earthquake science are called. They have made many researches and put forward many hypotheses, but it cannot be said that they have come to any very enlightening conclusion as to the why and wherefore of these phenomena. It is no longer believed, as it was by those who discussed the causes of the Lisbon earthquake in 1755, that the earth has a vast liquid interior covered with a thin crust, and that when this subterranean ocean is disturbed the crust is shaken. The theory had some vogue, but no facts could be brought to prove it, and it is now generally abandoned. An earthquake is now believed to be caused by an earth-wave passing in a certain definite direction, though how the earth-wave itself is caused, what gives it its first impact, no one can say. Seismology, by means of observations with instruments, has arrived at very definite quantitative results as to the speed of the earth-wave and similar facts; but the source of the wave remains a matter of the vaguest hypothesis. How little is known about the earthquake conditions is shown by the fact that the Nice Observatory had on Wednesday no warning, though often the shock is preceded—as was the case in the Ionian Islands last autumn—by a still, close state of the atmosphere. This fact is hardly comforting, for it seems to show that earthquakes will continue to be beyond the reach of human prevision. And if there is to be no forewarning, forearming is out of the question."

Men by the aid of science, "falsely so called," may frame theories that seemingly account for these phenomena of nature, and these theories may be believed by many; yet the next time the same phenomena again occur they appear in such a manner as to set aside all previously supposed reasons for their existence. We firmly believe the only true reason that can be assigned for them is that the world waxeth old as doth a garment (Heb. 2:11), and that it is in the very throes of death, just prior to the coming of the world's Redeemer and the grand consummation and restitution of all things. May the expectation of that day make us more diligent in the work of the Master.

S. H. LANE.

#### "MEN'S HEARTS FAILING FOR FEAR."

Just before the coming of the Lord, when nations are to become distressed, Jesus says, men's hearts will fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. Luke 21:26. When God's people should see these things they were to "look up" for their redemption was nigh. Whether this failing of hearts, was to be

caused by national troubles alone, or by a combination of distresses, we shall not attempt to discuss at present. But one thing is quite certain, viz.,—that distress of nations is one of the things which brings this fear into the hearts of men at the time mentioned by Jesus. What is the present

#### CONDITION OF THE NATIONS?

Is all peace and quiet? Far from it. While there is not any actual engagement between the nations, there is every reason to expect that such will be the case soon. The great theme of discussion is, Where will it commence? What nation will fire the first gun, and against whom? Statesmen acknowledge their inability to solve the mystery. But a few days ago, one of them said in his speech, "The political situation is unsatisfactory and changeable. No man can say what the hour may bring forth. It is impossible to lay down with certainty any definite course of action." To give the reader an idea of the feelings of the times, I quote a few extracts collected within the last week:—

"I do not intend to alarm you by exaggeration, but I must tell you since the existence of the Diet the times have never been so serious nor the danger of war so imminent. I do not say this for the sake of the elections, but because the gravity of the situation is so apparent."—*German Minister of State.*

"All that is regarded as uncertain is the moment of its outbreak."—*Bullionist.*

While the great men of the earth are thus perplexed, and fear is found in every heart, those who study the "sure word of prophecy," see that the last great conflict of the nations is at hand. Soon the kingdoms of this world, will become as the "chaff of the summer threshing floor," and will be carried away by the presence of Him who shall soon come to smite the nations. Then will the kingdom be given to the saints of the Most High, who shall possess it forever.

Those who look for these things, the present state of nations does not alarm. It only leads them nearer to the Lord. They see their redemption so near that they begin to cut loose from the world, and work for their fellow men around them. Their eyes are fixed toward that city, whose builder and maker is God. They look up, and with hearts free from fear and perplexity, they say "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." J. H. DURLAND.

#### MONASTIC PROSPERITY.

THE Roman Correspondent of the *Corriere del Mattino* says that, in spite of the law suppressing convents and monastic colleges, there were thirty-two houses constructed at the expense of monks and nuns from 1884 to 1885, at a cost of above eighteen million francs. The Jesuits have bought different buildings in Rome, among which is the Hotel Costanzi, for above five million francs; and eighteen convents have been building this year [1886]. A single architect, named Carimieri, has undertaken four large Catholic colleges. An Irish college is rising at the corner of Via St. Vitale. An American one is being erected at the Prati di Castello. Lately the Jesuits have bought the Campanari Palace, some houses in Via del Vantaggio, and are in treaty for the Astori Palace. The monastic college in Via Aliberti is being enlarged, and behind St. Lorenzo is rising a new Franciscan college and another convent. The beautiful Villa Augri, on the slopes of Posilipo, has also been purchased by the Jesuits.—*Daily News.*

## The Missionary.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt see it after many days."—Ecc. 11: 1.

#### THE TWO WAYS.

Two ways before each one are laid,  
Two paths from which to choose,  
Two ends when once the journey's made,  
But one to gain or lose.  
The worldly path is smooth and broad,  
With throngs upon the way,  
While narrow is the heavenly road,  
Which leads to endless day.

This heavenly path is steep and high,  
Beset with conflicts wild;  
For Satan oft this way draws nigh  
To tempt God's struggling child.  
This way, though straight, is very bright,  
Lit by the Saviour's feet,  
He ever is our shining Light,  
That leads to joys complete.

Around the broad and easy way  
Earth's pleasing charms entwine;  
'Tis Satan's snare to draw away  
The souls from path divine.  
At last, the end to each is come,  
When all must then appear  
Before Jehovah's awful throne  
His sentence just to hear.

One class will hear the words "Well done,  
Come, share my blessed home,"  
"Depart, for you I've never known,"  
Will be the other's doom.  
Oh! heed the call, while yet there's room,  
While Jesus waits to bless,  
Come, walk the way to God's sweet home,  
His happy, peaceful rest.

T. E. BOWEN.

Battle Creek, Mich., Feb. 12, 1887.

#### LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.

MEN often suffer great depression of mind in consequence of disappointment in their daily avocations or worldly pursuits, in which the honour and glory of God is not involved. It is not this kind of darkness to which we refer; but that which unforeseen circumstances bring to us, because of our connection with the cause of our divine Lord. God's work is not carried forward by might or by power, but by his Holy Spirit. Its prosperity is not because worldly wisdom, influence, and wealth, are connected with it, nor because outward circumstances are favourable to its advancement; but often his trusting children are brought through the most adverse circumstances to greater victories than were ever attained by mortal man. The darkest nights are not unfrequently followed by the brightest days. Even the dark clouds themselves have a silver lining; and the very circumstances which gave rise to so many evil forebodings, are fraught with gems of light, and eventually they result in the choicest of Heaven's blessings. When the mysterious problem is worked out, God's purpose becomes apparent in the advancement of his cause, and the rich experience gained by those whose lives are interwoven with it.

When Joseph's brethren sold him to the Ishmaelites, and his heart was wrung with anguish, which found expression in earnest yet unavailing tears and pleadings, he did not realize that God was sending him into Egypt for a wise and beneficent purpose. The false accusation of Potiphar's wife placed him in prison; but it was not revealed to him that this was the way that God had chosen to make him ruler over all Egypt. He could only see one affliction upon another. And little did either Jacob or Joseph realize that these varied circumstances which gave them so much sorrow, were all designed of God; not only for their salvation from seven years of famine, but to present, by the godly lives of his people and their miraculous deliverance from the furnace of affliction, the knowledge of the true God to a nation of idolators. "How should one chase

a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?" It is by the straightness of the way that men learn to lean on God. It is when the darkness without excludes from our mortal vision every visible help, that we learn to trust an overruling Providence. It is the fiery ordeal which brings forth the pure gold.

The death of Stephen, when it occurred, appeared to his friends to be an awful calamity to the early church; yet it is a luminous event in the early history of the Christian religion. Search wherever we will, we can nowhere find a more perfect example of a pure and unselfish Christian, than is revealed in the brief record of his life and martyrdom. The glorious manifestation during the last moments of his life, is all the more impressive when contrasted with the death of the first who died of the twelve,—the traitor, and that of Ananias and Sapphira, with whose death great fear fell upon all the church. The glorious kingdom of God's dear Son was founded under gloomy, and the most foreboding circumstances. He himself had died an ignominious death upon the cross; his most ardent disciple had denied him with cursing and swearing. But the martyrdom of Stephen shed a halo of heavenly light upon the Christian pathway. The revelation of a character so pure, in a manner to be discerned by all, while the moral atmosphere was filled with darkness and gloom, was an evidence which none could deny, an encouragement which none could doubt. By it the divine power of the religion of Jesus Christ was vindicated, and made apparent. It was a sure precursor of final victory.

To us, who have seen the triumphs of the cross mid a thousand such battles, and who are able to take a comprehensive view of these events, it is not difficult to discern God's overruling providence in them; but to the friends and associates of the murdered apostle, this was impossible. Behold them as they view the corpse of their champion and brother, at the feet of the murderers. "And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."

How much the death of Stephen had to do with the conversion of Paul we are unable to say, but subsequent allusions to it in his after life show that the impression made by it was lasting. And notwithstanding that the persecution raged for a season, the day did dawn when the churches had rest, and when the fact that through this persecution the glorious light of the gospel had been dispersed in many places was everywhere recognized.

S. N. HASKELL.

#### ECHOES FROM THE TENT.

I SUPPOSE that most of the readers of the PRESENT TRUTH are aware that during last summer Pastors S. H. Lane and J. H. Durland conducted a series of services in a large tent in Grimsby. Probably some of our readers might be anxious to know if the tent attracted the attention of any "out-of-town strangers," and how they were affected by it. While canvassing some sixty miles away from the spot, I chanced to meet a man who was in town at the time. He said he saw the tent and inquired of a bystander what it was for. On being told that a lecture was to be given that night on the prophecies of Daniel, he determined to go and hear it. After hearing it, he went again and again; then, leaving the town, he carefully thought over what he had heard; and when I saw him he told me he fully believed that the seventh-day Sabbath was right and ought to be kept, also that we were fast nearing the close of probation, and he was considering how he could shape his circumstances so as to keep the Sabbath of the Lord.

After I left that district, I moved until I was fully sixty more miles from Grimsby, and here I met another man who also went to the tent in the same way, only was able to go for a longer time. He stated that he was convinced

we were right in our views, and he knew that the greatest blessing that a Christian could enjoy was to be given to those who kept the Sabbath. He was determined to investigate these things more fully, so as to be able to give a reason for the hope that true Bible Christians had; he also was hoping for the time to soon come for him to be able to obey the law of God both according to the letter and spirit.

In this way is the good seed sown; although at first there is no visible result, yet it sinks in the hearts of the hearers, and let us pray that it may bring forth fruit in the kingdom of God. Although we may now say to each other, "Who hath believed our report?" because to us it seems as though others regarded it as an idle tale, yet we may take comfort from the words of the apostle (1 Cor. 15:58): "Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Having this to encourage all who labour for Christ, "let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." W. C. WALLIS.

#### THE THREEFOLD CORD.

SOME one has said, "Knowing, giving, praying, are the three strands of the rope by which the car of missions is drawn." Much is contained in the remark, and, following out the figure, we find that each strand is indispensable to the successful twining of the other two strands of the cable. Without knowing, the giving will be constrained and meager; without knowing and giving, the praying will lack earnestness and definiteness. We cannot take an interest in the subjects of which we are ignorant, and we cannot expect believing prayer where there is lack of interest in the subjects for which prayer is offered. Information must always precede enthusiastic work. Giving will follow when the mind has been informed, the conscience enlightened, and the heart interested; and prayer, earnest prayer, will follow knowing and giving, prayer being the golden strand that will twine into strength and beauty the other cords of the cable, and give them a permanence and power without which they will be useless. All the knowledge we can obtain, all the gifts we can bestow, all the service we may render, will fail in their purpose unless the whole be interwoven with the strand of prayer. It is said that "through every fathom of cordage manufactured for the British Government, there runs a scarlet thread, so that every fragment of it, whether found among the icebergs of the North or on the beach of some coral island in the tropics, may speak of the 'Sovereign of the Seas.'" Shall we not give to our work that prayer, that faith, that consecration of self, that shall be the scarlet thread that marks it indeed the King's cordage? And the heathen shall know the sign, and shall say, "These be the King's messengers."—*Rel. Intelligencer.*

#### STAND FIRM.

AT the battle of Waterloo a certain regiment sent word to the Duke of Wellington that they must soon yield. The Duke sent back word: "Stand firm."

"But we shall all perish."

"Stand firm," again said the Iron Duke. "You'll find us there," then replied the officer as he fiercely galloped away. And they stood firm; every man of that brigade fell fighting at his post.

Jesus, our great Captain, calls on us to stand firm, to do battle against Satan and all his hosts. Will the young soldiers of the cross prove less brave and true than earthly soldiers fighting for earthly glory?—*S. S. Messenger.*

THE College Alumni Meeting at Oroomiah, this summer, having drawn about ninety Nestorian women thither, special prayer-meetings were held with them, led by missionary ladies. One of these meetings lasted three and a half hours, and then "they seemed reluctant to have it close."—*Woman's Work for Woman.*

## Bible Readings.

"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."—Neh. 8:8.

#### IMPORTANCE OF OBEYING GOD.

1. WHAT first brought death to the human family?

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12.

2. What is sin?

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

3. What is said of those who will not hear the law?

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Prov. 28:9.

4. How should we act when others will not obey God?

"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment." Ex. 23:2.

5. How should financial circumstances affect our obedience?

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:31-33.

6. How should the wisdom of great men be regarded when they tell us it is not necessary to obey God?

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." 1 Cor. 1:25-27.

7. What course ought we to take, if the laws of the land conflict with God's law?

"Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Dan. 3:14, 16-18.

8. What did the apostles of Christ say, when commanded to speak no more in the name of their Master?

"But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." Acts 4:19.

9. How does God entreat us to obey?

"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isa. 48:18.

10. How soon should we obey?

"I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Ps. 119:60.

11. What reward is promised to those who keep God's commandments?

"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." Rev. 22:14.

## Interesting Items.

—The Government has purchased 3,000 horses in Canada for artillery purposes.

—Father Beckx, the General of the Jesuits, died at Rome on Sunday, March 6.

—The Great Eastern was sold by auction to the London and Australian Steamship Company for £26,000.

—A sheep, after being buried in the snow on one of the Border farms for five weeks, has been rescued alive.

—An explosion occurred in a colliery near Mons, in Belgium, March 5, by which 144 lives have been lost.

—The Duke of Sutherland, who owns 1,358,545 acres in Great Britain, has purchased 500,000 acres in America.

—The French have invented an explosive called melinite, said to be one hundred times more destructive than gunpowder.

—Mr. Moody is organizing a band of one hundred lady missionaries, to visit those who do not attend church in Chicago.

—An English company will utilize the water power of the Niagara Falls for manufacturing and electric light purposes.

—A testimonial of ten thousand guineas has been presented to Mr. Schnadhorst, in recognition of his services to the Liberal Party.

—The last large girder of the new Tay Bridge was placed in position on Feb. 26. The opening of the bridge is expected about the middle of June.

—No fewer than 20,000 people are homeless in the Riviera. An hour before the earthquake, horses, dogs, and birds were almost palsied with fear.

—Work on the buildings of the American Exhibition is being pushed with increasing energy. Over 1,000 workmen are now employed on the grounds.

—The *Methodist Times* says there are more than 42,000 Jews in Palestine—almost the same number as returned from the captivity in Babylon.

—A commercial panic occurred at St. Johns, New Brunswick, March 8, owing to the suspension of the Maritime Bank, with liabilities estimated at \$1,250,000.

—Miss Agnes Weston in giving an account of her work among sailors says there are now in the Royal Navy 10,000 teetotalers, and 200 temperance organizations.

—Col. W. H. Browning, convicted for misappropriating large sums of money while paymaster at Chatham, has been sentenced to sixteen months' hard labour.

—The Queen having been communicated with on the subject of temperance, says she is willing to use her influence to bring into force a bill for Sunday closing of public houses.

—A circular, signed by over sixty members of Parliament, has been issued to other members suggesting a private conference on the subject of restricting the publication of details of divorce cases.

—Canon Wilberforce, preaching in York Minster, declared that drink was the most comprehensive antagonist to the kingdom of heaven, and the most entirely dishonouring to Christian civilization.

—Mr. Young Terry, draughtsman at Chatham Dockyard, having betrayed the trust reposed in him, by selling information acquired by him in his official capacity, has been publicly dismissed the service.

—Britain is far in advance of all the other countries of the world in her use of sugar, consuming, for every head of her population, 68 lb. a year, while France comes next with an average of only 17 lb.

—A public meeting of the Anti-Sunday Travelling Union was held in London recently. The Chairman maintained that ministers ought not to undertake engagements which involved vehicular travelling on the Sunday.

—Captain W. Lang, R.N., naval adviser to the Chinese Government, has arrived in England to superintend the fitting out of four fast ironclad cruisers which are being built, two of them by Sir Wm. Armstrong, and two by a German firm.

—The new torpedo cruiser *Serpent*, the largest and most formidable ship of her class in the British navy, was launched from Devonport Dockyard, March 10. The *Galatea*, another new war ship, was launched at Glasgow on the same day.

—Seven days after the earthquake in the Riviera a whole family were extricated alive from a cellar in which they had been imprisoned by the ruins. A similar earthquake occurred in the same region on the same day of the month sixty-nine years ago.

—There is to be an interchange of Jubilee congratulations and offerings between the Pope and Queen Victoria. Her Majesty presents to the Pontiff a rare and richly bound edition of the *Vulgate*, and his Holiness gives her Majesty a superb mosaic.—*Weekly Register*.

—A terrible accident occurred on the railway near Boston, U. S. A., March 14. A train and seven carriages filled with working men and school girls broke through a bridge and fell a distance of thirty feet. Thirty-nine persons were killed, and over one hundred injured.

—At a meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, recently, a member of the Council read a paper entitled "Whence and Whither," which was much applauded by the audience, and in which he arrived at the conclusion that the inhabitants of this earth are all ghosts.

—The total number of pieces of matter mailed in the world in 1886 was 11,640,000,000 of which 5,849,000,000 were letters and 1,077,000,000 post-cards. Australians receive on an average 24 letters and post-cards for each person; Europeans, 14; Asiatics, 40-100ths; Africans, 9-107ths.

—Sir M. Hicks-Beach has been compelled to resign his post as Chief Secretary for Ireland on account of the state of his eyes, which will have to be operated upon. He will retain his seat in the Cabinet. The Hon. A. J. Balfour, Secretary for Scotland, has accepted the vacant position.

—A cabinet was recently bought for five shillings; the purchaser on examining it found in one of the drawers forty £100 notes. On tendering one at the bank, he found that the notes had been stopped by a person who lost them twenty years ago. On handing over the notes the finder was awarded £10.

—Mr. Henry Ward Beecher died at Brooklyn, New York, March 8, aged nearly seventy-four years. Mr. Beecher had recently been offered \$30,000 for the completion of his "Life of Christ" and for his autobiography, and it is conjectured that he applied himself too closely to work, and that the fatal stroke of apoplexy was the result.

—Two hundred and eighty serious earthquakes have befallen the Italian peninsula since the year 1400. The most disastrous ones on record occurred in the years 1169 at the foot of Mount Etna, with 15,000 victims; 1456 in the Neapolitan provinces, 30,000 victims; 1627, in the Province of Puglia, 4,000 victims; 1638 in Calabria, 9,600 victims; 1693 in Sicily, 93,000 victims; 1703 in Central Italy, 15,000; 1783 in Calabria, 60,000 victims; 1805 in Terra di Lavoro, 6,000 victims; 1857 in Basilicata, 12,300 victims; 1883 in Ischia, 2,515.

—A frightful accident occurred on the Elevated Railway, in New York, March 8. A fire near the line had stopped the trains, which stood closely packed for five or six miles. It was in the evening, and the trains were filled with working men, and as the prospect for reaching their destination seemed hopeless, several left the trains and began walking along the narrow platform, two and a-half feet wide, which runs beside the line for the use of the employés. The trains suddenly started; one man clutched a passing platform and hung there, his projecting body sweeping ten persons into the street below, four of whom were killed, and six severely injured.

—Another attempt was made on the life of the Czar on March 13—the anniversary of the assassination of Alexander II. While the Imperial carriage was returning from the church in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul to the Annitchoff Palace, an individual threw a shell under the carriage. It was shaped like a large book, with a string attached to it, which had to be pulled before the shell could explode; but the man while throwing the shell dropped the string, so that no explosion followed; he was immediately arrested, as well as another man near him with a shell shaped like a leather pouch. Over two hundred persons have since been arrested for complicity in the plot.

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"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."—Rev. 22: 12.

GRIMSBY, MARCH 17, 1887.

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WHY NOT BEGIN THERE?

If it is desired by our legislators to promote social purity, to educate the young in a pure life, why not begin in our great galleries, and schools, and exhibitions of art? Nude and lewd art has been the bane of thousands. No one can measure its power and influence. It inflames and excites the slumbering passions of many which otherwise would be held in check. The nude statuary and indecent exposures leave an imprint on the pure mind of many a youth which can never be effaced. And this kind of art is an excuse almost to the vendors of the vile photographs and low periodicals. Legislators seem to realize this when such exhibitions are made in cheap photographs or vile prints of the day; they are promptly suppressed and their authors and abettors punished. Why not pursue the same course with our great exhibitions of art, and some of our great artists? Is it because they are under "royal" or "noble" patronage? Impurity is impurity everywhere. Clean out our art galleries and museums. True art can be better shown.

THE REASON.

THE following item from the "News of the Churches" in the *Christian Leader* is, we believe, true, and there is a reason for the same: "Rev. W. A. P. Johnman, Hawick, says they are rapidly approaching continental Sabbaths in that town. The sliding of boys on Sabbaths scandalized his religious instincts, flagrantly interfered with his liberties and rights, and caused gross hurt to Christian teaching and life. They might preach till doomsday unless the authorities secured them in undisturbed possession of the Sabbath. They could not compel people to come to church but they could abate a public scandal." The reason why preaching would have no effect is that there is nothing in the Word of God to uphold a first-day, or Sunday, sabbath. People begin to realize it. If the seventh day is not the Sabbath, there is none by divine appointment. And if professed believers in the Bible and preachers of the Word ignore the Sabbath of the Bible, why should the people of the world give countenance to a man-made institution? Let the day which God has appointed be honoured by his ambassadors, and their precept will have more power. The truth of God needs not civil law to enforce its claims. "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." Mark 7: 9.

THE SECOND ADVENT.

"WHY do you Adventists say so much about the end of the world?" This inquiry comes up on every hand,—from the high and the low, from the rich and the poor, from the learned and the unlearned. Evidently to those who raise this query, it is not a welcome topic. At least one characteristic of the genuine Christian is "to love the Saviour's appearing." All the writers of the New Testament say a good deal about the coming of the Lord. The four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and Paul and Peter, James and Jude, all speak more or less about the end of the world, the sounding of the last trump, and the coming of Christ. Indeed, those who have made a careful count say that one verse in every twenty-seven of the New Testament speaks of the second advent. This probably is why Adventists say so much about it. The New Testament is full of it, and if Christians should hold their peace, "the very stones would cry out."

The coming of the Lord means the close of probation, the great judgment day, the conflagration of the earth, and the final doom of the impenitent, which are events of the most startling importance. If at midnight I see my neighbour's house on fire, while the inmates are unconscious of the impending danger, duty demands that I should warn them. And to convince my neighbour that I am not jesting, my actions and words must show that I am terribly in earnest, and that I realize the danger to life and property. At such a time, who would think of leisurely going to the house and of indifferently or jokingly telling him that it might be well to get up and see if his house was not in danger? No; there would be a stir. So it should be in divine things. If we wish to convince others of the solemn truths for our times, we must show by our talk, our actions, and our self-sacrifice, that they are divine realities to us, and not held simply as theories.—*Gospel Sickle*.

SANCTIFICATION.

IT is painful to know that there are not a few persons in different parts of our country who are making a specialty or a hobby of the doctrine of sanctification; while their presentation of it is so befogged, disconnected, and imperfect as to include no well-defined or definite view, and their lives exhibit an almost total lack of the true spirit of Christian holiness. Their spirit is often harsh, petulant, impatient of contradiction, boastful, or self-seeking. They are professedly very scrupulous as to the "duty of confessing the blessing," when if they would live as they should, their lives would save their lips a great deal of trouble.

Unless the profession goes hand in hand with humility, and sanctification with unselfishness and upright lives, it is of no worth, worse than nothing. It does harm both to the professor and to the observer. It brings a reproach upon our holy religion. Better, a thousand times, to say nothing on the subject, than to make loud professions of holiness, while the life goes in a contrary direction.

We have known a few persons who were said to have been made perfect in love, but they did not placard it, nor be always shouting it out. They quietly and unobtrusively lived it. It shone out in all their tempers, dispositions, words, and actions. They were humble, meek, and lowly, as was their Lord, whom they loved and served with pure hearts fervently.—*St. Louis Christian Advocate*.

SMITH.—Died February 14, 1887, at her home in Thorold Street, Grimsby, Mrs. Ivy Ann Smith, aged sixty-six years.

The deceased had been a devoted Christian for many years, but for some time in the past had been too feeble to attend the services of the house of God. About two and a half years since, through reading PRESENT TRUTH, she became convinced of the binding obligation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and at once commenced its observance. For several months she was confined to her bed, and was a great sufferer till released by death. Her example of patient endurance will be remembered by all who saw her in her last illness, and they hope to meet her when the Life-giver shall come to claim his jewels.

QUARTERLY MEETING.—The regular quarterly meeting of the Southampton church will be held at their meeting hall, April 1-3, 1887. Pastor A. A. John will attend. Opportunity for baptism will be given. Let there be a general turn-out. S. H. LANE.

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