

THE PRESENT TRUTH



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

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THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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THE UNKNOWN FUTURE.

God holds the key of all unknown,
And I am glad.
If other hands should hold the key,
Or if he trusted it to me,
It might be sad.

What if to-morrow's cares were here
Without its rest?
Rather would I unlock the day,
And as the hours swing open, say,
"Thy will is best."

The very dimness of my sight
Makes me secure;
For, groping in my misty way,
I feel his hand—I hear him say,
"My help is sure."

I cannot read his future plan,
But this I know,
I have the smiling of his face,
And all the refuge of his grace,
While here below.

Enough; this covers all my want,
And so I rest;
For what I cannot, he can see,
And in his care I sure shall be
Forever blest.

—Selected.

General Articles.

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

MAN'S OBLIGATION TO GOD.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

TO EACH of us God has committed sacred trusts, for which he holds us accountable. He designs that man shall be so educated as to develop his mental and moral powers, that he may have a well-balanced mind and a symmetrical character. But education alone will not prepare him to answer the object of his creation. He needs the grace of God, and divine aid awaits his demand. Divine power united with human effort will enable him to do good and glorify his Creator.

Few appreciate the value of man, and

the glory that would redound to God were he to cultivate and preserve purity, nobility, and integrity of character. The value that God sets upon man is shown in the price that has been paid for his redemption; his love is expressed in that he withheld not his beloved Son, but gave him to die for a sinful race. Angels could not, by any sacrifice that they could make, accomplish the work of man's redemption. It was only through the suffering and death of Christ that he could be restored to the favour of God. For our sakes, he who knew no sin was made an offering for sin. He was afflicted, insulted, oppressed. Arraigned as a criminal, he suffered shame, insult, mockery, and pain.

Christ bore all this to rescue man from the hopeless state into which he had been brought by his disobedience of the law of God; for sin is the transgression of the law, and death is its penalty. He did not suffer to do away with the law, or to lessen its force, but that its claims might be met, and the sinner be spared. Through his perfect obedience, the law was exalted and made honourable.

Christ will elevate man, and give him rich and glorious possessions, if he will respect the claims of God's law; but if he chooses the service of Satan, and will ruin his hope of heaven by his stubborn sinfulness, he must lose these blessings. He will have a place with associates similar in character to himself,—with those defiled by sin, who consider it a virtue, an evidence of smartness, to doubt God's word and be ranked among sceptics. To choose to be a sinner is to refuse to stand before the throne of God washed from the defilement of sin; it is to refuse the riches of eternal glory; it is to refuse to be a joint heir with Christ to the immortal inheritance, and to be exalted to an equality with the heavenly angels;—it is to reject all these, and to choose instead the sure consequence of sin, the sinner's fixed doom.

Those who might become co-labourers with Christ, and do good service in advancing the interests of his kingdom, but who use their talents and influence to tear down instead of to build up, are like noted rebels; their prominence, the value of the talent they use in the service of Satan, increases their guilt and makes their punishment more. These will feel

the wrath of God. They will experience what Christ suffered in saving men from the penalty of the broken law. The value of man and the measure of his accountability can be known only by the cross of Calvary. He who presents himself to the sinner as the One strong to deliver, will prove himself mighty to execute wrath and judgment upon every unrepenting son of Adam. He who holds the worlds in position, who weighs the hills in scales, and the mountains in a balance, who taketh up the isles as a very little thing, will show himself mighty to avenge his unrequited mercy and spurned love. Those who flatter themselves that God is too merciful to punish the sinner, have only to look to Calvary to make assurance doubly sure that vengeance will be visited upon every transgressor of his righteous law.

The penalty for breaking the law of God is proportionate to the price paid to redeem its transgressors. What unutterable bliss is prepared for those who will be saved through Christ, and what depths of woe for those who despise and reject his great salvation! Whatever of a worldly nature men esteem valuable sinks into insignificance when viewed in this light, and how great appears our obligation to use in the service of God all the talents that he has intrusted to our keeping.

Science is too limited to comprehend the atonement; the mysterious and wonderful plan of redemption is so far-reaching that philosophy cannot explain it; it will ever remain a mystery that the most profound reason cannot fathom. If it could be explained by finite wisdom, it would lose its sacredness and dignity. It is a mystery that One equal with the eternal Father should so abase himself as to suffer the cruel death of the cross to ransom man; and it is a mystery that God so loved the world as to permit his Son to make this great sacrifice. The Holy Spirit exalts and glorifies the Saviour. It is his office to present Christ, the great salvation that we have through him, and the sacred, elevated purity of his righteousness. Says Christ, "He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." The Spirit of truth is the only effectual teacher of divine truth; those who are taught of him have entered the school of Christ. How must God

esteem the race, that he gave his Son to die for them, and appointed his Spirit to be man's teacher and continual guide. Satan understands this, and he lays his plans to mar and wound man, the workmanship of God, and to prevent him from enjoying the happiness that this great rebel lost through his disobedience and malice.

Since his fall from heaven, it has been Satan's only joy and constant employment to thwart the plan of God by preventing the salvation of perishing men. He has carried on this work with marked success, and will continue it until Christ shall bring his career to an end. He has tried to induce men to aid him in treading the honour of God into the dust, and many have become co-labourers with him, and have encouraged his rebellion. Those who do this, who glory in their scepticism, and lead others to despise the law of Jehovah, place themselves in the ranks of the enemies of Christ, and use their influence to destroy rather than to save souls. They second Satan in his efforts to undermine the law of God by assuring the sinner that he will be saved while transgressing that law. They serve Satan, and will share his terrible fate.

The short space of time allotted to men here is exceedingly valuable. Now, while probation lingers, God proposes to unite his strength with the weakness of finite man. We should so educate ourselves that we can serve him intelligently. Those who have cherished scepticism may, by proper discipline of the mind, learn to cherish faith. Those who truly love God will desire so to improve the talents that he has given them, that they may be a blessing to others. And by and by the gates of heaven will be thrown wide open to admit them, and from the lips of the King of glory the benediction will fall upon their ear like richest music, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Thus the redeemed will be welcomed to the mansions that Jesus is preparing for them. There their companions will not be the vile of earth,—liars, idolaters, the impure, or the unbelieving; but they will associate with those who have overcome Satan and his devices, and through divine aid have formed perfect characters. Every sinful tendency, every imperfection that afflicts them here, has been removed by the blood of Christ; and the excellence and brightness of his glory, far exceeding the brightness of the sun in its meridian splendour, is imparted to them. And the moral beauty, the perfection of his character, shines through them, in worth far exceeding this outward splendour. They are without fault around the great white throne, sharing the dignity and privileges of the angels.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." In view of the glorious inheritance which may be his,

"what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" He may be poor; yet he possesses in himself a wealth and dignity that the world could never bestow. The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in heaven, in the presence of God and holy angels, over one sinner that repents,—a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.

THE RESURRECTION.

WE have seen that the object of our Lord's second coming is to take his people to himself. It has also been shown that Christ's coming is not at the death of saints, but that the only coming spoken of is a literal, personal coming in power and glory. From John 14:1-3 we draw the necessary conclusion that if his coming (yet in the future) is for the express purpose of taking his people to himself, then none of his people can be with him until he comes. This fact is plainly stated by Paul in the eleventh of Hebrews. After having given a list of the faithful ones of whom the world was not worthy,—those who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong" (verses 33, 34),—as well as those who "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments," the apostle concludes thus: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Verses 39, 40. This is an explicit statement that even the martyrs of old must wait for their reward until we who are alive receive ours.

And this is exactly what our Saviour said. As he was one day eating in the house of a Pharisee, he took occasion to give some instruction concerning hospitality. Said he: "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; and thou shalt be blest; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Luke 14:12-14.

There is to be but one reward given. Of those who looked for a return for their charities in this life, who gave alms to be seen of men, the Lord said, "They have their reward." Matt. 6:1, 2. The applause of men, or an equivalent for the gift, is all they need expect; but those who live lives of unselfishness shall receive an everlasting recompense "at the resurrection of the just." The words of Christ, "Behold, I come quickly, and

my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12), show that the resurrection, when the reward is given, is at the coming of Christ. And so again we have found that the righteous receive no reward till Jesus comes.

This proposition, already proved, is sustained by many other plain declarations of Scripture. Let us once more refer to Paul's words to the Thessalonians: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

Nothing can be plainer than this; the apostle has carefully guarded against any possibility of mistake. It is "the Lord himself" who comes. He comes, not secretly, but with "a shout," and "with the trump of God," whose reverberations shake the earth. That mighty blast awakes the millions of sleeping saints,—those who have died in faith, not having received the promise,—and they rise. This is the first thing accomplished. Then the living ones,—those who "remain until the coming of the Lord,"—are caught up "together with them" (those who have just been raised from the dead) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. This work of gathering the saints together is performed by the angels at the bidding of Christ. See Matt. 24:30, 31.

"And so" the apostle says, "shall we ever be with the Lord." The word "so" means "in this manner," "by this means." How is it, then, that we go to be with the Lord? By the resurrection of the dead, and the translation of the living. There is no other way brought to view in the Bible, by which we can be with the Lord.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is not a product of the New Testament alone. When Abraham was called upon to offer up Isaac, he obeyed, "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." Heb. 11:19. When Job was suffering not only physical torture, but the anguish of being deserted and despised by all his friends and acquaintances, his faith in the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead still sustained him. From his lips came this sublime utterance: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body [margin, though this body be destroyed], yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job. 19:25, 26.

Isaiah, in prophetic vision looking down the ages and beholding the troubles of the church, utters these consoling words: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in

dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26:19. Hosea, favoured with a similar view, speaks as in Christ's stead, and says of the people of God: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Hos. 13:14.

We have space in this article for only one more quotation. The prophet David, putting himself in the place of the church, and considering the persecution which it must endure "from men of the world, which have their portion in this life," anticipates the words of Paul in the eleventh of Hebrews, and says: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Psa. 17:15. When will the saints be in the likeness of Christ? The beloved disciple says: "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." John 3:2. David, therefore, did not look for satisfaction until the Lord's coming; but if he could have gone to heaven at death, that certainly would have satisfied him.

The following comments on Psa. 17:15, by Dr. Barnes, will be read with interest:—

"I shall be satisfied." While they are satisfied with this world, I shall be satisfied only when I awake in the likeness of my God. Nothing can meet the wants of my nature; nothing can satisfy the aspirations of my soul, until that occurs. 'When I awake.' This is language which would be employed only by one who believed in the resurrection of the dead, and who was accustomed to speak of death as a sleep—a calm repose in the hope of awaking to a new life.

The obvious interpretation of the passage, therefore, so far as its sense can be determined from the connection, is to refer it to the awaking in the morning of the resurrection; and there is nothing in the language itself, or in the known sentiments of the psalmist, to forbid this interpretation. 'With thy likeness.' Or, *in* thy likeness; that is, resembling thee. . . . I regard this passage, therefore, as one of the incidental proofs scattered through the Old Testament, which show that the sacred writers under that dispensation believed in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; that their language was often based on the knowledge and the belief of that doctrine, even when they did not expressly affirm it, and that in times of trouble, and under the consciousness of sin, they sought their highest consolation, as the people of God do now, from the hope and the expectation that the righteous dead will rise again, and that in a world free from trouble, from sin, and from death, they would live forever in the presence of God, and find their supreme happiness in being made wholly like him."

E. J. WAGGONER.

"LEAVING THE THINGS BEHIND."

Do NOT look back, my soul!
Behind, the billows roll,
That soon will oversweep
This path o'er which we weep:
These ways of toil and pain
Thou may'st not tread again.
Before thee lies the track;
Cast not thy vision back.

I know thy life is there—
Thy youth so strong and fair,
Thy time of promise fled—
The white brows of thy dead,
Thy courage and thy fears,
The wasted strength of years.
But vain to watch thy track;
Thou can'st not win them back.

It helps thee not to-day
To moan and weep and pray
For precious things bereft.
Still hath the spoiler left
In thy neglected glass,
Bright sands that quickly pass
Toward evening, one by one,
While thy work is undone.

Thy morning gone too soon,
The waning afternoon
Will beckon thee to rest.
Oh! haste to wrap the breast
In armour of the light,
That terrors of the night
Be met and overpast
By conquering faith at last.

Weep not, my soul, nor stay
Enslaved by yesterday;
Behold an open door;
Its threshold crossed, before
Thy sight triumphant stand
Hills of the promised land,
Where if thou wilt be free,
Shall thy to-morrow be.

—M. L. Dickinson.

CREATION WEEK.

SHOULD the patriarchs awake and stand among the scientists of the present day, they would no doubt be astonished to hear them explain the creation of this earth. And the modern scientists would tell Moses, were he here to listen to their great wisdom, that he made a great mistake when he wrote the first chapter of Genesis, and told the world that God made the heavens and earth in six literal days, and rested the seventh day.

Not long since I was present at a Bible-class that had a lesson on the creation, illustrated by a large chart. The instructor thought it very absurd to believe that the creation week consisted of just seven literal days. He thought the seventh day had not yet ended, and gave as his evidence, that it had no evening.

How any thinking mind could investigate the record of the creation in Gen. 1, and then teach the people that the seventh day had no evening is very strange to me. In Gen. 1:31, the record says of the sixth day, "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Of the preceding days we have the same record, "the evening and the morning," etc. From this record, we are plainly taught that the evening of each preceded the morning of that day. In order to have a day at all it must have an evening, as each day began with evening. If the sixth day commenced

with an evening, the seventh day must have commenced with the next evening, or we must conclude that the sixth day had two evenings. The latter position would be too absurd to be entertained for a moment. If each day began with an evening, there could not have been a seventh day at all, unless it had an evening. From this, we must conclude that the seventh day was of the same length as each of the previous six days, and had an evening as well as the rest.

If each of these days was a great period of time, of one thousand years or more, the Bible record should not give us events that plainly contradict such a position. In Gen. 5 we have a record of the age of Adam and his children. We are told in Gen. 1:26-28, that Adam was created on the sixth day. Then he lived the remaining portion of the sixth period and all of the seventh period before his fall. But Gen. 5 tells us that he was only *nine hundred and thirty years old* when he died. If the scientific theory be correct, Adam died during the creation week, and possibly before the seventh day began, for some think the periods were millions of years each. But we get into still greater difficulty when we read the record in the fifth chapter. We are told that Adam was an hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born, and while Adam was still living, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, were all born, and if Adam's entire life does reach over the seventh period, all the above-named persons were born before the second week. But such reasoning is so contrary to the Scriptures, that no thinking mind can entertain it for a moment. The God of heaven has given man the true record of his work, and of the genealogy of the human family from Adam to the flood, and both teach that the creation week was not made up of indefinite periods, but of literal days composed of evening and morning.

Then, when Jehovah spake with his own voice to the children of Israel from Mt. Sinai, as recorded in Ex. 20, he says, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." To say that the language used in the above text, can be construed so as to mean indefinite periods, is to so pervert the words of the Lord, that they lose all their meaning. If God wished his people to keep the Sabbath, he could command them to do so without basing the command upon any time that it took him to make the world. But he gives us his reason why man should observe the Sabbath: that he worked six days and rested the seventh day. If he did not do as he said he did, he is not a God of truth. If his word on this occasion cannot be taken literally, we have no evidence that the rest of the ten commandments are what he claimed for them; and still further, we may deny the whole Pentateuch. But deny the

Pentateuch, and we deny the entire Old Testament; for every writer refers to the Pentateuch as reliable. If the Old Testament is to be questioned, the New is left without any foundation. So the whole Bible must stand or fall with the first chapter of Genesis, which gives the true record of the creation week.

J. H. DURLAND.

HOW GOD LEADS HIS PEOPLE. NO. 9.

HAVING obtained the pamphlets, tracts, and leaflets, referred to in my last, I locked them up carefully in my desk, for strictly private perusal alone in my study. They seemed to me to have such infidel titles, that I was afraid to have any one else see them until I had examined them alone in the light of God's word. I can quite understand the feelings of those who cry out "Infidel! infidel!" against a man because he does not hold what are considered to be orthodox views. But as we ought not to condemn any man without a hearing, nor any doctrine as unscriptural without examination, I set myself honestly to find the answers to such questions as those which were now placed before me. What is a soul? Can it die? Do the Scriptures teach that man is a mortal, or an immortal being? How may we get to live forever? Christ's doctrine of eternal life is not set forth in the religious teachings of the day. Where are the dead? Do we go to heaven when we die? etc., etc.

I prayed earnestly for God's guidance. On the one hand I feared lest I should be led astray; and on the other hand I did not wish to reject any truth, however unpalatable, which was in harmony with his word. I remember preaching one Sunday from Psa. 119:18: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." The sermon preached from these words was my first sermon that I can remember made a visible impression on the congregation. Some sermons may have instructed them; others amused them for half an hour or so; and some may have even tickled what Paul calls "itching ears;" but I now began to be indeed in earnest, and earnest eyes were upturned to me. I pointed out how the church prayers taught us to pray that God would "enlighten our darkness;" that this was a confession that we might be in darkness in some things; that only God could open our eyes; and that if God did graciously open our eyes to see the light of his truth, we should be held responsible if we closed them again against that truth.

I began to study especially the fifteenth chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians (or, more correctly, to the *saints* at Corinth). This wonderful chapter occurred in the "Burial Service" of the church; and the taking of the funerals generally devolved upon me. I could not properly understand this important chapter; nor could I see always the cogency of the apostle's reasoning.

Every time I used it, I mentally prayed for more light upon it. Then I began to see what a great subject the resurrection was in the gospel preached by Paul; and I reflected how little I had made of this subject hitherto. I had certainly always acknowledged the doctrine of the resurrection; but I found that the "orthodox" doctrine of the resurrection "of the *body*" was very different from Paul's doctrine. Paul taught the resurrection of the *dead*, *i. e.*, of dead persons; I had taught the reunion hereafter of dead *bodies* to living persons. Paul taught that the dead are in a "sleep" previous to the resurrection (v. 20); I had thought that they were living in a happy state of consciousness. Paul showed that the dead lie under the power of an "enemy" in the "grave;" I had been led to believe that they were alive in the presence of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle proclaimed that apart from the hope of the resurrection even "they also which are fallen asleep in Christ *are perished*;" while I had imbibed the unscriptural notion that it was no small advantage to "shuffle off this mortal coil," and that it was impossible for the true man to perish at all. In short, I found the Bible teaching that man was only made "a living soul;" "a natural [or animal] body;" liable to death, actual death, on account of sin; while I had been supposing that he was made an *ever-living* soul, or never-dying spirit; and incapable of "surely" dying, whether he sinned or no.

These two positions being so contrary one to the other, for a short time I was staggered with the result of my investigation; but the more I searched the Scriptures, the more could I see they taught that man is only a mortal being, under the condemnation of death, by reason of sin; and that immortality, or deathlessness, can only be obtained on the conditions laid down therein.

This doctrine humbled me in my own eyes greatly. When I found I was only a poor mortal creature, dependent upon the Creator for the very breath of life I was breathing, I wept in secret. I had been possessed of the vain conceit that though worlds on worlds (if there were such) might eventually be destroyed; yet I could never cease to exist, no, not even if I were like Satan, to defy the very Creator! What presumption! What pride had been fostered by this vain tradition received from "the fathers!" But now it was cut down, secretly and severely; and the axe was lying at the root of the tree! I felt like one waiting to hear the sentence of the judge! Was I to die, or was I to live? Ah! then, what good news indeed was the gospel to me; that gospel which brings "life and immortality to light." The pagan, and Platonic notion, of my own natural immortality had prevented my seeing the beauty and the suitability of the numerous promises of life contained in

the gospel; but now they came flooding their welcome light into my hungry soul. How I rejoiced in such rays of divine light as the following, basking my trembling soul in the warm and invigorating sunshine of divine love: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have everlasting LIFE." John 3:16. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Chap. 4:14. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have *life*." Chap. 5:40. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting *life*. I am that bread of *life*. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and *are dead*. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and *not die*." "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, *may have* everlasting *life*: and I will raise him up at the last day." Chap. 6:40-47. "I am come that they might have *life*, and that they might have it more abundantly." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto *them* eternal *life*." Chap. 10:10, 27, etc., etc.

I cannot now give one tithe of the evidence I found in my Bible on this subject. But the words of Christ convinced me I was dependent upon him for unending, or everlasting life; and that if I desired this great boon I should have to seek it earnestly at his hands. The tracts were helpful to me on this subject in pointing out the Scriptures bearing on this question, and in starting my inquiries about man's nature and destiny; but it was the Scriptures themselves, and not the tracts, that wrought conviction in my mind. I felt that I must take their testimony, even though it should lead me into opposition to all the world besides: but I little realized at first how bitter that opposition would prove. I remember once, when the vicar and I were out together in the parish, I asked him how it was that there was no persecution in these days for the sake of the gospel. He replied, "It is because the world has grown wiser and better." I asked, "Is it not possible rather that we may not be preaching the same gospel?" He did not think so.

As I found nothing in the "Thirty-nine Articles," to which I had subscribed, contrary to the doctrines of conditional immortality; and as my vicar seemed disposed, at least, to entertain the subject as one worthy of consideration; I grew bolder and began to preach these truths. I began to preach "the kingdom of heaven," and "the second advent of Christ;" showing that the hope of the early Christians was in the second coming of Christ, and the setting up of the kingdom of God. I was listened to with marked at-

tention and interest, though not always without some little suspicion that the "new doctrines," as they were called, were not true doctrines; but I used my Bible pretty freely, and it was one that my vicar had lately presented to me! The people began to use their Bibles too, to see if I was right in my quotations; for they had "never heard of such texts in the Bible before as those which the curate had begun to preach from." A book-seller confessed to selling more Bibles at this time than ever he had sold before in the same place; which was a proof that the curate was at least leading them to search the Scriptures. Is it not a good thing when men are brought to examine themselves and their deeds in the light of God's infallible word? Do false teachers and seducers lead men to search the Scriptures? And if we are afraid of trying ourselves by their standards is it not because we suspect we may be in error? Had we not better discover our error, and forsake it, than foster it to our condemnation? The testimony of Christ, is, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved [or discovered, margin]. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." John 3:19-21.

A. SMITH.

THE COMMANDMENT FOR THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

ST. PAUL has given a precept concerning the first day of the week. It is the only precept concerning that day in the New Testament, and must therefore contain all our duty so far as we are required to distinguish that day from the other days of the week. St. Paul claimed so high a degree of inspiration that he said that the precepts which he gave in the name of the Lord should be regarded as the commandment of the Lord. 1 Cor. 14:37. Moreover as he was the apostle of the Gentiles, as Peter and James and John were the apostles of the circumcision (Rom. 11:13; 15:16; Gal. 2:7-9), it was proper that he should be the one chosen to teach the Gentiles their duty toward the first day of the week.

When the seventh day was proclaimed to the people of God, it was God the Father who gave the commandment, and in the commandment we find three important things announced: 1. The title of the seventh day, which is the Sabbath or rest-day of the Lord; 2. The duty with respect to the day, which is to set it apart from all worldly business; 3. The reason why we should do this, which is that God sanctified the day because he had rested upon it from the six days of labour in the creation of the world. Ex. 20:8-11.

St. Paul gives us a precept concerning

the first day of the week, which day it is commonly supposed ought to take the place of the seventh day. But why Christ did not give us a precept concerning this day if the day were made sacred by his resurrection, or why if it was best that St. Paul and not Christ should give this precept, the act of giving it should be delayed till nearly thirty years after Christ arose, it is not easy to explain.

But the precept has been given and it is for us to carefully examine it that we may learn what it contains. We ought to find in it the three things contained in the commandment concerning the seventh day. Thus we ought to find (1) the title; (2) the manner of observing the day; (3) the reason why it should be observed. In addition to this we ought to find the declaration that this commandment concerning the first day has been given to take the place of the commandment concerning the seventh day, if the precept were given for that purpose; otherwise we must understand that this precept does not excuse us from keeping the fourth commandment.

This precept reads thus: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." 1 Cor. 16:1, 2. This is the only commandment concerning the first day of the week in the New Testament, and it must therefore contain all our duty with respect to that particular day, and the reason on which that duty is founded. First, it must designate the day by its proper title, in order that we may know how much honour we ought to bestow upon it. Thus if it is the day which St. John calls the Lord's day, St. Paul when he teaches us how to observe the day must call it by that title or by some other title equally honourable. In our time the day is called the Christian Sabbath. If St. Paul knew that this was its proper name, he was under obligation to call it by this title when he was teaching us what we were to do in order to honour the day.

But what does he call it? Simply the first day of the week and nothing else. The day had borne this title more than 4,000 years (Gen. 1:5), and the resurrection of Christ had not added to it any title whatever. The name is exactly on a level as to rank and sacredness with the second day or third day, or any other day of the week which God has not sanctified. But what is the duty which St. Paul commands us to perform on this day? or rather, What is the manner in which we are, according to his commandment, to observe the day? Each one is to lay by himself in store on that day.

Would this duty occupy the whole day? By no means. On the contrary, one hour thus spent each week would suffice for the work. In most cases, even fifteen minutes on each first day of the

week would enable each individual to fulfil this duty. What else does the apostle assign to fill up the remaining hours of the first day? Nothing at all. Then he was not teaching the Corinthians how to celebrate the day as a holy day set apart from our business to the worship of God. On the contrary, he was only desirous to secure the performance of a particular act or duty, for which he must designate a definite day.

It is supposed by many that he gave this commandment in order to teach the people to assemble for public worship each first day. But this cannot be true, for he did not command the Corinthians to cast their money into the public treasury of the church, but he commanded each one to lay aside his contribution at his own house. The people must be in their own dwellings when they obeyed this precept.

But what reason did St. Paul assign for this precept? Was it that Christ arose on this day, and that they would commemorate his resurrection if they spent a few minutes on each first day of the week in laying by at their own houses a part of the wages of the previous week? He does not even allude to the resurrection of Christ; and it would have been very absurd to tell the Corinthians that the act of setting apart on the first day of the week a portion of the money received the previous week, would commemorate the resurrection of the Saviour.

He does give a reason however for this precept. It is that there should be no gatherings of money when he came. Why not? Was the gathering of money in this manner an act too sacred to be done in the presence of Paul? By no means. The real reason was that Paul wished to have all the time when he should visit them in which to instruct them in the deep things of the Spirit of God, and was not willing to be hindered by this secular business. Therefore he commanded them to take a portion of each first day of the week, each one being at his own house and examining the condition of his own affairs.

The last day of the week could not be used for this purpose because it had been set apart from all business transactions, to the honour of the Creator. But on each first day before engaging anew in the affairs of this life they were to review the previous week and to lay aside something for the wants of the poor. Does this precept set aside the fourth commandment? St. Paul does not say so. Does it conflict with what God has said in that commandment in honour of the seventh day? By no means. Moreover the only people that I have known to keep this precept of St. Paul just as he gave it are those who sanctify the seventh day as the Sabbath of the Lord.—*J. N. Andrews.*

You will have a large credulity and a long creed if you believe half what you hear and read.

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.

WHILE WE MAY.

THE hands are such dear hands—
They are so full; they turn at our demands
So often; they reach out,
With trifles scarcely thought about,
So many times; they do so many things for me,
for you—
If their fond wills mistake, we may well bend,
not break.

They are such fond, frail lips
That speak to us;
Pray if love strips

Them of discretion many times,
Or if they speak too slow or quick, such crimes
We may pass by; for we may see
Days not far off when these small words may be
Held not as slow, or quick, or out of place, but
dear

Because the lips are no more here.

They are such dear, familiar feet that go
Along the path with ours—feet fast or slow,
And trying to keep pace—mistake
Or tread upon some flower that we would take
Upon our breast, or bruise some seed,
Or crush poor Hope until it bleed,
We may be mute,

Not turning quickly to impute
Grave faults; for they and we
Have such a little way to go—can be
Together such a little while along the way,
We will be patient while we may.

So many little faults we find;
We see them, for not blind
Is love.

We see them; but if you and I
Perhaps remember them some by and by,
They will not be

Faults then—grave faults—to you and me,
But just odd ways—mistakes, or even less.
Days change so many things—yes hours,
We see so differently in suns and showers.
Mistaken words to-night,
May be so cherished by to-morrow's light;
We may be patient, for we know
There's such a little way to go.

—American Israelite.

MISS CHAPIN'S EXPERIMENT.

"NEENAH, are you ready to come out?"
No answer.

"Neenah, Neenah, do you hear?"

A rustling noise as of some one moving
about was the only sound.

Sadly Miss Chapin turned away from
the closed door and returned to her own
room.

Here she sat down, and tried to think
of some way to soften the girl's heart.
Failing to choose any plan, she rose and
went slowly to the study; for Mr. Allen
was the principal of this school, and here
was his presence chamber.

Once admitted, she said dismally:—

"I have come to see you about Neenah.
She still refuses to yield, and there is
but one penalty left."

"Well, well," Mr. Allen replied, a little
impatiently, "I can't see why that should
not be resorted to, if she remains surly
and disobedient."

"This is her second day of confine-
ment in her own room without commu-
nication, and she is as hard as ever,"
Miss Chapin went on. "If the poor girl

were not an Indian, having had no
mother's teaching to help her, I should
not feel so badly."

"But you would have her obey, surely?
I see no way left now, but the 'solitary
confinement' with bread and water diet
and the hard bed—yes, Miss Chapin,
that above all," Mr. Allen urged. "Did
you ever notice that the Indians are
especially fond of a soft bed?"

"Yes; no doubt that is because they
have none at all in their wigwams," she
answered.

"Bread and water are no more to
Neenah's taste than to that of any white
girl, I fancy," continued the principal.
"And I think a wholesome use of both
will be beneficial to Miss Neenah Crow
Wing. At all events we'll try it."

Seeing that all discussion was useless,
the teacher again returned to her wilful
pupil. This time she entered without
the permission which she had asked in
vain. Seating herself beside the girl,
she took one of Neenah's tawny hands in
her own, and tried to win her to a right
mind by gentle argument. Now and
then the dull red of the Indian girl's
cheek grew a shade more bright, but by
neither word nor sign did she reply.

After half an hour spent so fruitlessly,
Miss Chapin left her. With a light step
she hastened once more to the study.

"Mr. Allen, at the risk of being un-
welcome, I have to trouble you again
upon the same business."

The formal bow of one who has already
made up his mind, and does not mean to
change it, would have silenced a less
brave woman; but Miss Chapin began
resolutely: "Will you let me try an ex-
periment in Neenah's case?"

Mr. Allen hesitated. "You must not
let that girl off Scot free," he said at
length.

"But may I not choose her punish-
ment?"

"Well, if you will really inflict a pun-
ishment.—yes. I think I can trust your
discretion. Will you tell me what it is?"

"If you insist, certainly; but I would
rather not. Will you not wait to see the
result?"

"I would like to know beforehand."

"Very well then," and the bright flush
rose to Miss Chapin's cheek, but she
spoke very quietly: "I am going to bear
Neenah's penalty for her."

"You will do no such thing, madam,"
he exclaimed excitedly. "The person
who commits an offense, in this school,
must bear the consequences."

"That was not our Lord's way in deal-
ing with us," she answered softly. "It
surely must be safe to follow his ex-
ample. I beg you to permit me to stand
in this poor girl's place this once," she
pleaded. "That nothing else can con-
quer her, I am sure; this may not, but
let me try."

The principal was out of all patience.
"Fiddle-de-dee!" he exclaimed. "Have
we returned to the times of knight-
errantry?" Then, seeing Miss Chapin's

disappointment in her face, he added,
pleasantly, "but do as you please. Send
for me in time to make your will, how-
ever, for you are sure to end your days
in the 'dark chamber' if you wait for
Neenah's repentance."

Radiant with success, away sped Miss
Chapin, straight to the culprit.

"Neenah," she said kindly, "Mr.
Allen has sentenced you to the 'dark
chamber' until you are willing to do
what is right, and you know only too
well, poor girl! what that means."

Neenah's face only grew the more
dogged.

"I grieve to think of you, dear, shut
up in that lonely room so dark and bare,
with such a hard bed to lie upon, and
only your own naughty heart for com-
panionship. So I have asked Mr. Allen
to forgive you freely, on his part, and I
am going to bear your punishment for
you."

The girl started and looked at Miss
Chapin, then fell into her state of dull
indifference again.

"When you wish my forgiveness,
Neenah, come to me and I will give it
to you. I shall not see you again till
you come to seek me."

So saying the teacher closed the door
after her, and immediately gave herself
up, a prisoner in the "dark chamber."

Neenah could hear the key distinctly,
as it turned upon her friend, but she
also felt a keen sense of her own freedom.

In her stolid way she tried to enjoy
her liberty.

It was Saturday, the day so welcome
to teacher and pupil alike, so that in the
general bustle of a holiday Miss Chapin
was scarcely missed.

The affair was known only to a few,
and no explanations were necessary.

Sunday evening found her still a
prisoner. That night the chapel was
crowded, for a stranger addressed the
students, and the singing was especially
attractive.

During the services, Mr. Allen received
the urgent message that Miss Chapin
desired to see him immediately.

She had been conscious for an hour
that some one was stealthily moving
outside her door, and at last a paper had
been thrust under it. She had sent for
Mr. Allen to ask that this paper might
be examined as soon as possible, as she
had no light.

It was from Neenah. In rude, ill-
formed letters the poor child told how
she had lain awake all the long night
thinking of her teacher, and what she
was suffering for her sake. She could
bear it no longer, and she humbly begged
to be forgiven, promising to be a good
girl always.

Even Mr. Allen's heart was touched,
and Miss Chapin wept for joy. They
went together to Neenah's little room,
and found her crying bitterly. Nor was
she ashamed of her tears. She repeated
her promise of obedience most gladly.

Ignorant and unreasoning, Neenah

faithfully kept her word. And in this, as well as in her tender love for her teacher, this Indian girl put many a follower of the blessed Jesus to shame; for we often forget who bore our punishment because he first loved us.—Mrs. C. E. Cheney.

TWENTY-FIVE ARGUMENTS FOR TOBACCO-USING BRIEFLY ANSWERED.

1. *Tobacco steadies the nerves.*—So do alcohol and a dozen other poisons. It does more; it *unsteadies* the nerves. Half the men who think they need tobacco to steady their nerves would probably never find out that they had nerves if they did not use the weed. Tobacco is a powerful excitant of the nerves, and hence apparently increases their tone for a short time; but the unnatural excitement will invariably give place to a commensurate degree of depression, so soon as the poison has been eliminated from the system. While the drug appears to strengthen and steady the nerves, it is all the time making them weaker and more unsteady. If a person who uses tobacco wishes to ascertain its effect upon his nerves, let him abstain from it a few days, and the mischief it has wrought will be apparent.

2. *Tobacco-using promotes cheerfulness.*—Tobacco stupefies, intoxicates, narcotizes; if this is cheerfulness, then we may indorse the lines of the poetic lover of the article who sang,

"Sublime tobacco, which, from East to West,
Cheers the tar's labour and the Turkman's rest."

Deprive the tobacco-chewer of his quid or the smoker of his idolized pipe, and mark how soon his cheerfulness disappears. How suddenly he awakes to all the perplexities and irritations of life, like a person awaking from sleep!

The drunkard feels happy while sipping his bowl of steaming sling; but how does he feel the next morning after a "spree"? A more wretched creature is scarcely imaginable. The tobacco-user does not find his real status so often, because he is *drunk all the time*, and thus mistakes his comfortable feeling for cheerfulness. A very low grade of enjoyment.

3. *Tobacco is a valuable medicine.*—We must not dispute this fact, surely, for every work on *materia medica* ascribes to it as many as *seventeen* medicinal virtues. Pre-eminent it stands as a drug; but is this an evidence of its virtue as an article for general and constant consumption? An eminent physician says that the best medicines are the worst poisons.

To say that a substance is a medicine is to declare it to be a poison entirely unsafe for constant use. A learned professor of the regular school declares that "all medicines are poisons," and other eminent physicians have expressed the same opinion.

Whatever may be said of the propriety of employing tobacco as a medicine, nothing can apologize for its constant use.

4. *Tobacco aids digestion.*—Hundreds

of victims of the tobacco habit think it impossible to digest a meal without the assistance of a pipe or a quid. Nor, indeed, is this a mere fancy. A stomach which has been for long years abused by constant poisoning becomes so enervated and debilitated that it cannot perform its function, when deprived of its accustomed stimulus, until it has had time to recover its healthy tone and vigour.

When first indulged in, tobacco is a most effectual impediment to digestion. Every boy who ever attempted to use tobacco distinctly remembers how difficult it was for him even to keep his dinner in his stomach, to say nothing of digesting it, while a quid or a pipe was in his mouth. It is only after repeated abuse that the stomach ceases to remonstrate.

5. *Tobacco-using prevents obesity.*—It is not very strange that a man should grow poor on tobacco; and there is no question that in most cases a person can reduce his weight almost *ad libitum* by using the poison. It is exceedingly questionable, however, if such a remedy is not infinitely worse than the disease. There are any number of better remedies for excessive fatness which a person may employ without imperiling his own health and that of his children, as well as outraging every rule of decency and cleanliness. Abstemious diet, plenty of vigorous muscular exercise, with frequent bathing, are sovereign remedies for corpulency.

6. *Tobacco strengthens the mind.*—This is the declaration of accountants who cannot add a column of figures correctly, or fill out a blank receipt without having one side of the mouth stuffed with tobacco; of lawyers who are utterly unable to make a plea without the stimulus of two or three "Havanas;" of clergymen, also, who do not dare enter the pulpit to invite sinners to Christ or display the hideous deformities of sin, without first fortifying themselves by a vigorous mastication of "fine cut" or "plug," and perhaps stowing away in one side of the face a liberal quid to assist in impressing the listening audience with the charms of purity and the beauties of holiness.

We will not dispute that in all these cases tobacco really does *excite* the mental functions to more than ordinary activity. But this is not a correct test of the influence of the drug upon the mind. The thing to be determined is whether a person unaccustomed to the use of tobacco gains mental strength and acumen by contracting the habit. If this were the case, we ought to find tobacco-users, as a class, much more intellectual than abstainers. Will any person attempt to sustain such a claim? We think not, especially when it is remembered that tobacco-using has been entirely forbidden to students in every school in France, on account of its damaging effect upon the mind.

Tobacco will cause the mind to make violent, spasmodic efforts to accomplish

any desired object; but the work which results is always more or less marred by its baneful influence.

7. *Tobacco preserves the teeth.*—This is a very popular notion, and there may be a shade of truth in it, although some very respectable people think otherwise. But only mark the kind of teeth which it preserves. Are the yellow, dirty, unsightly masticators of a tobacco-user ornamental? They might be in some barbarous country, but they are not here. It is also a fact that tobacco is sometimes the cause of the decay of the whole maxillary bone, thus causing the loss of many teeth.

Other things besides tobacco are preservative. Corrosive sublimate is an excellent article to prevent organic decay, if a poison is preferred; if not, daily cleansing and due employment in mastication will be found to be not only neat and wholesome, but a most effectual method of preserving the teeth.—J. H. Kellogg, M.D.

(To be continued.)

CAN YOU WAIT?

How long? Till the trials which have vexed you are passed away? Till the men are dead that sought your life? Till those who slandered you come to have all they can do to defend themselves? Till those who have lied about you have proved themselves liars and are recognized as such? Till those who left you to join the strongest side have found their mistakes and want to come back? Till those who stood silently by and saw others wrong you, have had the same cup pressed to their own lips, and found few to take their part? Till the tide turns, and those who were deceived have learned to despise their deceivers? Till men who ride on the heights of power and wealth come down so low that none will do them reverence? Till God-fearing men who have been fooled recover their senses and their judgment? Till rogues fall out, and honest men get a portion of their dues? Till those who abused you for telling the truth find out the truth themselves and tell it far more loudly than you ever did? Till God, whose authority has been rejected, brings forth judgment unto victory, and blesses those who have been scorned and persecuted and cursed?

Can you wait? Time works changes, and eternity confirms them. All things come to those that wait. "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Fret not thyself because of him that bringeth wicked devices to pass."—*The Armoury*.

EVERY child is a hand mirror; if you see some ugly features in your looking-glass, correct your own face and figure.—*Dr. Lyman Abbott*.

THE grand essentials to human happiness are something to do, something to hope for, and something to love.

THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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

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S. N. HASKELL, D. A. ROBINSON, EDITORS.

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ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS.

MUCH is said at the present day about essentials and non-essentials in the Christian religion. It is true that there are many questions raised which have but little importance, in man's relation to God, and his duty towards his Creator. We must, however, conclude that if God requires obedience in any particular, it is always our duty to render that obedience even though our finite mind may not at first comprehend all the reasons for the requirement. One of the essentials in the Christian religion is implicit faith and trust in our Creator. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. 11:6. We will notice a few things as the word of God presents them, and also some matters and questions which are urged at the present day, which we believe are not presented in the Word as of importance, and which we must place among the non-essentials.

The doctrines of repentance before God, a change of heart, and of faith in Christ, all who believe in the evangelical religion will unite in calling most important. The apostle Paul taught publicly and from house to house the doctrine of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The words of our Saviour are: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3. And sooner than that those wicked Pharisees should enter into his kingdom, God would raise up men and women from the stones of the street, and fit them for his heavenly garner. "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matt. 3:9. Position and hereditary descent are nothing in God's sight as compared with true moral worth. The harlot Rahab, and Ruth, the Moabitish woman, became the direct ancestors of King David, the ancestor of Christ. This cannot be accounted for on other grounds than that God regards integrity of character irrespective of birth and parentage.

Yet there are many at the present day who have much to say about our being the literal descendants of Israel. Supposing we are or are not, what is the essential point in the matter? Is it not, Are

we connected with Christ? Here is the all-important question. It matters but little what tribe or nationality we belong to if we are Christ's, for with him "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all." Col. 3:11.

Another doctrine, gaining ground in some localities, is that of a future probation, an opportunity for salvation after Christ comes. But what is that to us? Is it a consoling doctrine? It may be to some, but consoling only to every lover, of sin. He can well say, If I can be saved in a future age, while business and pleasure take my attention here, wherein is the importance of my attending to those things in this life? This theory surely cannot be of God, as the fruit it bears is evil and only evil. If it be true to the one who lives in that future age, why preach it here? Why not wait until you get there? One thing certainly is true, without repentance before God no one will ever enter the kingdom of heaven. Conversing with an old man, a gentleman who had travelled extensively and preached this doctrine in India and New Zealand, we asked if he ever knew one soul converted to God by this doctrine. The only reply was, We preach many things which contain no converting power.

We may say, then, that, even though the doctrine were not positively unscriptural, it would be unessential; as it strikes directly at some of the fundamental truths of revelation, however, it must be classed as a doctrine essentially erroneous.

A question which receives much attention from some is concerning the day of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Was he crucified on Wednesday or Thursday, and did he not rise on Sabbath night instead of the first day of the week? This some claim to be a matter of great importance, as, if Christ did not rise on the first day, there could be no propriety in keeping it as a Sabbath in honour of that event. But while convincing one person to this theory in order to convince them that the seventh day is the Sabbath, fifty might be converted to the fact that the seventh day is the Sabbath, regardless of the day upon which Christ rose. Whether Christ did or did not arise on the first day is something which affects the fourth commandment, and the Sabbath, not one whit.

But while there are so many doctrines either not essential or positively erroneous, there are truths, we are certain, which men pass over lightly, which really have a direct bearing on the practical every-day religious life. Their importance is not realized at first glance, but their ultimate fruit may show them to be of much more than ordinary consequence. Take the doctrine of the unconsciousness of man after death. Does it make any

difference whether we believe that the dead are conscious or not? Let us ask the question, Where did the doctrines of purgatory, Universalism, worshipping of the saints and the Virgin Mary, etc., etc., come from? All are the outgrowth of this idea. Draw from the structure of their faith this corner-stone, and the whole house falls to the ground; modern Spiritualism, with its ten thousand votaries would cease to exist. This deception is built on the idea that after death men's souls come back to commune with their earthly friends.

"We cannot believe," says the Universalist, "that God will torment the lost to all eternity, therefore there must be a way for his restoration after death." Thus there are thousands of errors which grow out of this false doctrine. It is the root which sprang from the seed which Satan sowed in the garden, when he said to the woman, "Thou shalt not surely die." God had said, "Thou shalt surely die;" and the contradiction of God's word, uttered as it was by the serpent, and Satan, has been reiterated from that time to this. Does age make it true? Does it become truth simply because multitudes believe it? Is it a fact that, in the face of the continually recurring realities of death, sensible men can be made to believe that men do not die? That death is only a transition from mortal activity to immortal activity? Paul says that God only hath immortality. Is this true? He says that immortality is to be put on at the second coming of Christ. Is this a truth? Or is it true that in the face of more than a hundred plain texts concerning the nature of man in death, we do not really die, but that at that event which we call death, we enter upon a state in which we know more than ever before? Let God be true, and every man a liar.

And last, but not least, here is the doctrine of the Sabbath of the Bible. Does it make any essential difference which day we keep, so long as we keep one day out of the seven? The importance to be attached to this question lies in the reason for the observance of a Sabbath. If it is simply observed as a day of rest to the weary body, then one day in seven would perhaps answer as well as any particular day. But where did God ever state this as the reason for the institution of the Sabbath? Man does get rest. This is true, but did the Creator give man a reason for Sabbath observance which would appeal simply to selfish motives? Has he not lifted man's ideas higher than himself? Let us see: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son,

nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." And now comes the only reason that God ever gave for the observance of the Sabbath: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." The reason for observing the Sabbath, then, is to keep in memory the creative works of God. God did not rest because he was weary, or needed rest, but because he would have man forever remember him as the Creator of the heaven and the earth. He is the Lord, and that which distinguishes him from false gods is his creative power. To rob man of his rest-day is to take away from him that which connects him with his Creator. The fourth commandment of the decalogue is the golden clasp which binds the duty to our God, and the duty to our fellow men. It is the seal of God's law, and reveals God's name. To read any other day into the commandment makes it state an untruth, for it would assert that God rested upon a day upon which he did not rest, and blessed a day which never received his blessing. Who would dare to place the first day in place of the seventh in the commandment? "The Lord blessed the first day and hallowed it." Did any one ever see it read in this way? If such a rendering cannot be found, who would dare say it is not important to keep the day which God commands? Had the seventh-day Sabbath ever been observed for the reasons set forth in the fourth commandment, idolatry in its thousand forms of human inventions never could have flourished on God's fair earth. God designed in the fourth commandment to erect a barrier against idolatry which could not be passed; hence the thousand and one subterfuges Satan suggests to the human mind to take the place of the particular seventh day of the fourth commandment, and place the first day in its stead. But the Sabbath measuring the weekly cycle comes to us as a weekly reminder, as God's memorial of his own creative power. It is a monument of God's own erection, which points to the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Is not its observance, then, essential?

LETTER TO S. G.—NO. 4.

DEAR BROTHER,—I trust that we are agreed in all the positions taken in my previous letters to you, for I confined myself closely to the explicit declarations of the holy Scriptures. And where the word of God speaks, we can but stand silent and submissive. It yet remains for me to fulfil my promise to show that obedience to the law of God is impossible to

those who have not the Spirit and the mind of Christ.

Reason would teach us that a law spoken and written by a God of infinite holiness—a law which relates to, and guards, every moral relation—must itself be holy. And if it is holy, it is exactly suited to the circumstances and tempers of holy beings. And it follows, also, that it cannot be kept by unholy beings; it is contrary to their natures, or they are in their very nature contrary to it. But we will bring every position to the test of the Scriptures.

On a certain occasion the Saviour quoted the two commandments, found in Deut. 6:5, and Lev. 19:18, and commented, as follows: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:37-40. All the law hangs upon love; therefore obedience to the law can only spring from love, and therefore, as I said, the law is not suited to the carnal mind. Said the apostle, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." 1 John 5:3. The commandments are the outgrowth of love, and obedience is the only test of love.

Paul testifies to the nature of the law in Rom. 7. After saying that he was reprobated of sin by the law, and that, as a sinner, he was slain by the law, he adds: "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Verse 12. He said in Rom. 3:20, "by the law is the knowledge of sin." And so in this seventh chapter he says he had not known sin but by the law (verse 7); and in verse 13, he says, that sin by the commandment becomes exceeding sinful. Now that must be good, and not contrary to grace, which reproves of sin, and shows the exceeding sinfulness thereof. But if the law justified the sinner in his transgression, if it smoothed over sin and extenuated it, then it would be worthy of our neglect, and indeed of deprecation. But, then it would please the carnal mind; then there would less fault be found with it by those who love freedom from just restraint. On the other hand, it would then be unworthy of a God of infinite love and justice.

And Paul traces his argument to this very conclusion. He says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. It is impossible that there should be communion between light and darkness; or fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness. Even so, the carnal mind can have no fellowship with a law that is holy, and

just, and good; it cannot be subject to a law which is every way contrary to its nature, and which condemns its every thought and action. And hereby every man may measure himself if he will; if his spirit is in opposition to that law, he may know that his heart is carnal. If that law is contrary to his heart and life, he may rest assured that it will stand between him and God in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment on the authority of his commandments. Eccl. 12:13, 14.

A further and most conclusive confirmation of this is found in Paul's declaration in Rom. 7:14, "For we know that the law is spiritual." This proves decisively that what I have said is true, namely, that without a Christian spirit no one can keep the law of God. Inasmuch as the law is spiritual, obedience to the law is spiritual service to God. It is for this reason that Paul says the carnal mind, which cannot be subject to the law of God, is enmity against God.

And again, the law being spiritual, cannot be contrary to the gospel and to grace. And if, as some claim, the gospel supersedes the law, and releases us from its obligation, then the gospel has set aside that which is spiritual, and holy, and just, and good. But that is not the object of grace. Christ does indeed redeem us from the curse of the law, but not from the obligation of the law. The two ideas are inconsistent with each other. On this point the world has sadly strayed. They seem to think that the government of God needs remodelling to open the way for man's salvation. But it is not so. The government of God was always right, having for its basis a law which is holy, and just, and good, and spiritual. It is man that needs reconstructing; he has strayed from God, from his law, and from the way of justice, and holiness. Did Christ die to open a way for man still to slight the law of the Most High, and to be saved in disobedience? No, he came to reconcile us to his Father, and to put away sin, which is transgression of the law, even by the sacrifice of himself. He who persists in disobeying the Father is the one who frustrates grace. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid."

Now I claim that this point is also fully proved. The law is not suited to the tempers of people who are carnally minded. It will, indeed, reclaim them if they will walk in its precepts by the help of the Saviour, for "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." But I do not wish, my brother, to have you understand that I am presenting this argument as if it were in antagonism to you, or you to it. By no means, but in establishing certain principles—principles involved in your queries—it was necessary

to pursue this line of argument. I am very happy to read in your letter the remark: "It is because I am a child of God that I shall walk in obedience." I have endeavoured to show that when we are justified through faith, then first we are owned as servants of God; then first we can render acceptable service to him, or walk in harmony with his law. And if we obey him because we are his children, it will follow that if we continue to disobey his law it is because we are not his children; because we have not had the work of Christ perfected in us; we have not had sin put away from our hearts and lives.

God is doing a great work for his people to prepare them to stand in the perils of these last days. And perils are increasing; prophecy is fast fulfilling; the nations are preparing for a mighty conflict, and men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. Luke 21:26. And when the mystery of God is finished, and his work is accomplished, and the sins of his people are blotted out from the judgment records; when the Son of man comes and sends forth his angels to gather his elect, may we be of that company of whom it shall be said, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Matt. 24:30, 31; Rev. 14:9-14.

J. H. W.

ARE YOU DISCOURAGED? WHY?

IN one of the familiar hymns which we so often sing, occur these words:—

"Yet let nothing spoil your peace;
Christ shall also conquer these."

This language is spoken of those "foes within" which so often "betray us into sin." How will Christ conquer these? He will in the end, by an exertion of his own almighty power, destroy them, by destroying death and him that hath the power of death, that is the devil, the author of all those evil propensities by which men are drawn away and enticed.

While it is a great source of encouragement to know that this will be so in the future, and the promise is one which is most precious and very full of comfort, its practical benefits, so far as they affect our present circumstances, are at best but indirect. The trouble we have with these foes is now; and the question with us is, is there any way in which they are conquered for us in the present tense?

Yes, there is a sense in which Christ proposes to conquer these foes for us even now. He does not do this independently of any action on our part, but he conquers them by giving us the strength we need to overcome them. So while it is true that our inward foes are not conquered for us absolutely without our co-operation, while we cannot stand idly by and have

them brought and thrown lifeless at our feet, it is nevertheless true that we are not required to prosecute this warfare at our own charges, nor to depend for final victory on our own strength.

Our Lord has made provision for every emergency. He has arranged to supply every want, and told us to whom to apply in every time of need. Yet with all this we find some at times giving way to discouragement, and saying that they might as well give up the struggle; for they cannot accomplish the labour they have to perform, nor successfully prosecute the warfare in which they are engaged.

If we had to depend on our own resources, we might well feel and talk and act thus; but when we consider that all needed help is promised us from on high, this puts altogether a different complexion on the matter. With this fact in view, those who yield to discouragement, and propose thereupon to cease their efforts to run the Christian race, do one of three things: They disbelieve the Lord's promise to give them help when needed, or they insult his omnipotence by acting on the supposition that all the help he can impart is insufficient to meet the necessities of the case, or they despise their birthright by proclaiming that they care nothing for the object to be gained, or for the means by which to gain it. How is this treating the Lord?

Take an illustration: A person of wealth and ability takes another person into his employ. He assigns him a certain piece of work to perform. He gives him at the outset minute instructions, and informs him that at certain stages of the work it will be necessary for him to incur considerable expense, and at other times it will be necessary to bring to bear great power in order to accomplish certain operations. But he tells him to come right to him whenever any expense is incurred, for he has ample funds, and will supply all that may be needed; and when power is demanded he has all the mechanical contrivances and other means necessary to furnish it, and will produce them as occasion requires.

With matters thus arranged the man commences the work. Soon he incurs some expense, and thrusts his hand into his own pockets, and finds nothing to meet it. He comes to a hard place in the job, takes hold to exert what little strength he can, personally, and finds he can move nothing. Then he sits down and says, "I am discouraged. Here is expense that I cannot meet, and work to do that I am not able to perform. It's no use trying. I will give it all up."

What would his employer think of such service? Would he not say to him somewhat sharply, "What do you mean? Did I not tell you to come to me when-

ever funds were required and I would furnish them? And did I not tell you that for all the hard places, I had the means to produce the necessary power, and would furnish them at call? Do you doubt my word? Do you distrust my ability to meet my pledges? If so, I prefer some other person in your place who will show me more confidence and respect."

Just in this way does every discouraged Christian treat the Lord. What right had the man in the illustration to become discouraged and treat his employer as he did? What right has the Christian to act exactly thus toward the Lord of glory? Our short-comings and failures are owing to the fact that we try to meet the expense out of our own pocket, and carry on the work in our own strength. The fault is not with the Lord, nor with his plan. The plan is marked throughout with infinite wisdom, and the armoury of Heaven is full of weapons, all placed at our disposal through the key of faith and the channel of prayer.

Let there be no talk of discouragement nor of giving up the struggle. But let there be a going to the Fountain for life and vigour; let there be appeals to the Wise for wisdom, to the Strong for strength. The Lord has the means we need, even the gold tried in the fire; he has the clothing we must procure, the white raiment; he has the wisdom, the eye-salve with which he counsels us to anoint our eyes that we may see. With the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; and if we are his children, and work in the way he directs, that strength is ours.

U. S.

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.

THE CAUSES OF SPIRITUAL DECLENSION.

THE recent mission-hall census shows that the attendance at all the multitudinous mission-halls of London is less than 200,000. These figures have been a source of surprise to many as they show that an exceedingly small proportion of those who are not connected with the churches are reached by the mission-work. Mean-time freethought, secularism, and theosophy are actively and aggressively engaged in their work. The only barrier which can be erected against this flood of infidelity is the preaching of the Word in its purity, and the gospel in its simplicity. Is this being done, or is the lack of interest in practical religion apparent to-day due to the fact that the Scriptures are not held up as the word of God at which we should tremble?

The Rev. Archibald Brown, of the

East-end Tabernacle writes a stirring letter to the *British Weekly* in which he charges the spiritual declension among the people to the cause to which we believe it rightfully belongs. He says:—

"That a great change has come over evangelistic enterprise none can deny. So great indeed is the change, that some of us who have been nearly all our life engaged in the work now hardly know where we are. The preaching used to be the sole attraction. Judging from the announcements placarded on all our walls it is now one of the least. Choirs, solos, cornets, stringed bands, organ recitals, and I know not what besides, are the baits held out. The Bible is being shelved, and simple exposition giving place to smart anecdotes and the relation of 'past experiences,' which were better forgotten as they have been forgiven. The great aim seems to be to make a service 'bright' and 'pleasant,' rather than soul searching. A 'happy evening' is about the last thing an unconverted soul needs, and about the last thing he would get were Paul the preacher. There is all too little mention of the sinfulness of sin and the righteousness of God. Pleasing the people has taken the place of warning them. The result is that the taste of the masses has become vitiated. They have drunk of the wine of sensationalism until a service with no other attraction than 'the book' seems flat and insipid. Like dram-drinking, the dose has to be perpetually increased or it loses its effect. At the present time there is a dead indifference among the people which, in my judgment, the rank sensationalism of the past few years is largely accountable for. We must get back to simplicity of method, or there will be evil times ahead. *The Bible must be more honoured,* and reliance placed alone on the Spirit's application of the word. The clap-trap of the day is degrading the work of Christ and demoralizing the people. It gives the infidel ground for saying—as one did to my knowledge lately—'Their Christ is played out.' This remark was made as he pointed to a flaming bill outside a mission-hall announcing some special attractions. That some churches and chapels are little, if any better, in no wise affects the question. It only makes the matter the more serious.

"Then look again at what is done on a week day, and done in the name of Christian work! What would our grandfathers have said to such an announcement as this in connection with supposed evangelistic work: 'Grand pictorial comic pantomime! Lots of fun and roars of laughter for everybody. Come early!'

"Entertainments, concerts, tableaux, and such like are playing havoc with the work of God. In the name of religion our children are being trained for the theatre, and under the shadow of the name of Christ young people are being introduced to the 'world.'

"The devil never did a cleverer thing than when he suggested to the church of Christ that it was part of her mission to amuse the people. The Lord come to our rescue, or we shall soon have Holy Ghost power 'amused' out of our sanctuaries and halls. More Bible teaching, more prayer, more reverence, more simplicity, more Puritanism, more going outside the camp to a rejected Christ—these are the great needs of to-day.

"We have had enough of the rattle of clap-trap. Let us wait on God until we hear the thunder of *his power*. The Lord bring again to the front apostolic methods and apostolic doctrine; then shall we have apostolic success."

The preaching of apostolic doctrine will bring to light the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The reason why this doctrine is not more preached to-day is that the creeds of Christendom are sadly at variance with it. "To the law and to the testimony" we must bring

all doctrine, and all truly apostolic methods will be found upholding the truth in its purity, and enforcing the claims of God's law. Then might we hope for apostolic success, for "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."

Our American Letter.

DESCRIPTION OF A "BLIZZARD."

Battle Creek, Mich., Feb. 9.

IN my last "American Letter" I believe I made the statement that the climate of America differs greatly from that of the most of Europe, the winter seasons being much colder, even in the same latitudes. If my English readers could have been in America for a few weeks past, particularly a certain portion of it, they would have had a chance to verify this statement in a very convincing and perhaps disagreeable manner. I refer to the great storm which swept over that portion of our country during the latter part of January, and which, from its unusual severity, will doubtless pass into history as the "great storm of 1888." While severe winter storms are not infrequent over all the northern half of the United States, it is only on the great plains stretching westward from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains that their greatest fury is experienced. From the peculiar severity with which they sweep across that region, they have been given individually the distinguishing title of "blizzard." The district over which the "blizzard" holds sway embraces the States of Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Texas, and the Territories of Dakota, and Montana. In this connection it will doubtless be of interest to the reader to present a brief picture of one of these storms, which probably can be experienced nowhere else in the world.

Let us imagine ourselves situated in that portion of the country where the "blizzard" is said to be of most frequent occurrence; namely, the Territory of Dakota. We find the country but thinly settled, for the Territory is large and still comparatively new. On all sides of us we behold a vast and nearly level prairie, stretching as far as the eye can reach, its surface unbroken by hill or tree, or any other object save perchance the scattered and irregular dwellings of some frontier settlement, of very unpretentious though solid construction. The day has dawned auspiciously, but there have been visible certain atmospheric signs which to the experienced eye portend a commotion in the elements, and the older and more cautious of the inhabitants are careful not to venture out far upon the open prairie. Coming nearer to some of the scattered dwellings of the settlement, we perchance see a man engaged in stretching a rope between his house and barn. Upon our inquiring the reason, he informs us that it is necessary to insure communication between the two in the event of the storm. The distance being only a few rods, we look incredulous and perhaps are inclined to laugh at such precautions; but let us wait and see.

Meanwhile a gray mist has obscured the sun, and a dull, slate-coloured cloud rapidly mounts up on the horizon and spreads across the heaven. The air, which till now has been calm, is agitated by sudden gusts, and the atmosphere grows perceptibly colder. The heavens become rapidly obscured, and ere long short flurries of snow begin to follow each other at occasional intervals. The sky is now totally overcast, the air has a biting chill, and the snow flurries are sharp and frequent. Suddenly there appears in the distance a surging, irregular wall of white, which is borne

toward us with the swiftness of the wind. We have small leisure to watch its progress ere the whirling mass is upon us. In an instant everything upon which the eye can rest is obliterated. No true picture of a blizzard can be given on paper, as it would present only the appearance of a blank sheet. The fury of the wind is indescribable, and the smitten traveller, blind and struggling for breath, involuntarily turns from before it. Minute particles of snow, frozen hard, and whirled about in blinding clouds, cut the face like needles. The roaring and shrieking of the blast is deafening, and one can easily imagine that all the sounds with which a life-time or experience has made him familiar are being reproduced in a simultaneous chorus.

The velocity of the wind during a blizzard is very great but its path is far from being an undeviating line. Shifting and eddying continually, it whirls the snow about in every conceivable manner, now precipitating it in dense clouds upon the earth, and anon, with a sudden swoop, catching up an immense bank and whirling it aloft, laying bare the dark surface of the ground. Surging billows of white rise and disappear, and chase each other along the surface like the billows of the sea. Woe betide the luckless traveller whom the raging white monster overtakes and locks in his embrace upon the open prairie. His chance for life is about as good as if he were thrown overboard in mid-ocean. Utterly bewildered by the storm and chilled to the bone by the frigid blast, he wanders aimlessly about until, benumbed and exhausted, he sinks down in the snow, nevermore, by his own efforts and will, to rise. After the storm has subsided—perchance not till the snows of winter have melted away—his body is found and given the customary mode of burial.

It is one of the peculiarities of the blizzard that it falls upon its victims unexpectedly, and gathers its harvest of frozen humanity in the immediate vicinity of shelter and safety. Let us imagine the settler overtaken in his barn, caring for his stock. The house is only a few rods distant, but he has not taken the precaution to stretch a rope between, and the blinding cloud of snow renders objects even at arm's length almost invisible. Knowing the direction well, however, he anticipates no trouble, and so, having taken his bearings, he plunges into the storm. For a short distance he holds his course correctly, when a blast of more than usual fury forces him to pause for a moment, with lowered and averted face. When he is again ready to proceed he is not quite sure of his direction. He strains his eyes to pierce through the flying mass before him, but nothing is visible. Beginning to get bewildered, he looks around for the building he has just left. That, too, has disappeared. To shout would be worse than useless, for no human voice has power to rise above the shrieking of the blast. A strange sense of helplessness comes over him, but delay being out of the question, he plunges desperately ahead in the supposed direction of shelter, and perhaps almost brushing the house, passes on beyond it to wander hopelessly about upon the prairie. When the storm has ceased his body is discovered, it may be miles from home, or it may be only a few rods.

It is hardly necessary to state that a blizzard seriously interferes with railway travel, and sometimes suspends it altogether. Out on the level plains, with nothing to break the force of the wind, the snow piles up in almost mountainous drifts, and whole villages are cut off from communication with the outside world for days together, often to the great peril of the inhabitants. Railway trains are frequently "stalled" by the snow between stations, and the passengers have nothing to do but to make the best of the situation until the track is again cleared. If the supply of coal runs low, as happened on one such occasion during the recent storm, there is imminent danger of their freezing to death.

Well, says the reader, I'm thankful I don't

live in such a country. Such conditions of climate must demand of the inhabitants constitutional powers little short of the miraculous. To one reflecting in this strain, it would doubtless cause some surprise to be told that persons going from this country to England, or to the Pacific Coast of America, where snow is practically unknown, suffer more from cold in their new location than they did before; yet such is frequently the case. This result is largely due to the influence of atmospheric moisture. It is a well-known fact, in this country at least, that a very low temperature, with a dry atmosphere, is far more comfortable than a comparatively mild temperature when the air is damp and foggy; which, taken in connection with the fact that in countries subject to the latter conditions of climate there is usually little or no provision made for resisting their effects, will explain why many regard them less preferable in point of climate than colder longitudes. True, such storms as sometimes prevail in the blizzard region of the north-west, considered in their best light, are very objectionable features; but it must be remembered that these, even in that region, are quite infrequent, and are never experienced in by far the largest portion of the United States. To the aged, infirm, and poverty-stricken, the winter season brings often much suffering; but to most others, notwithstanding the frigid horrors with which the imaginations of those in warmer countries invest it, there is no portion of the year more welcome. We feel safe in asserting that such would be the verdict of by far the larger number of the 35,000,000 citizens of our Northern States.

L. A. S.

The Missionary.

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

EVERY-DAY WORK.

GREAT deeds are trumpeted, loud bells are rung,
And men turn round to see;
The high peaks echo to the pæans sung
O'er some great victory;
And yet great deeds are few,—the mightiest men
Find opportunities but now and then.

Shall one sit idle through long days of peace,
Waiting for walls to scale?
Or lay in port until some "Golden Fleece"
Lures him to face the gale?
There's work enough; why idly then delay?
His work counts most who labours every day.

A torrent sweeps adown the mountain brow
With foam and flash and roar;
Anon its strength is spent, where is it now?
Its one short day is o'er.
But the clear stream that through the meadow
flows
All the long summer on its mission goes.

Better the steady flow; the torrent's dash
Soon leaves its rent track dry,
The light we love is not the lightning flash
From out a midnight sky,
But the sweet sunshine, whose unfailling ray,
From its calm throne of blue, lights every day.

The sweetest lives are those to duty wed,
Whose deeds both great and small
Are close knit strands of an unbroken thread,
When love ennobles all.
The world may sound no trumpets, ring no bells;
The book of life the shining record tells.
—Christian at Work.

THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

THE tent-meetings in Carlton, one of the suburbs of Melbourne, have closed. Twenty-seven signed the covenant. Of these, thirteen united with the church at the last quarterly meeting, nine receiving baptism. None have as yet given up the truth, and we look for nearly or quite all the others to unite with us.

To-day, Bro. Curtis is pitching his tent in Clifton Hill, where he will commence meetings next Sunday evening. Many prayers will ascend that as good a measure of success may attend this effort as has crowned the one that has just closed.

The church quarterly meeting was held Jan. 8. Bro. Israel was present to conduct the exercises. As usual, there was a good attendance of the brethren and sisters, and we were pleased to see many faces of persons who within the past three months have learned to love the truth that is so dear to all our hearts. The responses given as Bro. Miller, the church clerk, called the names, indicated a healthy state of the church. After a short discourse on this subject by Bro. Curtis, the ordinances of the Lord's house were celebrated.

The tract society quarterly meeting was held the next day, Bro. Henry Scott presiding in the absence of the President, Bro. M. C. Israel. Only about forty per cent. of the members reported this quarter; but the reports returned showed an encouraging amount of work done. Those who failed to report have not been idle, and had all reported, the showing would have been more favourable. The question of missionary papers for the coming year was brought up. About 640 copies of the *Echo* have now been subscribed for, to be used for this purpose, and persons who were not present will probably increase the number to 700. Nine distributors were taken; and some of these, filled with reading matter, are now in coffee palaces and other public places.

Besides the individual reports, some very interesting letters were read, showing the favour with which our publications are received. One was from a lay preacher in New South Wales who accidentally came in possession of a few pages of the November *Echo*, and was so well pleased that he sent for the November and December number, with a view to becoming a permanent subscriber. Another was from a telegraph operator in Adelaide, S. A. This gentleman had come into possession of a copy of the *Echo*, and he characterizes its contents as "wholesome," "healthy truth, unlike the trash one sometimes gets hold of, that is misnamed a religious paper." This gentleman not only subscribed for the *Echo*, but called for the back numbers for the year 1886.

In Geelong, two persons, a man and his wife, have been led to embrace the truth through the efforts of a brother and his wife residing there. The *Echo* has been sent to a lady in Tasmania. She was so pleased with it that she became a subscriber, and now finds interested readers for six copies each month. She has subscribed for two copies of *Our Australasian Youth*.

Yesterday Bro. Curtis received a letter from the captain of the barque Tynron from Liverpool. While in Liverpool he met Bro. Drew, had some conversations with him on the truth, and purchased some books. He inquires where our meetings are held, and expresses a desire to know more of the truth.

The interest in Kyneton was interrupted and much injured by the holidays. Bro. Israel will probably soon leave the work there to be finished up by Bro. and Sr. Baker and a Bible-worker, and will proceed, with the tent, to Tasmania, where there seems to be every prospect that good can be accomplished.

E. J. BURNHAM.

Melbourne, Jan. 12.

GIVING WHILE IN DEBT.

THE question often arises in the minds of conscientious people, "Am I at liberty to contribute to benevolent objects while I am in debt? While I am owing money, all my income beyond my support ought to go to my creditors, hence I can give nothing till after I pay what I owe. Will the candid and honest

doubter allow us a few words that may help him to a conclusion?

1. If it is established that no one can give money for benevolence while he is yet owing money for just debts, then not one in five thousand would ever give to any cause whatever, for not more than one in that number is accustomed to sleep free of debt. It is the usage of our times to pay at the end of the week, or of the month, or of the quarter. Debt in some form is so universal, that a rule of this kind would per force suspend all benevolence.

2. If this should be given out as the rule that no one should give in charity or benevolence while he is in debt, there are some stupid and avaricious souls who would involve themselves on purpose, and make the Christian duty of paying debts first, a reason for not obeying a divine command.

3. We may learn the will of the Lord in this matter by recalling his enactments for Israel. He required that all the gross income was to be taxed and tithed as it came to hand. It was not to be used in settling up for last year's mistakes or follies, but as sure as a farmer gathered nine figs, or nine bunches of grapes, or nine sheaves of wheat, or had an income of nine cattle, or nine sheep, the tenth always belonged to the Lord. It was taken in kind, and taken directly from the tree or from the field, and it paid no tribute to creditor, tax-gatherer, nor even to the owner's support. There were no circumstances that were allowed to annul or even suspend this law. The Lord had need, for his own purposes, of a tenth of all that he caused to grow, and of all the labour which he gave men strength to perform.

4. When a person is largely in debt, beyond means of immediate payment of all claims, it is usual, and it is deemed equitable, to pay each claimant a just proportion of cash on hand, or of funds that he may accumulate. If we are owing to our neighbours, we are also greatly indebted to our heavenly Father, and it is just and right that we pay our proportion to both the heavenly and the earthly creditors.

5. There remains a difficult question, Must I still pay one-tenth, while I am owing my neighbours? Look at it! From God we receive life, and all its joys and comforts and hopes, and all our capabilities. If we rent a farm, we pay an annual rental of say one-third. What God gives us is of more value than the rented farm is to us. If I am a day labourer or a professional man, a mechanic or a minister, one-tenth of all that comes in will be the least that the shadowing of the old law would require.

6. But the Jewish law levied one-tenth for the temple. There was another tenth for the Levites and still other regular demands, making an aggregate of nearly, if not quite, four-tenths. When they paid the most, as in the time of David and Solomon, they prospered the most. At the rate of their annual payments, in the time of Solomon, our war debt, as it was in 1865, would have been all paid in seven or eight years. The same is true now as far as it has been tested. As a general rule the men who contribute the most for the Lord's work, are the most prospered men in the land. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."

7. We are to take with caution the statement that the Lord, directly, and in kind, rewards all those who give money for his work. If this were literally true then there is no need of faith, nor is there any benevolence in it on our part, more than when, having two horses, we trade one for a carriage. Benevolent giving implies giving, hoping for nothing again. We are so to give as to cultivate consecration, and to broaden and to beautify our character, without any definite covenant being made as to the time or mode of the divine repayment.—*Golden Censer*.

AN age of work will be but as a few days to those that love God, and long for Christ's appearing.

The Sabbath-school.

"And thou shalt teach them diligently."—Deut. 6: 7.

LESSON 9.—ADAM DRIVEN FROM THE GARDEN.

AFTER Adam and Eve had eaten the fruit, they felt guilty, and hid themselves among the trees of the garden. When the Lord came into the garden, he called to Adam, and said, "Where art thou?" Then Adam said, I was afraid, and hid myself. And the Lord said, "Hast thou eaten of the tree?" And Adam said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the fruit, and I did eat." "And the Lord God said unto the woman, 'What is this that thou hast done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.'"

So Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and God sent them forth from the garden, and placed a flaming sword at the entrance, so that they could not go back again. And the Lord made coats of skins for Adam and his wife, and told Adam that he must get his food by tilling the ground.

QUESTIONS.

1. What did Adam and Eve do after they had eaten of the fruit of the tree? Gen. 3:8.
2. How did they feel?
3. Why did they feel guilty?
4. What did the Lord say to Adam? Verse 9.
5. How did Adam answer him? Verse 10.
6. What question did the Lord then ask him? Verse 11.
7. What did Adam say? Verse 12.
8. Did not Adam seem to blame God by speaking in this way?
9. What did Eve say when God questioned her? Verse 13.
10. Do you think God was pleased to have them put all the blame on some one else?
11. Do you think he is pleased to have us blame others when we have done wrong?
12. What did the Lord do with Adam and Eve? Verse 23.
13. How did he keep them from going back? Verse 24.
14. What did he make for them to wear? Verse 21.
15. How did he say that Adam must get his food? Verse 19.

LESSON 10.—CAIN AND ABEL.

ADAM and Eve had two sons. The name of the older son was Cain, and the name of the younger was Abel. Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

Now when Cain and Abel had grown to be men, they brought offerings to the Lord. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought a lamb. And the Lord was pleased with Abel and with his offering, but with Cain and his offering, he was displeased. This made Cain very angry.

And the Lord said unto Cain, "Why art thou wroth? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" But Cain would not be persuaded; and one day when they were in the field together, Cain rose up against Abel, and killed him. And the Lord said unto Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" And he said, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?"

QUESTIONS.

1. What names did Adam and Eve give to their two sons? Gen. 4: 1, 2.

2. Which was the older?
3. After they had grown to be men, what did they bring to the Lord? Verses 3, 4.
4. What did Cain bring for an offering?
5. What did Abel bring?
6. How did the Lord regard Abel's offering? Verse 5.
7. How did he regard Cain's offering? Verse 5.
8. What effect had this upon Cain?
9. What did the Lord say to Cain? Verses 6, 7.
10. Was Cain persuaded by these words?
11. What did Cain do one day as he and Abel were in the field together? Verse 8.
12. After Cain had killed his brother, what did the Lord say to him? Verse 9.
13. What answer did Cain make?
14. Did he tell the truth?
15. Did he treat the great God with respect, when he said, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

BLACKBOARD ILLUSTRATIONS.

NO SABBATH-SCHOOL should be without a good blackboard. There is not a lesson recited but what some point can be so illustrated on the blackboard, that a lasting impression may be made upon the mind. A map of the country rudely sketched on the board gives a better idea than a long drill on the best of maps. A picture of some part of the lesson will add to the interest already awakened by study.

A general blackboard lesson for the whole school upon some Bible topic is sure to add to the interest. These lessons should be made very simple, and the illustration should not be so finely executed as to draw all the attention to the ability of the artist, and lose the force of the lesson to be taught. Occasionally, a well-executed landscape of Bible lands, may be interesting and instructive, but I have found the most interest taken when the drawing is partly or wholly executed while giving the lesson.

If the superintendent would prepare some illustrations on the lessons which are found in PRESENT TRUTH, he would find them a very great help in reviewing the classes who study those lessons. Suppose he wished to review the class studying on the creation. He should have printed on his blackboard in large letters, *first and second*, days, allowing a space for each day. Then call for hands of those who could give an account of what was created on the first day, allowing one pupil to give only one thing, then call on another. After the space allowed for the first day has been filled, go on with each of the other days, the superintendent, or some one chosen to conduct the exercise, writing the record in the proper space on the board. Sometimes an interest is awakened, by calling on some of the fathers or mothers to give the events of one of the creation days, allowing the children to make corrections. Very frequently the older members of the school will find that they do not remember as much of the creation week as their children.

Another very interesting blackboard lesson for the whole school is to choose some word, and have each one learn a verse of Scripture containing that word. The word *crown* might be used one Sabbath, and have a picture of a crown on the board. As texts are repeated which give some interesting thought, write the leading thought on or close beside the picture.

You will have such words as "incorruptible crown;" "crown of life;" "crown of rejoicing," etc. Leave your work on the board for the next week, and request verses to be repeated on the word *cross*. Draw a cross just under your crown. When the texts are all repeated, you will have illustrated on your board the importance of bearing the cross in order to wear the crown. This work can be left on the board for the third Sabbath, when a picture of a book can be drawn at the foot of the cross, representing the *Word of life*. From this you can instruct the school that the *Word* must be studied in order to know how to take up the cross, and the cross must be borne, if we would wear the crown.

I have given these examples of general blackboard lessons for Sabbath-schools to show that by a little thought and practice, the blackboard may be used with much profit in all our Sabbath-schools.

Perhaps other thoughts will be suggested in the future, to assist those who are anxious to make the Sabbath-school work a success. But in this part of the work as well as all other parts, a burden for doing good, that leads to earnestness and much prayer, is sure to be crowned with success.

J. H. DURLAND.

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.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST, WHERE WILL IT BE?

1. DID Jesus promise his disciples a reward in heaven?
"Great is your reward in heaven." Matt. 5: 12.
2. To whom did Jesus go when he left the earth?
"Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me." John 7: 33. "I go unto my Father." Chap. 14: 12.
3. Could the Jews go where he was going?
"Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, thither ye cannot come." Chap. 7: 34.
4. Could his own disciples go thither?
"Little children, . . . as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." Chap. 13: 33.
5. Did he promise Peter that at some future time he should follow him thither?
"Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." Verse 36.
6. Are there places of abode in heaven?
"In my Father's house are many mansions." Chap. 14: 2.
7. Did Jesus go there to prepare a place for his disciples?
"I go to prepare a place for you." *Id.*
8. Did he promise to come again and take them to be with him there?
"I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Verse 3.
9. Will the saints be caught up from the earth when they go to meet the Lord?
"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.
10. On what mount will they stand who are

delivered from the last persecution, that of Rev. 13:15-17?

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand." Chap. 14:1.

11. Is Mount Zion a part of the heavenly Jerusalem?

"But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." Heb. 12:22.

12. Is this Jerusalem above?

"Jerusalem which is above is free." Gal. 4:26.

13. Where are the victors when they sing the final triumph?

"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Rev. 15:2.

14. Is the sea of glass in heaven?

"A throne was set in heaven." "And before the throne there was a sea of glass." Chap. 4:2, 6.

15. Will the earth ever be without an inhabitant?

"I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form and void." "I beheld, and, lo, there was no man." Jer. 4:23, 25. "I have cut off the nations; their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by; their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant." Zeph. 3:6. "For all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Verse 8. "He shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land." Chap. 1:18.

16. Where will the people of God be when the earth is desolate?

17. In what day shall the earth be desolated?
"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Isa. 13:9.

18. Who shall be destroyed out of it?

19. Was the day of the Lord still in the future in the time of the apostles?

"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." 1 Thess. 5:2.

20. Does the apostle also teach that the wicked will then be destroyed?

"Sudden destruction cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape." Verse 3.

21. What signs shall precede that day? See Rev. 6:12-17.

22. Will the coming of Christ also follow these signs? See Matt. 24:29-31.

23. Who are raised from the dead at his coming?

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise." 1 Thess. 4:16.

24. When the saints and martyrs live again, with whom do they reign?

"And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Rev. 20:4.

25. How long is it before the rest of the dead, the wicked, live again?

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Verse 5.

26. Are there any of the wicked living during the thousand years? or have the remnant of them been slain?

"And the remnant was slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Rev. 19:21; see also Jer. 25:30-33.

27. The wicked being dead during the thousand years, if the righteous are reigning with Christ in heaven during the same time, will not the earth be without an inhabitant, as foretold by the prophets?

28. But if the saints reign on the earth during the thousand years, and then upon the renewed earth "reign forever and ever," as declared in Rev. 22:5, when will the earth be

"utterly emptied," so that there will be "none inhabitant," as the prophets have declared?

29. When the saints are redeemed, and reign as kings and priests unto God, do they look forward to the time when they shall reign on the earth?

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. 5:10.

30. When they reign on the earth renewed, how long will they reign?

"And they shall reign forever and ever." Chap. 22:5.

R. F. COTTRELL.

Interesting Items.

—The Italian Exhibition is to be opened in London in May.

—In New Zealand, the Factory Act limits the day to eight hours.

—London firemen are to be dressed in clothing made of asbestos.

—General Count de Robilant is to be the Italian Ambassador in London.

—An anonymous donor has sent £1,000 towards the Guy's Hospital Special Appeal Fund.

—A little child gave an alarm of fire at a house in Glasgow, and the entire family escaped.

—The Great Northern Railway is about to adopt the automatic principle of continuous brakes.

—The wine used at the communion in Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle is entirely free from alcohol.

—The British Empire contains 9,339,000 square miles, and the population is estimated at 307,000,000.

—A Russian prince while sketching in France, was mistaken for a German spy, and placed under arrest.

—A fisherman hauling in his lines off Stonehaven, hooked up a watch and chain from the bottom of the sea.

—A young lady, aged nineteen, who was over seven feet in height, and weighed twenty stone, has just died in Lancashire.

—A steam-derrick fell upon a train on an elevated railroad at Brooklyn. Three persons were killed and several seriously injured.

—During the recent cold weather, San Francisco was visited by thousands of snow-birds of a species never seen there before.

—It is announced from New York that a thousand persons have been rendered homeless by the recent cyclone at Mount Vernon, Ill.

—M. Land estimates that £400,000,000 have been lost to France through phylloxera. This is just double the war indemnity after 1870.

—Lord Dufferin will be appointed to the British Embassy at Rome when the present Ambassador, Sir J. S. Lumley's term of office expires.

—At Newcastle, Cal., a fig-tree measures eight feet four inches in circumference, one foot from the ground; its branches cover 2,500 feet of surface.

—A Mr. Harris left property to Preston which has realized £285,000. This amount will be mainly spent in providing a free library and orphanage.

—An explosion occurred in the Kreuzgraben coal mine, in the Saar district, Germany, Feb. 15, by which forty miners were killed. Thirty-six others were rescued.

—One of the Japan mail steamers *en route* for Korea from Chefoo sighted a Chinese junk bottom upwards. Eight men clung to the vessel, who had been without food or water thirteen days. The crew originally numbered nineteen.

—The Mercer Canal in California has taken five years and a-half, and \$1,500,000 in money, to complete. It is twenty-seven miles long, and irrigates 300,000 acres.

—Mr Spurgeon has expressed his willingness either to resign his presidency of the Pastors' College Conference, or to dissolve it with a view to its immediate reconstruction.

—Eight Siberian wolves escaped from their cage at Sanger's circus, in London, and got into a stable, where they were fastened in; after having devoured a valuable horse they were captured by their keepers.

—It is estimated that pin factories in New England turn out 10,800,000 pins yearly, and that other factories in the States bring the number up to 18,000,000. This is equal to about one pin a day for every inhabitant of the United States.

—M. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu gives figures showing the quantity of tobacco consumed in the different countries of Europe. The rate per hundred inhabitants is as follows: Spain, 110 pounds; Italy, 128 pounds; Great Britain, 138 pounds; Russia, 182 pounds; Denmark, 224 pounds; Norway, 229 pounds; Austria, 273 pounds.

—A declaration agreed upon between England and France, defining the functions and powers of the Joint Anglo-French Naval Commission for the New Hebrides, and establishing regulations for its guidance, was signed at Paris on the 26th ultimo. Military force will not be resorted to unless it is considered absolutely necessary.

—It is expected that Mr. Goschen, in his Estimates, will ask for £450,000 as a first instalment on the part of England towards the provision of an Australasian squadron for the protection of the British Colonies in the Pacific, to be spent almost wholly in building or providing ships. The Australasian Colonies are expected to contribute an equal amount for the same purpose.

—The whole of the Sioux and Apache Indians, at present located in the Wild West camp at Salford, together with the principal persons connected with the company, were present at the Episcopal church, recently, to witness the christening of the infant child of the Sioux Indian "Little Chief." After the baptismal rites the assembled body of Indians sang "Nearer my God to Thee," in the Sioux tongue.

—The Foreign Office has just issued its report on trade of other countries for 1886-7, in which it states that France made 4,000,000 gallons more spirits during the twelve months than in any previous year; she imported 3,500,000 gallons besides, or 200,000 more than before. The amount of money spent in the United States for spirits alone, during 1886, was nearly £50,000. Russia reduced her drink bill one-half, Sweden one-third, and England one-eighth. All the other countries from which returns are given, including Central Africa, South America, and China, show an increase.

OUR AGENTS.

GREAT BRITAIN.

International Book Depository, 48 Paternoster Row, London, E. C.

AMERICA.

Review and Herald, Battle Creek, Michigan.
Signs of the Times, Oakland, California.
New England T. and M. Society, South Lancaster, Massachusetts.

CONTINENT.

Les Signes des Temps, Basle, Switzerland.
Sundhedsbladet, Christiania, Norway.

AFRICA.

International Tract Society, Cape Town, South Africa.

AUSTRALASIA.

Bible Echo, Corner Rae and Scotchmer Streets, North Fitzroy, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS.

BOOKS BOUND IN MUSLIN.

Man's Nature and Destiny.—The state of the dead, the reward of the righteous, and the end of the wicked. By U. Smith. A logical and scriptural treatise concerning man in his present state, his condition in death, and his prospects beyond the resurrection. 444 pp. Price, 6s. 9d.

Synopsis of the Present Truth.—This work takes up those topics which the author usually presents in a lecture course at the Theological Institute, and gives a careful explanation of over thirty important Bible subjects. By U. Smith. 336 pp. Price, 4s. 9d.

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THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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

LONDON, MARCH 1, 1888

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SPECIAL NOTICE.—Any one receiving this Periodical by post, not having subscribed for it, will not be called upon by us to pay for what he has not ordered. The paper has probably been sent by some friend or missionary society. Please read it and give it to your friends to read.

"REFLECTING the other day upon the sad state of the churches at the present moment, I was led to look back to apostolic time, and to consider wherein the preaching of the present day differed from the preaching of the apostles. I remarked the vast difference in their style from the set and formal oratory of the present age. But the main difference I observed was in the subject of their preaching. Surprised I was when I discovered that the very staple of the preaching of the apostles was the resurrection of the dead. The apostles, when they preached, always testified concerning the resurrection of Jesus, and the consequent resurrection of the dead. It appears that the alpha and omega of their gospel was the testimony that Jesus died and rose again from the dead, according to the Scriptures."—*Spurgeon*.

WE would like to ask a few questions of those who claim that the law of God was all abolished at the cross, and that Christ and his apostles gave us a new law afterward. *When* was the new law given? what day? at what time? Name it, if you can. *Where* was it given? in Jerusalem? on the Mount of Olives? at Antioch? where? Find it, please. *How* was it given? vocally? written out? printed? how? Tell us something about it. *How many* precepts has this new law? ten, or eleven? eight, or twelve? If there is such a law, you certainly should be able to answer these simple questions about it. Which is the first precept? which is the

last? Tell us, please. To whom was it given? to the apostles, to the world, to Gentiles, to Jews, to whom? What is the penalty of this new law? Is it death, or stripes, or burning, or stoning? What is it? Where do you find it? The fact is that no such new law ever was given, and the man does not live who can find it.—*Exchange*.

THE LAW NECESSARY.

Or the necessity of dwelling upon the law of God, Bishop Simpson once uttered the following golden words, being the closing remarks of a lecture delivered by that eminent man on "Preaching," at Yale College:—

"The law of God should be distinctly set forth. The congregation should be gathered as around the base of Sinai, as from the summit is heard the voice of God in those commandments which are eternal and unalterable in their character. The effect of preaching the law will be that some hearts will be opened; others may be repelled, and say, 'Let not God speak to us any more.' Some will object to the preaching of the law, and say, 'Prophecy better things.' But still the law must be preached. It brings the sinner to a recognition of his sins, that he has transgressed God's holy law, and shows him the fearfulness of the doom which is impending over him. The law must be followed by the gospel. The awakened sinner must be pointed to the Saviour, that he may see that, deep as his transgression may be, the blood of Christ can wash it away. There are many preachers who love to talk of the gospel alone. They dwell especially upon the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Christ. This is well. It is more than well. It is essential. But sometimes they neglect these matters of the law, and assign them to a place in the past age, claiming that men now can be best moved by love alone. They may thus rear a beautiful structure; but its foundation is on the sand. No true edifice can be raised without its foundation's being dug deep by repentance toward God. The gospel has no significance, except as it is based on the positive law, which Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil. The law without the gospel leads to service; the gospel without the law leads to Antinomianism; the two combined—charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned."

WHY THEY ARE ZEALOUS.

THE class of Sabbath-keepers known as Seventh-day Adventists are frequently accused of being great sticklers for the particular day, and of exhibiting a zeal in the matter amounting almost to pertinacity. This may be partly true, but the Author of the Sabbath himself has spoken of this very thing. Hear what he says: "Thus saith the Lord, . . . Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it, that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." Isa. 56:1, 2. The Hebrew word *Kha-zak*, here translated "lay hold," means "to bind fast; to hold fast, to cleave, to adhere firmly; to make firm, to strengthen; to be urgent, to press upon; to show one's self strong, courageous, brave," etc. (See Gesenius's Heb. Lex.) Its use is shown in a few texts as follows:—

"And while he [Lot] lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand." Gen. 19:16.

"And they caught every one his fellow." 2 Sam. 2:16.

"And caught hold on the horns of the altar." 1 Kings 1:50.

"Let him take hold of my strength." Isa. 27:5.

"They shall lay hold on bow and spear." Jer. 6:23.

"The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits." Dan. 11:32.

The word occurs some three hundred times after the examples here given. This explains why the S. D. A. people have a zeal in Sabbath observance amounting almost to enthusiasm. God has promised "a blessing" upon those who do this, who lay hold upon the Sabbath truth; and what God blesses is blessed, and he whom God makes strong, man cannot make weak.—*Gospel Sickle*.

WHOSE WORD DO YOU BELIEVE?

WHEN man was first placed on probation, two positive declarations were made to him, one by God and one by Satan. God said to Adam that should he partake of the forbidden fruit he would surely die. Satan's statement was the opposite, viz., that he would not surely die. Unfortunately, Adam took Satan's word instead of God's, and what is still further exceedingly unfortunate is that the great majority of mankind at the present time are doing the same thing; they insist on believing that man does not and cannot die; that what seems death is only transition. Reader, whose word are you taking in this matter, God's or Satan's?

The New Testament speaks of death as a sleep. It represents the saints who are in their graves as asleep in Jesus. What is the appropriateness of this figure? What is the peculiarity of sleep?—Respiration and circulation go on as usual, and we are in the exercise of all the bodily functions, except that *consciousness is suspended*. There is, therefore, nothing in sleep that can properly be compared with death, except this one feature, its condition of unconsciousness. And this harmonizes with Psa. 146:4—"His thoughts perish."

The destiny of all men, both the righteous and the wicked, will be decided by the judgment. Men will be judged before they are rewarded or punished. It is not reasonable nor scriptural that one shall enjoy the bliss of heaven and another endure the fiery hell of torment for years and centuries before they have been judged worthy of either. And it is a fact expressly revealed that God "hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness;" and the reader will please note that that day was still future four thousand years this side of the creation. Acts 17:31.—*Selected*.

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