

# THE PRESENT TRUTH

"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth."—St. John 17: 17.

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"OUT of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord." Ps. cxxx. 1. And he did not cry in vain. The depths from which he cried were the depths of sin; for he said, "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." "Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." So out of the depths of iniquity we may cry to the Lord, with the assurance that He will gladly help us. We cannot be too low down for Him to reach us.

THE Pagan maxim, which too many quote as though it were Bible, is, "God helps him who helps himself." But the truth revealed in the Bible is that God helps the man who is not able to help himself. Read the account of a storm on the sea, and of deliverance from it, as recorded in Ps. cvii. 23-30. Of the men in the storm it is said: "Their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses." So it was when Jehoshaphat, in behalf of the people, said to the Lord, "For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon Thee," (2 Chron. xx. 12) that the Lord sent deliverance.

ALL these things "were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." Rom. xv. 4. "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are; yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we

may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. iv. 15, 16. Infirm means without strength; without strength implies being overcome by sin. So we learn that in the midst of defeat, when borne down under sin, we may come with boldness to Jesus, and find forgiveness and help.

FOR it is only at the very lowest possible state that we become connected with Christ. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners, unto repentance. Matt. iv. 13. As He came to save the lost, we commend ourselves to His mercy by acknowledging that we are lost sinners. But sin is death. Therefore Christ bore our sins, and died for us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. iii. 13, 14. So it is in our wretched, sin-cursed condition that we receive help from the Lord.

DEATH is the lowest condition possible, and it is in His death that we become perfectly united to Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27. We put on Christ by baptism. And what is baptism? "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. vi. 3, 4.

WHAT does this show? Simply this: that not only *may* we be saved when in the very lowest state, but we cannot be saved in any other condition. As a matter of fact all men are in that lost condition; for "all have sinned;" "they have all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good; no, not one." Rom. iii. 12, 23. But in order for any to get the benefits of Christ's salvation, they must acknowledge themselves to be in that condition. By the law of faith

boasting is excluded. And this not only once, but always. The Christian can never boast of his goodness, for boasting shows the absence of faith, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. xiv. 23. The Christian must always acknowledge himself to be a sinner, and then he may always be a sharer in the sacrifice of Christ. So he always lives only in the present. With Paul he may say: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom *I am chief.*" 1 Tim. i. 15. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Gal. iv. 14.

### THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

TAKEN as a simple matter of history, there is nothing better attested than the fact of the resurrection of Christ. It was well known to all the people who lived at that time, and was a matter of common report. When the apostles spoke to the Jews, they talked of the resurrection of Jesus as something that did not need to be proved, but as that of which everybody was well informed. When Paul stood before Festus and King Agrippa, and spoke of the resurrection of Christ, Festus tried to make light of the matter, but the apostle replied that he was not mad, but spoke forth the words of truth and soberness, and then added: "For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner." Acts xxvi. 26.

THE fact is that the Jews never disbelieved that Jesus had risen from the dead after the crucifixion. This is shown by their action after the resurrection. An angel had come down from heaven, and had rolled the stone away from the sepulchre. Before the dazzling light of his countenance, the guards had fallen to the earth as dead men. Then Jesus came forth, and met His disciples, who went to tell the rest of the brethren. "Now when they were going, behold, some of the



watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money to the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you." Matt. xxviii. 11-14.

WHO that knew anything about Roman discipline would ever believe such a story as that? What Roman soldier would ever dare acknowledge that he had slept on guard, if it were really so? The story was absurd, on the face of it; for although in spite of the sure death that always follows detection, a single soldier sometimes sleeps on guard, it is not possible that an entire guard should fall asleep at the same time. But the story which the Roman guard was bribed to tell was its own best refutation. For the very fact that they were not put to death, although they told that they had slept while on guard, and had allowed their charge to be stolen from them, is evidence that nobody really believed the story. The very means used to discredit the resurrection, established the truth of it.

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION.

To bear witness of the resurrection of Christ was the one work of the apostles and their co-workers. This appears more fully than anywhere else in the account of Paul's case, which Festus gave to Agrippa. After telling about the desire of the Jews to have judgment against Paul, and of his own demand that they appear against him in a regular manner, he said that when the accusers came, "They brought none accusation of such things as I supposed; but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Acts xxv. 18, 19. That was the sum of the whole matter. The Jews said that Jesus was dead, and Paul affirmed that He was alive. To the mind of the heathen ruler it seemed a most foolish, trifling controversy. What difference did it make to him or to anybody else, whether Jesus were alive or dead?

AH, the heathen ruler did not know that that simple question was the greatest thing in the world; that on it hung everything, even the destiny of the whole world. For as the apostles and disciples preached, they did not speak of the resurrection of Jesus as a mere fact of history, but they dwelt upon the results of that event. That which angered the rulers of the Jews was that they "preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Acts iv. 2. Without the resurrection of Jesus there could be no life for man. The Apostle Paul puts the matter thus: "Now if Christ be preached that He rose

from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not; For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen, and is become the firstfruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. xv. 12-20. All our hope comes from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. So the Apostle Peter blesses God that He has "begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Peter i. 3.

NOTICE that in the discourse of Paul concerning the resurrection he says not only that if Christ be not risen those who have fallen asleep in Him are perished, but that "ye are yet in your sins." The resurrection of Jesus assures the resurrection of men from the dead, only because it brings the forgiveness of sins. The hope of the resurrection is simply the hope that comes from righteousness received through faith in Christ, "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. iv. 25. The Apostle Peter connects the "lively hope" to which God has begotten us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, with the fact that we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

#### THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION.

THE Apostle Paul's earnest desire was to "win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." Phil. iii. 8-10. And in His prayer for us he desired "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." Eph. i. 17-20.

THE power of Christ is the power of the resurrection. Paul declares that the Gospel of God is "concerning His Son Jesus Christ, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 3, 4. It was by the Spirit that Christ was quickened, or made alive (1 Peter iii. 18); and the Spirit has the power of giving life, because it is the Spirit of holiness. See Rom. viii. 10. Life and righteousness are identical, as we learn from Rom. viii. 6: "To be spiritually minded is life and peace;" and also from Gal. iii. 21, which tells us that if there had been a law given which could have given life, righteousness would have come by it. The Spirit of God, therefore, gives life to the dead, because it gives righteousness to sinners.

IN order to see that this is what is to be learned from the resurrection of Christ, read again the quotation from the first chapter of Ephesians, and then follow on with the second chapter: "And you hath He quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins; . . . but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 1-6. Therefore we know the power of the resurrection of Christ only by experiencing the same power in the forgiveness of sins, and in overcoming sin. Thus we share even now in the resurrection of Christ, and that is the assurance of the future resurrection at His coming.

READ also the same thing in the Epistle to the Colossians: "Ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation [working] of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened [made alive] together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Col. ii. 10-13. All tell the same thing: the forgiveness of sins comes by the resurrection of Christ, not as a historical event that took place eighteen hundred years ago, but as a present thing, which we are to experience day by day with Him. Thus we may see how the resurrection of Christ is to be the one theme of Christian preaching now as well as in the days of the apostles. We are to be reminded of it, not by the formal observ-



ance of a day once a year, which has never been commanded, but by going through the process daily.

#### WITNESSES OF THE RESURRECTION.

THIS shows us how we, as well as the apostles, may be witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. For we are to be witnesses as well as they. A witness is one who tells what he knows, if he is a true witness. Otherwise his testimony is good for nothing. He is not to bear witness to what has been told him, but to that of which he himself is personally assured, by his own experience. If only one man knows a certain thing from his own personal knowledge, and he tells a dozen other men, and the whole thirteen then go into court and testify to that fact, there are not thirteen witnesses, but only one. The one man has simply repeated his testimony thirteen times. The case is no stronger for the testimony of the twelve men who repeated what had been told them. They might better have held their peace. So it is with the witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. He who tells it because somebody else has told him, is not a witness, and might better say nothing about it. If pressed closely, all that he can say is that somebody told him so.

BUT is it possible for anybody in these days to be able to give testimony concerning the resurrection of Christ, of the same nature as testimony that is required in earthly courts? Most certainly. Can it be thought that God requires less positiveness in His witnesses than earthly judges in those who appear before them? Not by any means. How can they give such testimony? Simply by knowing Christ, and the power of His resurrection. The question is, Does Jesus live, or is He yet dead? All know that He died: may we know that He is alive again? Most assuredly. The experience of the Apostle Paul may be that of every one. The Jews said that Christ was dead, and Paul affirmed that He was alive. They are brought before the court on that point. How does Paul demonstrate that Christ is now alive? Thus: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. ii. 20. That is sufficient. That is as good testimony as could be given in any court. A man is said to be dead. I say he is alive. The question is, "How do you know?" and I reply, "He lives at my house, and is my constant companion." That is the evidence to-day to the world, that Christ is risen from the dead. On this testimony alone can unbelievers be convinced.

THE Christians' hope, therefore, is seen to be a certainty, and not a doubtful thing. If they know that Christ is risen, they know just as well that they too will

be raised from the dead. Thus Christ has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. The Gospel makes known Christ as the risen Saviour, who is alive for evermore. His life is manifested in the mortal flesh of those who believe on Him. They pass from death unto life with Him. Nevertheless they are mortal. To sleep in the grave is their sure lot, unless prevented by the coming of the Lord. But as they live by faith, and not by sight, they hold fast their life as long as they keep the faith. So, whether waking or sleeping, their life is hid with Christ in God. The Spirit of God which is given them is their life, and their assurance of immortality. The life is theirs now, but the immortality will be bestowed only at the coming of the Lord.

"BEHOLD, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. xv. 51-53. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep. 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. iv. 14-17.

IT is a very common thing for people to regard truth as of two kinds—essential and non-essential, important and unimportant. This is a great mistake. All truth is one, and cannot be divided into classes. Every point of truth is of equal importance with every other point. Truth is of God, for Jesus Christ whom He has sent is the truth. But the riches of Christ are unsearchable. He is infinite, therefore the truth is infinite. But there can be no comparison of infinities. To the human mind, at least, all infinities are equal. So the only thing necessary to be determined is whether or not a thing is true. If it is, then no matter how unimportant it may seem to human understanding, we may be sure that it cannot be ignored without sin.

IN a perfect machine the smallest bolt is as important and necessary as the largest shaft, for the reason that without the bolt the shaft would be useless. So

in God's perfect word the smallest matter is as important as what are called the great things. God has not wasted His time on non-essentials. He does not speak that which is of no importance. "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Prov. xxx. 6, 7.

#### THE CHURCH IN THE EARLY CENTURIES.

SOME weeks ago the Archdeacon of London wrote an article which appeared in the *Christian Commonwealth*, entitled, "The Christian Church at the End of the Third Century." Coming from the source it does, the article is worthy of the attention of those who think that everything that "custom" sanctions in the present practices of the church is necessarily of Divine authority. We quote below a large portion of the article:—

"It is very natural, after the long lapse of centuries, that Christian people, in all their manifold divergences of faith and practice, should appeal to the example of the primitive church. Much, indeed, may be learned from its history, to illustrate and explain the development of Christian institutions. But even here we shall nowhere find absolute perfection. As the apostles themselves could be mistaken about so important a point as the meaning of our Lord's words about St. John, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?' so we should expect to find errors and inconsistencies even in those early days. It is well for everybody alike to remember the wise rule of the English Church, 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith; or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.' And again the English Church pronounces clearly the fallibility of all churches, even the earliest: 'As the church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, have erred, so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith.' And once more speaking of General Councils, the English Church declares: 'Forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God, they may err, and sometimes have erred even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained of them as necessary to salvation, have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of the Holy Scripture.'

"The present inquiry is intended to show some of the more noticeable points where the church at the end of the third century had diverged from apostolical practice.

"1. The delay of baptism till after a catechumenate of two or three years.

"2. The form of exorcism of evil spirits in baptism.

"3. The administration of milk and honey in baptism, as typifying the blessings of the Heavenly Canaan.



"4. The giving of the Lord's Supper to infants.

"5. The distinction between clergy and laity, as constituting the former 'Churchmen' in some sense.

"6. The multiplication of subordinate church officers.

"7. The beginnings of the Roman primacy. 'The claims which ripened into the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome over the Western Church had already been put forward, and to a great extent admitted, during the first three centuries. Arising naturally out of the civil supremacy of the capital, the pretensions of Rome were supported by the fiction of Peter's bishopric there, and also by the equally groundless statement that the church was founded by Paul.' 'At the end of the second century we find a precedence assigned by Irenæus, not to the Bishop of Rome as the successor of Peter, but to the Church of Rome as the chief centre of the Apostolical tradition derived from Peter and Paul.' 'Cyprian is the first eminent advocate of the superiority of the Bishop of Rome as the successor of Peter. . . . He calls the Church of Rome the chair of Peter, and the chief church, whence the unity of the priesthood had its source, the root and mother of the Catholic Church.' The importance of the capital of the Roman Empire was thus ignorantly transferred to a new and spurious spiritual supremacy.

"8. The earlier Apologists gloried in the taunt of their heathen adversaries, that they had neither temples nor altars. But in the second century the metaphor of sacrifice began to be used incautiously and indiscriminately about the Lord's Supper, and the poetical term 'altar' began also to be employed for the Lord's table.

"9. The carrying of the elements (the consecrated bread and wine) by the deacons after the service to those who were sick or in prison. The earliest germs of the Romish practice of communion in the bread alone seem to have sprung from the custom of communicants carrying home portions of the bread to be partaken of by the family at morning prayer. This habit of 'domestic communion' prevailed in North Africa. . . .

"15. The custom of keeping Lent, however excellent and desirable in itself, is not of Apostolical authority. 'The great *Quadragesimal fast* before Easter, in commemoration and imitation of the forty days' fasting of Jesus in the wilderness, began in the second century. But the exact correspondence of the duration was not at first insisted on. It was sometimes as short as a day, or two days, or forty hours, and sometimes a few weeks, but less than the forty days, a period which was finally fixed by the influence of Rome.'"

The Archdeacon closes his article with the following remarks, in which he ignores and directly violates the declarations of the Church of England, which he quoted at the first:—

"Some of the customs and principles introduced by the Church of the first three centuries, as distinct from what we gather from the actual writings of the New Testament, have commended them-

selves; others have been dropped by Reformed Christianity. . . . But no period of the Christian Church is guaranteed to be free from error, except the life and teachings of its Founder; and though the earlier we go back, the purer and simpler we find, to our great delight, its doctrines and customs, still it has over us no absolute authority; and those doctrines and customs must all be submitted to the test of agreement with Holy Scriptures, where as in the case of the points mentioned in this paper, there are divergences and variations—these may be perfectly harmless and even salutary; they may also be the reverse. We must be guided in our attitude towards them partly by our own judgment, in reliance on the Holy Spirit and the use of earnest prayer; partly, where recourse can be had to such assistance, by the advice and direction of the spiritual organisation to which we belong."

There are many other things besides those mentioned by the Archdeacon, wherein the modern church differs from the Apostolic church. Notable among these are infant "baptism," the substitution of sprinkling for baptism, and the substitution of the observance of Sunday instead of the seventh day—the Sabbath of the Lord. On this last point, the *Christian at Work*, a Presbyterian journal, has said:—

"We hear less than we used to about the apostolic origin of the present Sunday observance, and for the reason that while the Sabbath and Sabbath rest are woven into the warp and woof of Scripture, it is now seen, as it is admitted, that we must go to later than apostolic times for the establishment of Sunday observance."

The Rev. Dr. Scott, in commenting on Acts xx. 7, had the following to say on the subject:—

"The change from the seventh to the first appears to have been *gradually and silently introduced*, by example rather than by express precept."

The celebrated ecclesiastical historian, Mosheim, speaking of the second century, says:—

"It is certain that to religious worship, both public and private, many rites were added, without necessity, and to the great offence of sober and good men. The principal cause of this I readily look for in the perverseness of mankind, who are more delighted with the pomp and splendour of external forms and pageantry, than with the true devotion of the heart, and who despise whatever does not gratify their eyes and ears." "There is good reason to suppose that the Christian Bishops purposely multiplied sacred rites, for the purpose of rendering the Jews and the pagans more friendly to them." "A large part, therefore, of the Christian observances and institutions even in this century, had the aspect of the pagan mysteries."—*Eccl. Hist., Book 1, century 2, part 2, chap. 4, sections 1, 2, 5.*

The question arises, How are we to distinguish the pagan additions from the Christian original? The answer is, By the Holy Scriptures. It is so easy a

matter that any child who can read can readily discern it. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. The Holy Scriptures are perfect, and they contain all that is necessary for perfection in all good works, all that is necessary for salvation. Whatever, therefore, differs from their standard is wrong, and tends to imperfection and destruction.

The Archdeacon says that "some of the customs and principles introduced by the church of the first three centuries, as distinct from what we gather from the actual writings of the New Testament, have commended themselves." To what have they commended themselves? Only to those who are "more delighted with the pomp and splendour of external forms and pageantry, than with the true devotion of the heart." Those things which do not come from the Bible, do not come from God, and hence are only blots on Christianity, instead of a part of it.

In determining what things are right and what are not, there is no guide but the Bible. Even "earnest prayer" is no guide; prayer is a help only as it is prayer for the aid of the Spirit to lead into the truth which the Bible sets forth. He who resorts to prayer to find out whether or not he shall do a certain thing, when he has a plain command for it in the Bible, or when the Scriptures give no warrant for it, thereby insults God. He is guilty of asking God if He really means what He says.

Neither is "the spiritual organisation to which we belong" to be in any respect our guide in these matters. In His word the Lord speaks to individuals. Each person is to read for himself. "The head of every man is Christ." 1 Cor. xi. 3. It makes no difference whether the Papacy is represented by one man or by an organisation of men,—the Papacy consists in the interposition of some man or men between the individual soul and God. There are many good and learned men in the world, but there is not and never has been one so good and wise that he could in the slightest degree take the place of Jesus Christ.

God has set teachers in the church; but the work of the teachers is not to originate truth, not to take the place of God's word, but to lead souls to God and His word, so that they may drink for themselves from the Fountain Head. Whoever deviates in the slightest degree from the word of God, is to that degree a false teacher. He is blind, and can only lead his blind followers into the ditch.

In passing through the darkness of this world's night, "hardly bestead and hun-



gry," the only safety lies in turning "to the law and to the testimony." God's word and it alone is the truth. "The church" is not the guide. Whoever takes it for a guide is following men. The church is not a law-making body; Christ is the head of the body, the church. "The church" is indeed the church of Christ, only when it implicitly follows his word. When the body is connected with the Head, having nourishment ministered to it from the Head, it "increaseth with the increase of God." Col. ii. 19.

Therefore! "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him." Col. ii. 8-10.

#### A CASE OF CONSCIENCE.

It occurred nearly twenty-six hundred years ago, in the province of Babylon. The circumstances were the following: On account of the disobedience of the great mass of the children of Israel, the Lord had suffered the whole nation to be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and many of the people had been taken from Jerusalem to Babylon.

This Nebuchadnezzar was a heathen king, and so some time after the conquest of Babylon, he "made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits; he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up."

When all these officers of the kingdom were gathered together before the image, "an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up; and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

The people knew that the king was in earnest, and so whatever their private scruples might have been against worshipping the image, they concealed them, and in appearance, at least, did homage to the golden image. Who that believes that the civil government has a right to make laws concerning matters of religion, dare say that they did wrong? Would they not be met with the statement that it is necessary to the peace and good order of the State that there should be

uniformity in matters of religion? And if this is so, who but the chief ruler of the State can prescribe the forms of religion?

Doubtless there were some who would suggest that they ought not to bow down to the image, but they could speedily be silenced, by the inquiry, "Who are you, that you should set yourself up to know more than all the wise men of this nation, and the king himself?" Some might even recall a commandment to the effect that none shall bow down to graven or molten images, but they would be met with the statement, "if it were wrong, do you suppose that all the nation would be doing it? Hasn't it been the custom of almost the whole world for centuries to worship images? Don't all our religious teachers say that it is right? Don't you suppose that they know more about these things than we common people do?" Who could meet such an argument as that?

And then others would say to the doubtful ones: "You don't have to worship the image, in your heart; you need not feel any reverence for it, but you can bow down before it in obedience to the king's command. If you refuse, you will be cast into the fiery furnace, and your family will be deprived of your support. What is the use of virtually committing suicide?" And thus the scruples of all would be silenced.

But not of all, for there were three men in the vast assembly who did not bow down to the image. At that time certain Chaldeans came before the king, and, after repeating the decree, said, "There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee; they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." What made the offence of these men the more odious, and magnified the contempt in which they held the king's decree, was the fact that they were foreigners. Such disobedience of a direct law could not be tolerated, and least of all in such men.

So "Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true [is it of purpose] O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" And then in the kindness of his heart, he offered them another chance to redeem themselves. He would not at once carry into effect the decree that they should be burned. But if on the second sounding of the music they did not bow down, then there should be no alternative, but they must be cast into the furnace.

Then what did those men do? Did they begin to apologize for their mistake, and promise obedience in the future? Did they plead that they had been very quiet in their disobedience to the law, so that no one could take offence at their disregard of the image? Not they. Listen to their brave words:—

"O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

The consequence was that they were thrown into the furnace, which for their especial benefit was heated seven times hotter than usual. But before we notice the result, let us see what power these men were disregarding. If ever there was a king who ruled by Divine right, that king was Nebuchadnezzar. Hear what the Lord Himself said through His prophet:—

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters: I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by My great power, and by My stretched out arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto Me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son." Jer. xxvii. 4-7.

These three Jews knew this, for they were associated with Daniel on a previous occasion, when he received the interpretation to a dream which the king had, in which he said, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." Dan. ii. 37, 38.

God Himself, therefore, had given Nebuchadnezzar the right to rule. Moreover, He had commanded the Jews themselves to serve Nebuchadnezzar. The prophet Jeremiah, who remained in Jerusalem, in a letter which he wrote to his captive fellow-countrymen, at the command of the Lord, had said to them, "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." Jer. xxix. 7.

Surely then God must have been very angry with these three Jews for thus refusing to obey the king's decree. Not



by any means. Although the fire was so hot that it slew the men who threw the three Jews into the furnace, the Hebrews themselves were not affected by it in the least. The fire simply destroyed the bands which held them, and they walked at liberty in the midst of the furnace, and the Lord Himself came down and walked with them, to show His approval of their act. See the whole story in the third chapter of Daniel.

The point of this simple story is that, while "the powers that be are ordained of God," "there is no power but of God." "Power belongeth unto God." God has never ordained any power to be above Him. This He could not do, for "He cannot deny Himself." He has never constituted any authority to contravene His authority. We learn that while we are to seek the peace of whatever country we may dwell in, and are to pray for kings and for all that are in authority, the peace of any country is not found in disobedience to God, no matter what may be the laws of that country. While we are to be subject to the powers that be, it is to be for the Lord's sake.

No man on earth is warranted in resisting authority. On the contrary we are charged not to resist evil, that is, we are not to oppose force with force. But as we have learned from this story, submission and subjection to the powers that be does not consist in obeying laws that are contrary to God's laws. In the case before us, the king gave all their choice: they might worship his image, or they might go into the burning fiery furnace. The most of the people showed their subjection by worshipping the image; but the three Hebrews showed their subjection by refusing to worship the image, and going into the furnace. They did not resist the power. They did not try to raise an insurrection. They served God by disobeying the king, and showed their regard for the king's authority by calmly accepting the alternative which he granted them.

The commandments of the Lord are very plain. A child may understand them. "If any man willet to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." All that is needed is a willing mind. It is self-interest that clouds the mind to the precepts of the Lord. But he who has no intention or desire but to do the will of the Lord, will not be confused as to his duty by conflicting human laws, but will say as did the apostles at a later time, "We ought to obey God rather than man." Only the man who is conscientiously resolute in serving God, can be rightly subject to the powers of earth.

"The light that shines upon our path, the truth that commends itself to our consciences, will condemn and destroy the soul, or sanctify and reform it."

#### THE PEACE OF GOD.

WHEN our Saviour was about to leave this world and return to the Father, He not only anticipated the greatest needs of His followers, but He made ample provision to supply them. The greater the need the greater is the blessing that He has furnished to meet that need; and there are no needs which through His abundant grace He has not supplied.

Shortly before finishing His work on earth which He came to do, our Lord said to His disciples, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John xiv. 27. He understood the trials through which they would pass, and He knew that in the world they would "have tribulation." John xvi. 33. Not only so, but He knew the disquietude and the restlessness of the human heart without His presence. Long before, through His Spirit which was in the prophets (1 Peter i. 10, 11) Himself had declared that "The wicked are like the troubled sea; for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace saith my God, to the wicked." Isa. lvii. 20, 21, R.V.

With everything around them calculated to give unrest, the disciples needed the very thing that Jesus Christ left for them,—His peace. And the peace He gave to them He freely gives to all who will accept of it to-day. He gives His peace by giving Himself; "For He is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity," etc. Eph. ii. 14, 15, R.V. His was a sinless life; He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He "condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3), in His own flesh. He resisted sin at every step, and His sinless life was a standing condemnation of sin. What He did in His flesh He will do in our mortal flesh, if we accept His peace by accepting Him. The life of Jesus "made manifest in our body" (2 Cor. iv. 10) will be a life of peace; for He is peace, and He is *our* peace.

The sinner cannot work himself up into a state of peace, neither can he evolve peace out of his own heart, because God says there is no peace to the wicked. How then shall he obtain it? Nothing short of creative power can give to the sinner the peace of Christ, and that is the power which is pledged to do it. Jesus Christ "was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." John i. 10. The psalmist tells us how this act of creation was performed. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. For He spake and it was; He com-

manded and it stood fast." Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9. And when darkness and chaos reigned over the earth which had been brought into existence by the word of His power, He said "Let there be light and there was light."

This same One who wrought in creation, when riding on the waters of Galilee's lake could say to them "Peace, be still," and they were still. What changed that troubled sea and made it calm and peaceful? Only the word of His power. He "spake and it was." Even so when Jesus Christ speaks peace to a troubled soul who believes the word spoken, there will be peace. But will the Lord thus speak peace to those who need it? Certainly; for He declares that the thoughts that He has toward us are "thoughts of peace and not of evil." Jer. xxix. 11. For the sake of His disciples, the Lord Jesus had thoughts of peace toward the troubled sea of Galilee, He gave utterance to that thought, and there was a calm. Will He do less for troubled souls to-day? No, indeed. Listen to what He says: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints; but let them not turn again to folly." Ps. lxxxv. 8.

It is living faith in the Divine word that brings peace into the soul, for, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. v. 1. The Spirit of God in our hearts bears witness to the change wrought, and by its testimony we "know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii. 12. The man therefore, who has the peace of Christ, knows that he possesses it, for he knows whom he has believed. 2 Tim. i. 12. "And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. iv. 7.

D. A. ROBINSON.

THE *Catholic Times* and *Catholic Opinion* calls attention to the fact recorded in an Anglican journal, that a large number of members of the University of Oxford are presenting a petition to the Bishops of the Church of England, praying them to take some steps to prevent clergymen from "attacking, maligning, and falsifying the Holy Scriptures." The petitioners state that the Oriel Professor of Interpretation of Holy Scripture has spoken of one of the books of the Bible as "a shrivelled-up myth." The editor of the *Catholic* journal says:—

"The same canker of unbelief is fast eating its way into the Presbyterian churches of Scotland. How is it, we may well ask, that the only Christian community in which attacks on the authority of Scripture are unheard of is the Church of Rome?"

We can answer that question. The



reason is that in its very beginning the Catholic Church practically took the Bible out of the hands of the people, by the dogma that only the clergy can understand it, and that the people must receive it only as interpreted by them. Having taken the entire Bible from the people, there is no need to make attacks upon it. Professed Protestantism has not yet proceeded so far, but it is gaining on the Catholic Church with long and rapid strides.

#### FAITH, LOVE, AND WORKS.

"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." 1 Thess. i. 3.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus ii. 11-14.

THE ultimate design of the Gospel is through faith and love to produce good works in the life of every one who accepts it. Good works are thus the Gospel's objective point. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10. Good works are produced solely by the power of God; they are distinctively the result of the power of the Gospel, as evil works are the production of the flesh; and so good works might be said to be the measure of one's faith and love, and the evidence of his relation to Christ. But men have been turning this just about, and endeavouring by their own power to produce good works with the view of commending themselves to God, thus making works the ground, instead of the fruits, of their acceptance. When they fail to reach their own standard, as all do, they become disheartened and believe themselves to be rejected of God. And so they are; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

God cannot accept man upon his own works, for man's works always fall short of the standard. God cannot call a work good that falls short of being good, without witnessing to a falsehood. His testimony is that "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 12, 23. And this testimony is true, for God is true. The inability of man in himself ever to produce a good work is also plainly stated in the

Scriptures: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?—Not one." Job. xiv. 4. This statement is not intended to rob man of the hope of seeing good works appear in his life, but most thoroughly to discourage him from entertaining the false hope of producing good works by means and through powers which are wholly inadequate. The declaration of man's inability to do good is designed to lead him to renounce self-dependence, and drive him to the Gospel, the very power and means ordained of God to produce good works. He is thus led to renounce his own works, and to open his heart and mind, and give his entire being to the operation of the spirit and power of the Gospel, to let God produce in him and through him what he could not produce of himself. "For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

But why is it that man cannot do good, though he try ever so hard? For the simple reason that *man must be made good before he can do good*. "Either make the tree good and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The word of God witnesses of men that the thoughts of their hearts are evil, and evil continually; so their works are evil, and evil continually. All the evil that men do proceeds from the natural heart. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." And while the heart is still evil, man can by no resolution or exertion of his own produce a good thing. The Lord inquires, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" And He adds, "Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jer. xiii. 23. Sin is a disease, and man has no remedy to reach the seat of the disease; the trouble lies deep in the heart. A remedy must be found therefore that will reach the heart and change its condition, before any change can appear in the life; for out of the heart are the issues of life. Prov. iv. 23.

The Gospel provides just this remedy; and all who accept of it purify their hearts by faith. Acts xv. 9. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Rom. x. 10. This righteousness, the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, and which is upon all and in all them that believe (Rom. iii. 22), is an active principle, and fills the believer with "the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory

and praise of God." Phil. i. 11. Righteousness is right-doing—right-doing according to the only standard of righteousness, the law of God. The righteousness required by the law is fulfilled only by love, for love is the fulfilling of the law. Love out of a pure heart is the end (object) of the commandment,—love to God and man, love that flows out in loving acts of worship and praise toward God, and toward man in kindly deeds, in unselfish plans and work for others' happiness, in visiting the sick, the fatherless, and the widow. In other words, to keep the law of God is to live over again the life of Christ.

"In Thy life the law appears,  
Drawn out in living characters."

Such a life must and will glorify God; for it manifests to the world the power of the Gospel to produce righteousness through and in spite of the weakness of the flesh.

Many are earnestly seeking for just this power; and if they see its fruits in the lives of those who profess the Gospel, they will be led to embrace it for themselves. Nothing in the world so restrains the Gospel from reaching many a longing soul as the unrighteous lives of those who profess it. So God justly says His wrath "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down [restrain] the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. i. 18, R.V. Righteous lives and actions recommend the Gospel; for those who witness its effects in others are led to have confidence in its power. Hope is thus raised in their hearts, and they begin to believe that if it has power to produce righteousness in one as weak as themselves, it has power to produce it in them also.

It is also a great comfort to one who realises his own weakness to know that it does not depend on any power of man to produce the fruits of righteousness; that, in fact, the power of the Gospel is made perfect in man's weakness, and is most clearly exhibited where there is the least apparent strength of man. "And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong." All may thus take Christ and understand that by faith they may lay hold of infinite power. "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isa. xxvii. 5. G. B. STARR.

SPEAK gently! 'Tis a little thing  
Dropped in the heart's deep well;  
The joy, the good which it may bring,  
Eternity shall tell. —Bates.



## General Articles.

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

### "ABOVE THE CLOUD IS LIGHT."

COULD we on some dark day of clouds,  
When lowering hangs the chilly mist,  
Ascend above the gloom that shrouds  
To where the mounts are white, sun-kissed,  
And look toward the world we knew,  
Shrouded in gloom and sorrow riven,  
Would we behold that world as true,  
And only think a dream was heaven?

Above us is the vaulted sky,  
Infinite, pure, exalted, vast,  
Around the glittering spires high,  
As fair cathedral columns cast,  
Beneath our feet all silvery bright  
Are those dark clouds that shrouded so,  
O would not that glad world of light,  
Become more real than that below?

Ah, how the new world we would sing,  
If not at first, then by degrees;  
For this sweet law's in everything,  
The soul is changed by what it sees.  
The glory there would slow work through,  
Until the soul in glad delight,  
Would say the world of light is true,  
A dream is all the world of night.

From every world of darkness near  
There is a path to heights sublime,  
And shall we linger year by year  
And fail the upward path to climb?  
Live 'neath the clouds that so enthrall  
Our souls in their dire gloom and night,  
And miss the angels when they call  
"Come up! above the cloud is light?"

"Come up! The light is bright and clear,  
Set steps in faith's aspiring way,  
And sweet will be the atmosphere  
Enlivened with a heavenly ray.  
The Sun of righteousness is there  
Illumining what seemed to thy vision,  
Dark clouds of gloom, till they are fair,  
Love tinted in the light Elysian.

And on the mountain of fair Hope,  
What infinite wonders thou shalt see  
And thy bound life find outward scope,  
Like some caged bird from prison free.  
And 'stead of mourning of the way,  
Thy soul will strike another key,  
And thou wilt say that all along  
"The God of love was good to me."

FANNIE BOLTON.

### REPRESENTING CHRIST TO THE WORLD.

IN order to save fallen man, under a sense of the infinite magnitude of the task, Christ undertook to represent to the world the character of God in His great love for the world. Nothing was allowed to divert His attention for a moment. His one effort was to carry out the plan of God laid before the foundation of the world. Said Christ, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again." "As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep." That is: "My Father hath so loved you, that He even loves Me more for giving My life to redeem you. In becoming your substitute and surety, by surrendering My life, by taking your liabilities, your transgressions, I am endeared to My Father; for by My sacrifice, His will is fulfilled, His law vindicated, and God can be just, and yet justify Him who believes in Jesus."

This is a love that passeth knowledge.

Shall we not be filled with astonishment at the amazing riches of the grace of Christ? Jesus alone could do the work. Knowing the height and depth of the love of God, He engaged to come into the world to make it manifest to sinners. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the love of God to lost humanity. It is impossible for us to conceive of the riches of His grace abundantly provided for all who believe on Christ. And having thus Himself represented the love of the Father, He has enjoined upon those who believe in Him to represent His character to the world, and thus reflect the glory of God in their own character.

Jesus says, "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world," to be witnesses for Me. Christ calls upon each of His followers to represent His goodness, His mercy, and His love to the world, as He has represented the love of the Father. He has made those who believe in Him as their personal Saviour, partakers of the Divine nature, that they should not perish, but have everlasting life; and those who are saved by His grace are to reveal his power to others, that others may be saved through their instrumentality. All who are truly converted are commissioned of God to be light-bearers to the world.

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." It is the privilege and duty of every child of God to obtain day by day a living experience in the things of Christ. Through a connection with Christ, we are to go forth in His Spirit, with His mind, as agents to co-operate with the Divine, to bear to the world the message of the love of God to man. We are to proclaim that Christ is our advocate, that the bow of promise encircles the throne, that the Lord is waiting to be gracious. This work must not be set aside because it requires self-denial and self-sacrifice. Looking to the Author and Finisher of our faith, we must see there our pattern, and shape our life after the example He has given.

All the heavenly intelligences are looking with intense interest to see what the human agencies will do at this time. As ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation, they look with yearning desire upon the world for whom Christ died. They know that Jesus has died that the world might believe in Him and not perish, but have everlasting life. They know that Jesus now says to the sincere, believing ones: "You have given yourselves to me, and I have given you to the world as My representatives. Ye are to be no more children, tossed to and

fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. You are My witnesses, dedicated to Me, that ye should go forth to represent the gracious character of God."

When by faith we grasp what Jesus has done for us, all hardness of heart will be melted under the softening, subduing influence of His matchless love, and we shall bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. We shall then feel that we are under obligation to task to the uttermost our capability, that our talent may be brought into highest service to diffuse the light and grace we have received. There will not be exhibited a disposition to tear down, but the mind and spirit which dwell in Christ Jesus, to restore, to build up. Jesus was a fountain of healing mercy for the saving of the world; for by precept and example He represented the justice and love of God to men. When the nature of man is renewed by grace, he will be full of tenderness, sympathy, and love. Thus the character of God will be unfolded to the world as it is, and Satan will not be able to fasten the minds of all humanity in his snare, charging God with his own attributes, and misrepresenting His character.

Jesus could not express in words to the understanding of man the love of the Father; He could only say, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But He did express the love of God in His actions. Never can we equal the goodness and the love of Jesus, but He calls upon every man and woman, youth and child, to behold him, and by beholding His perfection of character, to become changed into His image. Call every talent into exercise to copy the Pattern. Christ died to save man, and He calls upon us to live as seeing Him who is invisible, that we may save souls. Then seek the Lord most earnestly. Eternal life at the right hand of God is worth a lifelong, persevering, untiring effort. Look to the cross of Calvary, and be no longer half-hearted. It is either life or death with every one of us; and when we surrender all, then Jesus will open ways that we may serve Him with every power of our being. The Lord would have us gather up the rays of light, and be witnesses for Christ.

Says the prophet, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

The church may individually be all that they profess to be; for if they will seek the Lord with all the heart, they



will be filled with the Spirit. Jesus Christ is the Pattern, and everyone who copies the Pattern will estimate the value of his own soul as the purchased possession of Christ. He will see that the Lord requires all the members of His church, as living, human agencies, to exert a sanctified influence in unity to build up the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth. The careless inaction, the indolence, the neglect to improve a single faculty and intrusted capability which might have been employed for blessing humanity, robs the world of the promised influence of the Holy Spirit, which might have accompanied with its presence the living witness for God. A message from heaven is sent to the world by those whom the Lord has called. They are to make known the salvation of God, that, by the testimony of those who are sanctified, many may be saved.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

#### A B C.

Do you know your alphabet?

"A strange question," you say, "to ask of one who has read for years and years, and who at this moment is reading a paper."

It does seem strange at first thought, but it has struck me within the last week, that it is a question which we should carefully consider.

It is a sad fact that we are fast outgrowing our childhood. Our hearts are becoming stereotyped. We take it too much for granted that we have learned, and well learned, all the lessons of youth, that we have passed all over that ground once, and need never to return. We have put away childish things, and our superior learning and wisdom causes us to look with a sort of pity, akin to contempt, upon youth with its ignorance and follies. We forget that in our zeal to grow beyond the follies of youth, in our eagerness to become full-grown men and women, we may leave behind some of the prime requisites of *Christian* men and women. What gain is there in becoming men and women, if we leave the Christian out?

It seems that Jesus must have seen our danger, for these are the words that He has sent to us: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," or as found in Luke, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

Here is one thing in childhood, then, that we should not have left behind, and our Master says that we must confess our sin and humble ourselves until we are willing to take it back, or we shall in no wise enter the kingdom of God. We must be willing to receive the kingdom of heaven just as a little child does. As little children learn their alphabet, we must be willing to learn our alphabet, and believe that "A" is "A," and "B" is "B," because our Father says so.

The father tells his son that all the treasures of earthly wisdom and knowledge are hid in his alphabet. If he will but learn it thoroughly and use it well it will open up to him all the wisdom in the world. He takes his father's word for it, learns his alphabet, and finds it indeed true.

Now that is what we are to do. We must in childlike faith believe in and learn the Christian's alphabet; and having that we shall have all things.

"But what is the Christian's alphabet?"

Jesus Himself tells us in Revelation xxii. 13: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. In Jesus we find our whole alphabet, from the first to the last, for in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. ii. 3.

Is it not most necessary, then, that we *know* our alphabet? Is it enough that we know about it?

If we could get but one glimpse of the riches of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption that are hid in Christ for us, would we not willingly become as little children, and spend the rest of our days in becoming acquainted with this wonder of wonders,—this God-given Alphabet?

Without Him we "can do nothing." Without Him all our reachings out after wisdom, holiness, life, and heaven, will be as useless as a child's reaching out after learning without a knowledge of his letters.

God help us, then, to study Jesus more, to become so thoroughly acquainted with Him that He will form a part of our very being. Then we shall have the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. i. 24); righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. i. 30); all spiritual blessings (Eph. i. 3); eternal life (John xvii. 3; iii. 16; an everlasting inheritance (Eph. i. 11; 1 Peter i. 4); we shall be sons of God (John i. 12), and heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 17). What more could we wish?

But let us remember that Jesus is the only Door and the only Way. He is the Alphabet, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

#### THE PROMISES.

In prayer comes the realisation of the promises. Every prayer is founded on a promise, and every true prayer discovers this foundation. The promises of God, all of which are "yea and amen in Christ Jesus," penetrate every gloom, and look beyond the thickest darkness. The promises fringe the thunder-cloud with rays of light, and enable us to discern the "smiling face" behind the "frowning providence." Promise sees the dawn from the midnight, anticipates the sunrise from the sunset, recognizes in the

leafless trees and cheerless snows of winter the harbinger and earnest of the fruits and flowers and seasonable enjoyments of the summer-tide. The Key of Promise now opens the doors and iron gates of Doubting Castle, and delivers the pilgrims out of the hands of Giant Despair.—*Sel.*

#### THE RUSSIAN METHOD OF EVANGELIZATION.

THE *Contemporary Review* for April contains an article by E. B. Lanin, on Constantine Pobedonostseff, the Russian religious censor. It affords an excellent idea of the beauties of a State religion logically and consistently applied, as will be seen from the small portion of it which follows. It may be necessary to state that the term "Orthodoxy," as used in the article, refers to the established religion in Russia.

"As it is part of his duty to present every year a lengthy memoir to the Emperor on the condition of Orthodoxy in Russia, it is but natural that he should be eager to display a considerable balance to the good; and his efforts to bring about this result occasionally betray him into acts which, while they strike Europeans as grotesque or immoral, leave his conscience serene. His instructions to bishops in heterodox districts, putting them under an obligation to proselytise, have led to an organised and complicated system of conversion by force and pious fraud, obviously based on the view that mere formal registration in the Orthodox Book of Life, though accompanied by immorality and followed by irreligion, is better far than an honest faith in God, worshipped under some uncouth name, and an upright life outside the true fold. Bishop Benjamin, of Siberia, for instance, instituted a sort of Buddhistic hunt every year, which terrified the unfortunate Booryates far more than it improved them. A certain number of men, women, and children were annually told off, and inscribed in a special list of 'individuals liable to holy baptism,' and on the date fixed would be driven down to the river, immersed *en masse*, and then left to the practice of Lamaism as before. I read a letter from one of their chiefs last year, in which he describes himself as hiding in the forest, suffering all kinds of hardships, because unwilling to be baptized, and earnestly pleads for mercy. I met another in January last year, who had come to St. Petersburg to plead for toleration. As the bulk of these unfortunate people have not the faintest inkling of the meaning of Christianity, and cannot speak the only language understood by their apostles, they are only scared by the queer things done to them in the river. Prince Meschtschersky, that *enfant terrible* of the Tsardom, published a detailed account of the matter some months ago, in consequence of which inquiries were instituted in Siberia. Bishop Benjamin at first felt himself safe and secure under the wing of the



Ober-Procuror, but when telegram after telegram was received by him from the capital, and the danger to which he was exposed was made clear, he died of nervous shock.

"Bad as this undoubtedly is, the treatment meted out to Protestant sects is infinitely worse. The members of the sect known as the Paschkovites (from one of the leaders, Colonel Paschkoff) have been treated worse than the heathen and the publican. Meetings at which the Bible was read were prohibited, tea-shops and refuges closed, the more zealous preachers imprisoned, and Colonel Paschkoff himself—one of those rare individuals whose beautiful lives do more to convince us of the Divine origin of Christianity than all the miracles ever witnessed or recorded—was banished for ever from Russia. In accomplishing this arduous and uncongenial task, M. Pobedonostseff found it very difficult to keep within the bounds of truth, justice, and moderation; and the recollection of his backslidings in this respect is still gall and wormwood to his soul, and intensifies his hatred for an eminently Christian community. Our most odious enemy is he who wittingly or unwittingly drags our weak points into the broad light of day and betrays us into belying our principles and playing false to our convictions. Hymn-books, which M. Pobedonostseff and his clergy had sanctioned or eulogized, were suddenly condemned and withdrawn from circulation, and a hateful class of spies established—persons who denied their own religion in order to prevent other people from professing theirs, and who shamelessly lied in the interest of truth. False witnesses were found who swore that members of the sect had desecrated images and blasphemed saints; and on the strength of these depositions many were flogged, fined, and imprisoned, and deported to Siberia. And when a most honourable man came forward and made known the facts to M. Pobedonostseff, asking him to have them officially tested, the Ober-Procuror was deaf, like Festus, to the words of justice and truth. The last stage in this interesting drama was the closing of a coffee-house much frequented by poor students and factory-hands in one of the slums of St. Petersburg, because of the proprietor's refusal to remove certain Gospel texts from the walls, where they had been hanging, to my own knowledge, for twelve years. Some of the texts consisted of Christ's words to his disciples, and Colonel Paschkoff thought that he might safely assume that they would do no positive harm. 'I strictly forbid you to preach any more such socialistic sermons; you shall not use the pulpit as a tribune for the spread of revolutionary doctrine,' exclaimed a Roman Catholic Bishop in Austria to one of the most gifted of the priests the other day. 'To hear is to obey, my Lord, I will never preach another of his sermons,' was the humble reply. 'Whose sermons? What do you

mean?' asked the astonished prelate. 'I mean St. John Chrysostom, my Lord; for it was his homily that I preached *in extenso*; but of course I will never repeat the offense in future.' 'Remove those dangerous words,' exclaims the director of the Orthodox Church of Christ. 'I cannot; they are Christ's own words,' was the reply. The cases are very much alike; but there is this difference; the Roman Catholic Bishop was ashamed of his constructive disrespect for the memory of John Chrysostom, but M. Pobedonostseff was unabashed, though he implicitly censures Christ.

"But of all the Christian sects in Russia, the Stundists are by far the most cruelly treated. They may be broadly described as Evangelical Christians, who endeavour to worship God in spirit and in truth, and put obedience to His will—as they conceive it—above compliance with the ukases of the Tsar. Vigorous folk like these, who take life seriously and fear only God, are odious to a statesman who acts as the official spokesman of God and Tsar; they are the hard lumps which, refusing to dissolve in the mass, are cast into the mortar and pounded. The loss of civil rights, fines, imprisonment, and banishment to the remotest and most unhealthy tracts of the Empire, were the penalties decreed and enforced against this form of Christianity until a few months ago, when it became evident that they aggravated the evil instead of remedying it. The Stundists touched the hearts of the convicts with whom they mingled; soldiers sent to their prayer-meetings for the purpose of giving evidence against them later on, oftentimes dropped upon their knees and begged to be received into the proscribed brotherhood then and there; punishment was courted rather than feared, and the sect thrived and spread.

"A few months since, the Ober-Procuror turned over a new leaf, changing the system of repression. The members convicted now are no longer scattered over the country, but either imprisoned or else employed in public works for the benefit of their indolent Orthodox brethren, generally at a long distance from home. They forfeit their right to work at their trades, and, employed as night-watchmen, foresters, etc., receive but a wretched pittance fixed expressly with the object of keeping them and their families on the famine line. This is a somewhat heavy penalty to have to pay for the right to practise what most sane people hold to be a virtue; and it is to be hoped that no more than this was ever intended by the Ober-Procuror. Unfortunately a good deal more regularly occurs: doings which it is difficult to describe in the language of propriety, and impossible to qualify in terms of moderate condemnation. The wives and daughters of these men remain at home, while their husbands and fathers are absent for days and nights at a time;

and the rural police and village ruffians profit by the occasion to visit these helpless females, bring their *vodka* with them, and hold their brutish orgies in their presence. A veil must be drawn over the scenes that ensue, over the crimes that cry to Heaven for vengeance. Nor are these crimes only imagined. I have lately read some heartrending appeals to Christians of the civilized world, nay, to men and women of every faith, written with the life blood of the despairing victims, in which these horrors are described. These appeals, I believe, have not yet been published. I know that they have been made in vain. People have not time in this busy age to join a crusade which has religion or religious freedom for its object. And, besides, what business is it of foreigners to meddle in Russian politics? These are matters for the Russian Government to settle; and it has decreed that Stundism, which undeniably constitutes a serious danger to Orthodox-autocracy, must be stamped out in self-defence. And who will gainsay the Government?"

#### GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF RELIGION.

ONE would think that so simple a proposition as that which affirms the existence and inalienable character of the rights of a religious conscience as above and beyond all human authority ought to have been among the earliest and most widely-extended discoveries of the race. The fact, however, is sadly the reverse. Of all the forms of wrong which men have suffered from each other, none have been less reasonable or more merciless and unrelenting than those of religious zeal armed with the civil power. There is no darker chapter in the history of governments than that which chronicles their misdeeds in the attempt to administer and propagate religion. The attempt is essentially a horrible human tyranny begun, and every step of the process is that tyranny continued.

The doctrine of a *personal* God, related to men as their Creator and Preserver, being received into the mind as the *objective* basis of religion, naturally connects itself with the idea of this God as a supreme *lawgiver*, to whose authority we are directly subject and from whose administrative control no power can release us. His will, no matter how ascertained is the final law. Peter and John were simply true to universal thought when they said: "We ought to obey God rather than men." Daniel was true to the same thought when he disregarded the edict of a king rather than violate that of his God. The martyrs who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods and cheerfully died at the stake for what they regarded as obedience to God were true to the doctrine that God, and not man, is the supreme ruler, and that the authority of the latter—whether that of the parent, the magistrate, the legislative assembly, or the king—when in conflict with that of



the former, is not for a moment to be regarded. No human law can outlaw the law of God. There is but one supreme authority in the universe, and this is exclusively vested in God Himself. No one disputes this proposition who believes in the existence of a personal God. It is one of the first truths of all religion.  
—*Dr. Spear.*

#### THE DOSHISHA SCHOOL.

AMONG the many mission schools in Japan is the Doshisha School. It was founded by Mr. Neesima, who was born February 12, 1843. He was ten years old when Commodore Perry first entered the bay of Yeddo. From his youth he seems to have been inclined to worship the true God, and from the age of fifteen he refused to worship idols. When he was fourteen he began to study the Dutch, and continued this language for a year with a native teacher. At sixteen he borrowed a geography of the United States, written in Chinese, by Dr. Bridgeman of China. He also found an abridged Bible history in the Chinese language. He read in the opening sentence, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." This carried conviction to his soul. He says, "I put down the book and looked around me, saying, Who made me, my parents?—No, my God. Who made my table, a carpenter?—No, my God. God let the trees grow upon the earth; although a carpenter made up this table, it indeed came from the trees. Then I must be thankful to God; I must believe in Him, and I must be upright toward Him." Again he says, "I found out that the world we live upon was created by His unseen hand, and not by a mere chance. I discovered in the same history that His other name was the 'Heavenly Father,' which created in me more reverence toward Him, because I thought He was more to me than a mere creator of the world. All these books helped me to behold a being, somewhat dimly yet in my mental eye, who was so blindly concealed from me during the first two decades of my life."

He had seen no foreign missionaries, and could obtain no explanations; therefore an anxiety was aroused on his part to visit a land where the Gospel was freely taught. It was against the law at this time for young men to leave their country for foreign lands. With great difficulty he obtained permission to sail in a ship bound for Hakodate in the spring of 1864. After long waiting in Hakodate, he found an American brig which was to sail for Shanghai. He made a confidant of a young Japanese who could speak a little English, and this friend rowed him out to the brig at midnight, and he was received on board. The next morning the Japanese authorities searched the boat to see if there were any of their number on board; but he was not found. Finally he secured passage in a sailing

vessel bound for Boston. He exchanged his sword while at Shanghai for a copy of the New Testament in Chinese, which he studied on the voyage. When he came to the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of John, he felt that this was just such a Saviour as he needed.

He finally found himself, by a series of singular providences, in the Amherst College, under President Scelye. His faithfulness in his studies and his high character won for him the love and respect of all his teachers and classmates. A Japanese embassy about this time visited the United States. After reaching Washington, they sent orders for all the Japanese who were studying in the United States to appear before them. Mr. Neesima was one of the number. He wrote to Mr. Flint, one of his teachers, at this time: "I expect to stand up for Christ before the heathen embassy. I think it is a good opportunity for me to speak for Christ. I wish you would make special prayer for me, and also for the embassy." He was invited to accompany them to Europe, which he did; but before he left America, he appeared before the American Missionary Board, and his simple plea for his own country awakened such an interest in the hearts of some true friends to missions that in a short time he received a letter from the secretary, telling him that the sum of £1,000 was waiting him to found a collegiate theological training school to train Christian workers for Japan. The name Doshisha was the one decided upon for this school.

To go through the particulars, how God blessed his efforts in establishing this school, and the number of converts made in the few years since its establishment, would require altogether too much space. Until the day of his death his heart was set on Christianising his own people. Near the close of his life, after urging a broadening of the work already established through his instrumentality, he says, "I cannot write such a letter as this without shedding many tears. My heart is constantly burning like a volcanic fire for my dearly beloved Japan. Pray for me that I may rest in the Lord." He wrote another strong appeal for the university. At a dinner given one evening, in the summer of 1888, under the influence of the Spirit of God, after an earnest appeal, £6,200 was subscribed. He lived to see the foundation of the university laid. Mr. Harris of New London, Connecticut, gave £20,000 to endow the department of science; he also received an endowment of £12,000 from Japan. The department of theology now numbers over 80 members, the College department about 240, and the preparatory, 140—over five hundred young men in all. There is also connected with the Doshisha a girl's school of about one hundred members, and a hospital in which there is a training school for nurses with twenty-five students. Nearly thirty buildings have been erected for these

schools. Nearly one hundred men are now preaching the Gospel in Japan who were educated in the Doshisha, and many others are engaged as Christian teachers, editors, etc.

The autumn of 1889 found Mr. Neesima far from well; but his intense desire to work for the university led him to go to Tokio, where he worked privately for his plan, and received many promises of aid. A severe cold, however, coming upon him in his extreme weakness, brought on the disease which ended his life. With the words, "Peace, joy, heaven," on his lips, he fell asleep January 23, 1890. It is said that no private citizen has ever died in Japan whose loss was so widely and deeply felt as that of Mr. Neesima. He was acquainted with every advance step of the Gospel in Japan to the day of his death. His entire interest was centred in the propagation of the Gospel truth. Although the inspiration he imparted to others has to a great extent ceased since his death, yet many have been led to embrace Christ in Kiota, where the school is established, which is one of the strongholds of Buddhism.

S. N. HASKELL.

#### WILLING SERVICE.

I AM tired of using the pulpit corkscrew to draw out of Christians the offerings and prayers and service, which to be of real value ought to be spontaneous. I shall continue to pray and persuade and plead, but I shall not come begging you to do your duty. "*My people shall be willing* in the day of My power," saith the Lord. I can testify to this as one of the most real experiences of my life. I have been in assemblies when the Spirit has been sought, and when the power has come down mightily on the people. And then, to witness the giving and the praying and testimony; you do not have to draw the charge from a well-primed gun. Let a spark fall on it and it goes off of itself. Oh, for Christians charged with the Spirit; then the world would be amazed at the Church, instead of cavilling at its workers as it often does now.—*Dr. A. J. Gordon.*

YOU will never be saved by works; but let me tell you most solemnly that you never will be saved without works. Salvation is all free grace on the side of the atoning Saviour; it is all free obedience on our side. The only proof you can give that you are trusting Christ or following Christ is that you are striving to keep Christ's commandments.—*Dr. Cuyler.*

"THE restraint which God's word imposes upon us is for our own interest. It increases the happiness of our families, and of all around us. It refines our taste, sanctifies our judgment, and brings peace of mind, and in the end, everlasting life."



## The Home.

"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.

### HAVE COURAGE TO SAY NO.

You'RE starting, my boy, on  
life's journey,  
Along the grand highway of  
life;  
You'll meet with a thousand  
temptations—  
Each city with evil is rife.  
This world is a stage of excite-  
ment,  
There's danger wherever you  
go;  
But if you are tempted in weak-  
ness,  
Have courage, my boy, to  
say No!

In courage alone lies your  
safety,  
When you the long journey  
begin;  
Your trust in a heavenly Father  
Will keep you unspotted from  
sin.  
Temptations will go on in-  
creasing,  
As streams from a rivulet  
flow;  
But if you are true to your man-  
hood,  
Have courage, my boy, to say  
No! —H. R. Palmer.

### SAYING NO.

HAVE you ever said  
Yes, when you knew that  
you ought to have said  
No? Have you ever felt  
afraid to obey God for fear  
of what someone might  
say or do? Let me tell  
you a true story.

Years ago in the city  
of Jerusalem lived three  
young men. They were  
very much like any other  
young men, only they had  
thoroughly learned one  
thing,—they had learned  
to love God with all their  
hearts. They had become  
acquainted with Him and  
His word. They had  
proved Him and found  
that He always kept His  
promises, and that no  
other friend was so able  
and willing to help them.  
They had learned that if  
He was for them He was  
more than all that could  
be against them. It was  
well that they knew this,  
for they were soon to pass  
through some very trying  
times.

One day a [mighty king with his sol-  
diers came and surrounded their city and  
overcame it, and carried them away from  
all their friends to Babylon, the great  
city where the king lived.

How glad they must have been, then,  
that they knew the best Friend of all!  
Although they were so far from home,

they could not feel alone, for they knew  
that God was with them in Babylon as  
much as He was in Jerusalem. They  
therefore took courage knowing that all  
would work together for their good if  
they continued to love and trust God.

They cheerfully studied the new lan-  
guage and all the other things that the

brought them into all this prosperity.  
They knew that it was God who had  
been with them and had given them all  
that they had.

The king had heard of their God, but  
was not himself acquainted with Him.  
He looked upon Him as but one of the  
many gods, like unto their idols. But



king wanted them to learn, and, with  
God's help, became very wise, good men,  
loved and respected by all who knew  
them. The king was so well pleased  
with them that he finally set them over  
the great affairs of his province. But  
you will see that they did not become  
proud and forget the Friend who had

God wished to teach the king that He  
alone was God, and that the idols which  
they worshipped were of no good at all.

The king made a great image of gold  
about ninety feet high and nine feet  
broad, and set it up in a plain near the  
city of Babylon. Then he sent word to  
all the great men and rulers of the



provinces to come to the dedication of the great image.

And they came. What a sight it must have been! There were princes, governors, captains, judges, treasurers, counsellors, sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces standing before the bright image of gold which the king had set up. As the three young Hebrew men were rulers, of course they also were there, besides musicians with their cornets, flutes, harps, sackbuts, psalteries, and singers.

Then a man cried out very loudly so that they all might hear, "To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the cornet and all the other kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that the king hath set up; and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning, fiery furnace."

Suddenly the music began, and the people, not daring to disobey, all dropped on their knees and began to worship.

Did I say *all* the people began to worship? No, no, that is a mistake. Three lone men stood straight up, and did not bow at all! Can you think who they were?

The three men from Jerusalem knew that that image was not God. They were acquainted with the true God, and although they felt sorry to hurt the feelings of the king who had been so kind to them, they thought it would be far worse to grieve the heart of the One who had given them their lives and everything else that they had ever had, and who had loved them so much that He had given His only Son to die that they might be saved. If God had suffered all that for them, surely they ought to be willing to suffer a little for Him. They knew well enough that it *would* grieve Him if they should only bow down to the image, even though they should not worship it in their hearts, for He had plainly commanded them not to make unto them any graven image, and not to bow down to them or serve them. And then it would look as though they were ashamed of their God, and afraid to trust Him. No, no, they very quickly decided that they would rather die than grieve their best Friend. So they did not bow down.

As soon as the king heard about it he was very angry and sent for them and said, "Is it true, did you purposely disobey me and not bow down? I shall now give you one more chance. I shall have the music sound again, and if you bow down when you hear it, it will be well with you, but if not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"

The three Hebrews did not hesitate a moment, but said, "We do not care for another chance; if our God thinks best He is able to deliver us out of your hand, and He will; but even if He does

not think best to do this, be it known unto you, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Then the king was full of fury and had them bound by his mightiest men and cast into the furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, and they fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

The fire was so hot that it slew the men who cast them in, but to the great astonishment of the king it did not seem to hurt the three Hebrews at all.

The king rose up in haste and said unto his governors, "Did not we cast three men bound into the fire?"

They answered, "True, O king."

He answered and said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Then the king came near the door of the furnace and called the three men, and said, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither."

Then they came out of the fire, and the princes, governors, captains, and the king's counsellors gathered together and saw them. The fire had no power at all upon their bodies, not a hair of their head was singed, their coats were not changed, and there was not even the smell of fire upon them! The Lord Himself in whom they trusted had come and walked in the fire with them and by His power had kept it from hurting them.

And the king saw that He was God and believed on Him and praised Him, and commanded that if anyone should say a word against Him they should be cut in pieces "because," he said, "there is no other god that can deliver after this sort." The image could not keep its worshippers from being burned, but God could.

How glad the three Hebrews must have been that they had learned to obey God in their youth!

Do not be afraid to take Jesus for your best Friend. He can strengthen you to say No when you are tempted. He is able to deliver you from sin and every other evil thing. He may sometimes allow you to suffer, but remember if He does it is for your good, for He loves you and gave His life to save you.

#### THE EVILS OF STIMULATION.

THOSE who resort to tea and coffee for stimulation to labour, will feel the evil effects of this course in trembling nerves, and lack of self-control. Tired nerves need rest and quiet. Nature needs time to recuperate her exhausted energies. But if her forces are goaded on by the use of stimulants, there is, whenever this process is repeated, a lessening of real force. For a time more may be accomplished under the unnatural stimulus, but gradually it becomes more difficult to rouse the energies to the desired point, and at last exhausted nature can no longer respond.

The habit of drinking tea and coffee is a greater evil than is often suspected. Many who have accustomed themselves to the use of stimulating drinks, suffer from headaches and nervous prostration, and lose much time on account of sickness. They imagine they cannot live without the stimulus, and are ignorant of its effects upon the health. What makes it the more dangerous is, that its evil effects are so often attributed to other causes.

Through the use of stimulants, the whole system suffers. The nerves are unbalanced, the liver is morbid in its action, the quality and circulation of the blood are affected, and the skin becomes inactive and sallow. The mind, too, is injured. The immediate influence of these stimulants is to excite the brain to undue activity, only to leave it weaker, and less capable of exertion. The after-effect is prostration, not only mental and physical, but moral. As a result we see nervous men and women, of unsound judgment and unbalanced mind. They often manifest a hasty, impatient, accusing spirit, viewing the faults of others as through a magnifying glass, and utterly unable to discern their own defects.

We are already suffering because of the wrong habits of our fathers, and yet how many take a course in every way worse than theirs! Opium, tea, coffee, tobacco, and liquor are rapidly extinguishing the spark of vitality still left in the race. Every year millions of gallons of intoxicating liquors are drunk, and millions of pounds are spent for tobacco. And the slaves of appetite, while constantly spending their earnings in sensual indulgence, rob their children of food and clothing, and the advantages of education. There can never be a right state of society while these evils exist.—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene.*

#### A DWARF MAKER.

THE history of tobacco in the island of New Zealand furnishes a quite suggestive illustration for our purpose, and one on a large scale. When Europeans first visited New Zealand, they found in the native Maories the most finely-developed and powerful men of the tribes inhabiting the islands of the Pacific. Since the introduction of tobacco, for which the Maoris developed a passionate liking, they have from this cause alone, it is said, become decimated in numbers, and at the same time reduced in stature and in physical well-being, so as to be an altogether inferior physical type of men.

That men who themselves smoke should allow their growing boys to indulge in the habit is a marvel. That men who have sons and daughters should be willing themselves to smoke is a glaring proof of the weakness and selfishness of human nature, and goes far to prove the doctrine of total depravity.—*Independent.*



## HOW MUCH SLEEP IS NEEDED.

THAT the amount of sleep required by different individuals is decidedly different has almost passed into an axiom. Persons who are very energetic naturally require a great deal of sleep, and children and young people who are growing require at least nine or ten hours of sleep. Invalids or people advanced in life should sleep as long as they can, as there is no restorer of tired nature like sleep. To get a refreshing sleep the brain must cease to act. It would be curious to trace how many cases of irritability, or of functional diseases of the nerves, are due to lack of proper sleep.

Little children should literally go to bed with the chickens. They should have an early supper, and be put to bed directly after. This should be kept up till the child is seven or eight years old, when the bed-time hour may be seven. A growing girl should certainly go to bed as early as eight o'clock. The old Norman law which commanded that all fires should be covered and lights put out at the ringing of the curfew bell, was, from a hygienic point of view, a wise one. Considerable harm has been done by arbitrary rules in the matter of sleep. The fact that Napoleon was able to exist with six hours' sleep, if it were true, proves nothing but his exceptional endurance. It is said that General Grant once said that he could do nothing without nine hours' sleep.

There has been considerable discussion as to what is the best position in sleep. Most physicians will say you should lie on the right side; but no definite directions can be given. A weakness of the lungs may cause the sleeper to rest more comfortably on the left side. Again, in depressing illness the patient usually lies flat on his back, and this position seems, in general, to contribute the greatest amount of rest to the muscles, yet few people would find it a comfortable one. A position which has been advocated with considerable show of reason is that of lying partly on the face. Probably no healthful person sleeps altogether in either one of them, but varies his position during his resting hours.

The best coverings are light woollen blankets. The impervious cotton quilts so much used are the most unwholesome of any covering. A hair mattress is conceded now to be the very best bed, and a good hair bolster is the most wholesome head rest. Sleeping with a number of pillows under the head is certainly injurious, as it tends to raise the head into a cramped unnatural position. The fashion of double beds is one greatly to be deprecated, and two single beds placed side by side are taking their place in many cases—*Dr. Andrew Wilson*.

"O, YOUTH who are sowing wild oats, do you know  
That the terrible seed you are sowing will grow?"

## "JUST FOR TO-DAY."

EVERY day ought to begin with prayer for guidance and help. Pray Wilberforce's prayer "Just for to-day." Too many people want to carry a big supply of grace for distant days. But as for myself I have found, as in eating large dinners, I have the same need the days following; so in spiritual life, one prayer will not last two days, nor will the quota of grace given keep fresh any better than the manna of the Israelites. Every day help for every day need to perform every day duties—that is the idea. A notoriously wicked man suddenly reformed, and remained consistent in his new profession by simply praying every hour for strength for just one hour more. "That is the way I get along," he said.—*Rev. Frank S. Arnold*.

"FROM a child, Timothy knew the Scriptures; and this knowledge was a safeguard to him against the influence surrounding him, and the temptation to choose pleasure and selfish gratification before duty. Such a safeguard all our children need."

## Interesting Items.

—It is stated that 70 per cent. of the people of Ceylon live by agriculture.

—Some 67-ton guns recently turned out at the Royal Gun Factory at Woolwich cost £10,668 each.

—In the Nova Scotia Legislature a Bill granting female suffrage has been rejected by a majority of three votes.

—Serious rioting has taken place in Belfast. Roman Catholic workmen have been attacked and stoned by a "Protestant" mob.

—The Home Rule Bill passed its second reading Friday night, April 21. The Committee stage was formally fixed for May 4.

—A dispatch of April 20 reports another severe cyclone in the Mississippi Valley. Whole villages have been destroyed, and many people killed.

—The Norwegian Ministry has resigned, owing to the King's refusal to regard the settlement of the consular question as a purely Norwegian matter.

—The tithe of the Church in Wales amounts to £304,429 a year. As many as 410 benefices out of a total of 987 belong to private patrons not affected by the Suspensory Bill.

—The Emperor of Germany and the Pope have had a long interview, with the result, according to the Pope, that many little misunderstandings have been removed.

—Custom House returns show that on the 1st of last month there was in the bonded warehouses of the United Kingdom no less a quantity than 8,342,017 gallons of wine in casks.

—The churches of the Wesleyans, Bible Christians, and Free Methodists of New Zealand are likely to be amalgamated, a joint committee having agreed upon a basis of union.

—The island of Zante has suffered from several more shocks of earthquake, completing the work of destruction begun by the one in February, and the people are in a state of panic.

—In Japan most persons can write as well with their left hand as with their right. At the earliest age boys and girls are taught to use both of their hands in writing and in other work.

—The Protestant Alliance has issued a protest against the precedence given by the Lord Mayor to the Pope in placing his name before that of the Queen at the recent banquet at the Mansion House.

—Official returns just published show that last year in Egypt the number of murder cases dealt with by the courts of justice was 289. In many of these crimes the primary motive was robbery.

—The magistrates at Cardiff are perplexed by a new phase in the drink traffic. In order to frustrate the Sunday Closing Act in South Wales, workmen now club together to buy a cask of beer, which is taken to a field and there consumed at leisure.

—A fire broke out in the timber yards of the Victoria Dock, at Hull, on the 23d ult., and burned for twenty-four hours, destroying property to the amount of £100,000. There is evidence that the fire was the work of incendiaries, and was connected with the great strike of the dockers, which is still in progress.

—Sir W. Harcourt has introduced his Budget for the year 1893-94, estimating the expenses of the Government at £91,464,000, and the revenue at £89,890,000, leaving a deficit of £1,574,000, which he proposes to meet by an increase of a penny on the income tax, thus producing an estimated surplus of £176,000.

—It is stated that during the past two years in Bengal the percentage of cases of lunacy due to "ganja," a most insidious drug, was no less than 53 per cent. of admissions "where the cause of the disease could be traced." The special cultivation of Indian hemp, and the preparation of "ganja," is carried on under Government license, the amount produced averaging 600,000 lbs. annually.

—The Cunard Steamship Company have just sent to sea the *Campania*, the largest ship afloat, and now the White Star Company are building the *Gigantic*, which will greatly surpass the *Campania*. The *Gigantic* is to be 700 feet long, 20 feet longer than the *Great Eastern*, but it will be 15 feet narrower. The engines of the *Great Eastern* were 7,650 horsepower, while those of the *Gigantic* are 45,000. It is expected that the speed of the *Gigantic* will be 27 knots an hour.

—As stated in the preceding number of this paper, the "temperance" organisations succeeded in breaking up a meeting of publicans in Trafalgar Square. This was chronicled as a temperance victory. About two weeks later the publicans played the same dishonourable trick upon a temperance meeting at Mile-end. This proceeding is reported as an outrage. It would seem that violence in the interest of "reform" is considered as altogether better than ordinary violence.

—Prof. Elisha Gray, one of the inventors of the telephone, has invented an instrument which may supersede it. It is called the "Telantograph," and is already in actual use in Chicago. Two instruments are required, one for transmitting and the other for receiving a message. A man can sit at the transmitter, take an ordinary pencil, write a note to a friend, and simultaneously with his writing another pencil at the other end exactly reproduces the message. Not only are the words transmitted, but an exact facsimile of the handwriting is produced. If the sender does not wish to keep a copy of his message, it is not necessary to make any marks in writing; tracing the letters on the paper with a pointed stick will do equally well. By this means sketches of persons or places, outline maps, etc., can be sent by telegraph. It is not necessary that anybody should be present at the instrument to receive a message. If a man's business is out of his office, any message will be recorded as well as if he were present, and will be ready for his inspection when he returns. The whole thing is done in silence, and anyone who can write can use the instrument. The advantages of the telantograph over the telephone are obvious.



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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, MAY 4, 1893.

## PROTESTANTISM, TRUE AND FALSE.

A MEETING was held in St. James' Hall on the 24th ult., to protest against the Welsh Suspensory Bill. The reason for the opposition to this Bill, on the part of churchmen, is that it is but the first step toward the disestablishment and disendowment of the whole Church of England. Some friends of the Bill were present, however, and vigorously demonstrated their right to be called "Nonconformists" and "Dissenters," by an utter failure to conform to the rules of decency and good behaviour, and by dissenting in such boisterous tones that the meeting was broken up before it was half finished. It is strange that men cannot see that rudely and senselessly to break up a meeting, to the object of which they are opposed, only strengthens that object, and weakens their own case.

A VICTORY for the truth can never be gained by force. Mob law has no connection with the law of righteousness. When the professed friends of freedom indulge in intolerant acts, they show themselves the enemies of freedom. No man is a friend of freedom who is not willing and anxious to give to every other man all the liberty he wishes for himself. Such a man is not only no friend of freedom, but he does not even know what freedom is, and is, therefore, himself a slave.

THAT man alone is free whom the truth makes free. See John viii. 31-34. And this freedom comes alone through Christ; for He alone is the truth. John xiv. 6. It is the "free Spirit (Ps. li. 12) of God, whom the Father sends in the name of Christ, that bestows this freedom; for only where the Spirit of the Lord is, is there liberty. 2 Cor. iii. 17. So that the only absolutely free man in the world, is the man who is led by the Spirit of God. But such a man cannot by any possibility do anything which would tend to curtail the freedom of any other person; for since the Spirit of the Lord gives liberty, he who is led by it must allow liberty to others, or else he himself forfeits it.

TRUE Protestantism has nothing to do with violence in any form. It is true that in Reformation times men rushed to the sword in behalf of "Protestantism" and against Catholicism; but therein they ceased to be true Protestants. The Papacy is simply professed Christianity upheld by civil power and worldly methods. When therefore, the professed Protestants had recourse to the sword,

and made their "Protestantism" an affair of politics, they thereby showed that they had not yet been emancipated from the Papacy; and as in their supposed protest against the Papacy they adopted Papal methods, their very protest was a real victory for the spirit of the Papacy, although its outward form suffered a defeat. Protestantism, indeed, is simply the protest of truth against error; not the protest of the form of truth, but the protest which a life of truth opposes to error.

THIS principle must apply in the present controversy. Since the Papacy fully developed is but professed Christianity, deriving power, support, and influence from secular sources, it follows that the Church of England, being a State Church, is essentially Papal in its constitution. And therefore it follows that to attack it with any form of violence, which is always only the manifestation of human power apart from God, is simply to oppose the Papacy in the spirit of the Papacy. And it is obvious that a victory in such a case could be nothing more than a victory for the Papacy. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." James i. 20. All this applies equally well to the violence which some professed Protestants are using towards Catholics. Indeed, it is rather worse, for while Catholicism proclaims itself intolerant, and so in persecuting dissenters is only carrying out its principles, Protestantism proclaims liberty to all.

AND now just one point on the merits of the disestablishment question. The churchmen call disestablishment and disendowment robbery. If by those terms is meant depriving the church of endowments which it has received from private estates, and the free gifts of the proprietors, and appropriating them to secular uses, then it is indeed robbery. For although it is contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity for the church to amass property, yet the property once acquired is as sacred as the property of a private individual. The same principle must apply to the church as to an individual professor. A Christian should distribute wealth as it comes into his hands, instead of hoarding it up, yet even though he disobey the precept and example of his Master in this respect, no earthly power has the right to dispossess him of his property.

BUT if disestablishment and disendowment mean simply the ceasing on the part of the Government to give to the church funds that are raised by general taxation, then it is perfectly just and no robbery. For it is certainly no robbery for either a person or a State to cease at any time to continue even a voluntary gift which is within its right to bestow; how much more proper must it be, then,

to cease to bestow a gift which it never had any right to bestow. It is true, as Lord Selbourne said at the recent meeting in St. James's Hall, that no religious work can be carried on without temporal means; but the necessary temporal means should not come from those who are opposed to the religious work done, or to the mode of doing it. "The labourer is worthy of his hire," but only from those who have hired him. "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix. 7); He will accept only freewill offerings. See Ex. xxv. 2. Therefore it follows that when the Government takes advantage of its power, to appropriate for church purposes money that has been paid as taxes by men who do not believe in that church, and who protest against being forced to support a form of religion in which they do not believe, God does not accept such appropriations, and His work is not carried on by them. Such appropriation is itself robbery, and the fact that it is carried on professedly for the service of the Lord, does not make it any less sinful in His eyes. "For I the Lord love judgment; I hate robbery for burnt-offering." Isa. lxi. 8. "To obey is better than sacrifice." 1 Sam. xv. 22.

At the Bible House in New York, a few days ago, the Rev. Hiram Bingham, a missionary of Micronesia, saw the completion of the printing of the entire Bible in the language of the Gilbert Islanders. The work of translating was begun in 1859, Mr. Bingham having been compelled first to reduce the language to writing. Twenty years ago he finished the Old Testament, and on the 11th of last month he completed the New Testament. Dr. Gilman of the Bible Society, spoke of Mr. Bingham as the only man who has reduced a language to writing, completed a vocabulary, constructed a grammar, and translated the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and then revised all the proofs.

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