

# THE Present Truth.

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

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## The Present Truth.

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THERE is nothing more comforting to an individual who knows his own weakness and the limitations of his powers, than a belief in a supreme power and goodness, which watches over all things and attends to the wants of all living creatures. And there is nothing more comforting to one who holds this belief than to see, in the light of Divine revelation, the care of Him who is the embodiment of that power and goodness, for every one of His children here on earth.

WE live in a world of suffering and sorrow, and our eyes have become familiar to sights of poverty and distress of every kind. Yet God has not withdrawn His care from the world; He has not left His earthly children to take care of themselves. While they meet with experiences which try their faith, they are not left without the evidence of His guiding hand in all the darkness and difficulties of the way; and they may see, if they will, tokens of the abiding presence of that love which gave the Son of God to die upon the cross for their salvation.

OUR conceptions of things are so coloured by the false light of human ideas and human practices, that it is natural for us to think of God and His dealings with us much as if He were a man like ourselves, only a little higher

up in the scale of being. As we seem to have come into the world by accident, and the care and attention which we receive from men comes by the accident of our association with them, so it seems to us that our relation to God is also accidental. Since we are here, He is obliged to take notice of us, and when He finds us in the midst of difficulty and danger, He helps us out, at other times leaving us to look out for ourselves. And perhaps we are all the time worrying about what we shall do in this or that difficulty that looms up before us, for fear if we trust to the Lord we may find Him unprepared for the emergency.

WITH such a conception of God's providence toward us, it is not surprising that we are so often afraid to trust Him. It would be different if we would take the view which is revealed to us in His word. Let us glance at some words of the Apostle Paul upon this point: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Eph. i. 3-6.

Do we grasp the meaning of these words? If we do, we see that God thought of us before ever we thought of ourselves. He thought of us ages before we ever came into existence. His love and His care were exercised toward us before the foundation of the world! The Omniscient, looking ahead through the ages to come, down even to the scenes of the present hour, saw

us, and chose us in Christ, adopting us into His royal family, making us sons and daughters of God! These were the conditions under which we were born into the world.

GOD not only saw us before the foundation of the world, but He knew us by name. The Old Testament record furnishes an instance of God's calling an individual by name long before that individual came into being. Isa. xlv. 1-4: "Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places; that thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob My servant's sake, and Israel Mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name; I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me." This is a prophecy of the taking of Babylon by the Medo-Persian armies under the leadership of Cyrus and Darius. It was uttered about 712 years B. C., and the event which it foretells took place about 538 B. C. And thus king Cyrus, nearly 150 years before he was born, was called by name and "surnamed" by the God of heaven, for the sake of Israel His elect, who were to pass seventy years in Babylonish captivity. And surely God knows His own elect as well as those whom He uses as the instruments of their welfare.

BUT who are the "elect" of God? The apostle says, "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son;" and Peter tells us that the elect are

"elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Rom. viii. 26; 1 Pet. i. 2. Again we read that it is an "election of grace;" which grace is "given us in Christ Jesus." Rom. xi. 5; 2 Tim. i. 9. The "calling" and "election" of God are in Christ. They apply not to us by ourselves, but only in Him; and they apply to all that are in Him. It is so "according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. iii. 11. It is the fulfilling of the "everlasting covenant" of grace, which from eternity provided for the acceptance of the sinner in Christ. If then we are in Christ we are numbered with God's elect; and if we are out of Christ we should without delay come to Him, accepting the invitation given us; for it is to all, saying, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17.

GOD not only saw us before the world began, and sees us now, but He looks ahead and sees us in the ages to come; for we read that "God, who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 4-7. God will show to "the principalities and powers" in heavenly places the wonderful riches of His grace, in taking from among frail, sinful, fallen men, those who in future ages will sit with Christ and share in the deliberations of heaven.

WHO will say, then, that they are here in this world to contend with chance or with fate. Is it not evident that in the Christian's life at least, there is no such thing as chance. Certain it is that He who knew us and exercised His grace toward us before the foundation of the world, does not withdraw His love and care when we are here on the stage of action. He sees every event of our lives before it comes; and we are told that "all things work together for good to them that love God." Rom. viii. 28. All things must, therefore, be under His control and direction, even those events which seem the most strange and accidental. Let us, then, "trust in the Lord and do good"; let us "rest in the

Lord, and wait patiently for Him," believing that He who began the work of grace toward us before the foundation of the world, will not fail now to carry it forward to a glorious completion.

#### ACQUAINTANCE WITH GOD.

To mortal man is extended the honour of becoming acquainted with God. The highest being in the universe is willing to become acquainted with the weakest and most finite. He even desires that we should seek His acquaintance, and to this end has given us a revelation of Himself, adapted to our finite comprehension. Nor is this acquaintance to be like that of an earthly king with one of his subjects, or of some lord or great man with one who is poor and in humble station, who sees only his wealth and splendour and hears only his commands; but it is to be the acquaintance of friends,—one which will reveal to us not only the majesty and greatness of God, but His love and mercy, and every attribute that He possesses. He is willing that we should know all that He is and all that He has. This is friendship in its highest and most intimate form.

The prophet of olden time evidently understood this truth when he spoke the words, "Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace." Job xxii. 21. But how can we become acquainted with Him? How can mortal beings, shut out from His presence and with capabilities infinitely lower than His, know Him who reigns in the heavens? To human wisdom this would seem impossible; but not so to the wisdom of God. By one of the most wonderful provisions of His grace, He has brought to us the knowledge of Himself. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians inquires, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?" But he adds, "We have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. ii. 16. And this revelation comes to us through the agency of the Spirit.

How wonderful is the truth here brought to our view! We, who cannot know (as perhaps we would often like to know) the minds of one another, can know the mind of God! We do not need to know the minds of one another; it would be a great injury to us if we could, for we should lose all confidence in humanity. But knowing the mind of God, we know all that is good and pure and holy, all that is for our strength and hope and comfort.

And so God has given us this wonderful insight into Himself. The apostle writes, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. . . . Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii. 9-12.

Jesus has said, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Rev. xxi. 7. And these things God has revealed to us by His Spirit, which "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." It is not merely houses and lands and silver and gold that the saints are to inherit in the world to come. They will inherit also that which pertains to God Himself,—His mind and His nature; for the Spirit searcheth the deep things of God that it may reveal them unto us as among the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

The revelation of God is Christ. Christ gave Himself to us, and in accepting Him, we receive His mind and His Spirit. He is the express image of His Father. Heb. 1. 3. His mind is the mind of God. He is one with His Father. John x. 30. God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and Christ is in the heart of the believer. 2 Cor. iii. 19; John xvii. 21, 23. Thus the same mind and the same Spirit are in all three, and the individual no longer sees all things within the narrow realm and through the cloudy atmosphere of His own mind, but has rich glimpses into deep and glorious mysteries in the realms beyond.

In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. ii. 3. To these treasures, therefore, we have access by having the mind of Christ. A limitless field is opened before us, which we can never fully explore. There are no treasures of wisdom and knowledge outside of Him. Whether we look in the realm of nature or of human thought and life, we cannot grasp the truth concerning the things that we see, except as we view them in the light of the knowledge of Him who made all things, and by whose hand they are controlled and upheld. The atheist, as he looks into the heavens, sees only the operations and results of a law of nature working through a "nebular hypothesis;" but the devout

astronomer exclaims, "O God, I think Thy thoughts after Thee." To those who become acquainted with Him, God gives His thoughts. He withholdeth "no good thing from them that walk uprightly." Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

In becoming acquainted with God, we become also acquainted with ourselves; and though the knowledge may not be pleasant to us, it is exceedingly profitable. While we compare ourselves with others around us, we are not wise, or at most are wise in our own conceits; but when we come to know God, we can view ourselves in the light of the true standard of perfection. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and God has said that only He can search and know it. And only as we see with the mind of Christ can we know the evil that is lurking there, waiting to accomplish our ruin.

Acquaintance with God is beneficial in every way. The prophet understood this when he uttered the words which we have quoted, "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace." The knowledge of what He is to us and will do for us brings us perfect peace; for we know that He is for us, and "if God be for us, who can be against us?" "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Isa. xxvi. 3.

Acquaintance with God is also our salvation. For said Jesus, "this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." John xvii. 3. For the knowledge of God comes by Christ dwelling in us, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Who will fail to avail themselves of the privilege of becoming acquainted with God? Who will prefer their own mind to His mind, their own wisdom to His wisdom? Who will not esteem it a high honour to be able to say, I know the God of Heaven? Let earthly potentates and great men seclude themselves and refuse their friendship and their acquaintance; we know One who is infinitely the superior of any man. We enjoy fellowship and communion with Him, and are on terms of the closest intimacy, even that of sons and daughters with their father. We do not care for the honour that comes from man. "Thus saith the Lord: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth

glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness, in the earth." Jer. ix. 23, 24.

Let it be our aim to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" that in the day of His appearing, we may meet Him not as a stranger, but as a friend, as One whom we well know, and have earnestly longed to behold.

#### HOLDING THE WINDS.

EVERY one who keeps the run of current events must know of the tension that has for a long time existed in the mutual relations of the great powers of Europe. The most trivial circumstance, from a national point of view, such as a petty quarrel or even the indisposition of one man, among those who hold the reins of power, may, we are told, suffice to throw all Europe into desperate conflict. Just now the tension is very severe in the relations between Italy and France, and it is said that those in high military circles look for a rupture to occur at any moment. On the military frontier, long lines of semi-belligerents stand facing each other, ready at a moment's notice to spring forward and inaugurate a conflict into which all Europe will be drawn. And yet it is probable, as has already so often been the case, that the war cloud will pass over without any deadly discharge upon the earth, and the restless dogs of war, crouching in readiness for the spring, will settle down again and content themselves with glaring at each other across the line which keeps them apart.

But why is this? Why the constant repetition of this curious phenomenon—now hardly regarded as curious because of its frequency—of relations strained almost to the point of rupture, yet meeting a relaxation just before the breaking point is reached; of war clouds rising as if to scatter death and destruction over a continent, and as suddenly disappearing again without a discharge of their lightning and thunder? That the phenomenon is a striking one, not known in the history of international relationship hitherto, cannot be denied. For a score of years Europe has been a vast armed camp, with her governments staggering under a constantly increasing military burden, so that peace itself is now more expensive than war was formerly,—and yet the war for which all have been straining every nerve in prepara-

tion, has not occurred. People have grown accustomed to the sounding of the alarm, and now hear it with indifference. Some have even arrived at the conclusion that the world is going to adopt the rule of arbitration and other peaceful methods of settling international disputes, and thus war become a thing of the past.

But there is a reason why these things have occurred as they have—a reason not understood by the world, but which makes all clear to the student of the inspired word. And let it be stated here that no one is prepared to understand the significance of events either in the political or the religious world, who does not study the word of God. The political situation of to-day is thus foretold by the Apostle John, writing eighteen centuries ago: "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Rev. vii. 1.

The verses preceding this statement describe the coming of the great day of God's wrath, when "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man," shall hide in the dens and caves, and say to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand." We have reached the period of time just preceding this awful day, and now the "four angels" are "standing on the four corners of the earth," holding the winds, that they may not blow upon the earth till the servants of God are sealed with His seal. There is a sealing work going on in the earth, and it is the work of God, and meanwhile nothing can take place which will interfere and cause it to stop. The world is not to be distracted by the blowing of the winds of strife, the convulsions of the nations of Europe. The servants of God are in those nations, and they must be sought out and sealed. So there have been momentary outbreaks and appearances of

strife, but the great struggle has not yet come; there have been fitful gusts, but the hurricane wind has not yet blown. This is what the world has seen for a score of years in the past, and sees to-day.

But sooner or later the storm will burst. The winds will not always be held. The sealing work will be completed and those who are the servants of God will be prepared for His appearing and the day of His wrath. Then the restraining power will be taken away, and a whirlwind of strife will be the result. We must not rest in the fancied security of those who dream of the extinguishment of war and an era of universal peace. "When they shall say, Peace and safety then sudden destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thess. v. 3. Our safety now is in being numbered with the servants of God—those who "Keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus" (Rev. xiv. 12)—and in receiving His seal—the mark of His authority—in our foreheads, that thus we may "be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke xxi. 36.

#### GLORIFYING GOD.

WONDERFUL as it may seem, it lies in the power of feeble, finite man, to glorify God. He who is the King of kings, dwelling in light whereunto no man can approach, and before whom angels veil their eyes, can receive an augmentation of glory from mortal man! We do not know how this can be, but God Himself tells us that it is true. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." Ps. l. 23.

All things were created for the glory of God. Rev. iv. 11. Yet God is not arbitrary, but has made the glory of the Creator the highest happiness of those created. The apostle Peter tells us, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." 1 Pet. ii. 9. Though man is fallen, he has not lost the privilege of serving the original purpose of his creation. In one thing he can yet stand with the sinless throng in worlds above; he can do that which will glorify God; he can join in the great anthem of praise which myriad tongues, from realms beyond our sight, send forth to the great Creator.

And God is glorified by the praise of

our feeble tongues just as much as by the anthems of seraphim and cherubim; for it is not the might or the grandeur or the eloquence of the tribute that glorifies Him, but that which tells most of the power of Divine love. And man, to whom that love has been most revealed, is perhaps best fitted of all to testify of that grace which is sufficient for all needs, and that power which is made perfect in weakness.

#### THE HOPE OF SALVATION.

THE hope of salvation is the Christian's helmet. The Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Thessalonians, says, "Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation." 1 Thess. v. 8. The purpose of the helmet is to guard the head. The mind of the Christian is to be fortified by a firm belief in and expectation of salvation in the kingdom of God. With such a belief, his mind is guarded against being cast down in discouragement or despair by the attacks of the devil.

Most people believe in salvation, but few, apparently, look upon it as something that is to become an actual reality in their lives. It is made altogether too much like a mere theory, to be spoken of in religious meetings, sung about and prayed over—something that exists, like the heaven of the popular imagination, "beyond the bounds of time and space." It should be made a *fact*, future, it is true, so far as the kingdom is concerned, but no less real. It must be made a fact, a reality, or it will not serve its purpose in the Christian warfare.

Some, it may be, have more of a theory of salvation than a hope of it. They see the path that is cast up for the righteous to walk in, and it is high and very narrow. They see the standard of righteousness set up in the law of God, and it seems impossible of attainment. The frailties of the flesh press upon them so strongly that a perfect life seems altogether beyond their reach. And so it is to all, except to those who attain to it by faith; but these have not strong faith, and by their own powers they can make no progress. And so the "hope of salvation" is with them almost a dead hope. It is a theory rather than a fact. It is nothing that is able to keep them from having frequent attacks of despair.

But the Apostle Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His

abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." 1 Peter i. 3, 4. The hope of salvation is meant to be a "lively hope." And when God asks us to have a lively hope of anything, He has made provision that we should have it. What God asks us to hope for, we can expect with certainty. We hear a great deal about the uncertainties of this mortal life. We hope for things, but we do not know that our hopes will be realised; we expect things, but we find ourselves disappointed. It has been said that the only things certain to us were death and the Judgment. But the resurrection of Jesus Christ has added to these the certainty of salvation. He has made it certain that every man will be saved who will believe on Him. And thus salvation—eternal life in the kingdom of God, which is so much beyond all that we ever hope for in this life, is something of which we may be absolutely certain. God has not left us in any doubt upon this vital point. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself; saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. . . . That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Heb. vi. 13-19.

Let us then improve the privilege offered us, and make this hope a lively hope and a sure anchor of the soul. Let us remove it from the far-off realms of theory, and bring it near into the realm of fact. Let us expect it as much and more than we expect anything in this world. We are in the position of the children of Israel upon the borders of the promised land; let us profit by their experience. They received word that the cities were strong and "walled up to heaven," and the inhabitants were giants before whom they themselves were as grasshoppers; and then they were seized with unbelief. Their hope of entry into it was lost and they gave way to despair; and by their action made necessary the mournful record, "They to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief." Heb. iv.

6. The high walls that seemed to reach up to heaven represent to us the walls of doubt; the giants are the giants of unbelief. And as those walls and those giants fell then before the advance of faith, so they will fall now, however high and strong they may seem to us. Let us put on this helmet and move resolutely forward, knowing that "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. v. 9. And like those to whom Peter wrote, it will be to us a hope "wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter i. 6, 7.

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**"CHRISTIAN" NATIONS.**

THE idea that there are any Christian nations in the world, in the sense of being governments which are actuated by the principles of Christianity, was rudely shattered by a Japanese Buddhist, in an address made at the World's Parliament of Religions, at the World's Fair. Kinza Ringe M. Harai (such was the speaker's name) is a Japanese gentleman of learning and ability, a fluent speaker of English, and well informed in the ideas and practices of English-speaking people. In his address he said:—

"If any person should claim that there are many people in Japan who speak and write against Christianity, I am not a hypocrite, and I will frankly state that I was the first in my country who ever publicly attacked Christianity—no, not real Christianity but false Christianity; the wrongs done toward us by the people of Christendom. If any reprove the Japanese because they have had strong antichristian societies, I will honestly declare that I was the first in Japan who ever organised a society against Christianity—no, not against real Christianity, but to protect ourselves from false Christianity and the injustice which we receive from the people of Christendom."

"One of the excuses offered by foreign nations is that our country is not yet civilised. Is it the principle of civilised law that the rights and profits of the so-called uncivilised, or the weaker, should be sacrificed? As I understand it, the spirit and the necessity of law is to protect the rights and welfare of the weaker against the aggression of the stronger; but I have never learned in my studies of law that the weaker should be sacrificed for the stronger. Another kind of apology comes from the religious source, and the claim is made that the Japanese are idolaters and heathen. . . . Admitting, for the sake of argument, that we are idolaters and heathen, is it Christian morality to trample upon the rights and advantages of a non-Christian nation, colouring all their natural happiness with the dark stain of injustice? I read in the Bible, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to

him the other also;' but I cannot discover there any passage which says, 'Whosoever shall demand justice of thee, smite his right cheek, and when he turns, smite the other also.' Again, I read in the Bible, 'If any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;' but I cannot discover there any passage which says, 'If thou shalt sue any man at the law, and take away his coat, let him give thee his cloak also.' . . .

We are very often called barbarians, and I have heard and read that Japanese are stubborn and cannot understand the truth of the Bible. I will admit that this is true in some sense, for though they admire the eloquence of the orator and wonder at his courage, though they approve his logical argument, yet they are very stubborn and will not join Christianity as long as they think it is a Western morality to preach one thing and practice another."

All this the Japanese naturally charge to, or at least associate with, the religion which is supposed to dominate the western nations. If they were told the truth of the matter—that there is no such thing as a truly Christian government—there would be far less antagonism to Christianity roused in the minds of those who most need its truths.

There is, indeed, not a nation upon the earth to-day that is actuated by any other motive than that of self. Their policy is, Let us look out for self first, self last, and self always. This is why one or another of these so-called Christian nations adopts the policy of "protection." It matters not to the government of the United States that hundreds or thousands of people in England are thrown out of work and reduced to starvation by a law which places a prohibitive duty upon the importation of tin. It matters not to that government that it has closed its doors upon hundreds of millions of the human family, in China. When the poor and needy paupers come to its shores, it unceremoniously drives them back to the place whence they came. Is this Christianity? So also it matters not to the government of England that China is forced to accept the importation of a deadly drug that is fast enslaving both the bodies and souls of millions of her population. Is this Christianity? And these are only a few of many illustrations that might be given. And the same governments which do these things are, we are told, fitted to legislate on the subject of religion! Let us hope that the words of this outspoken Japanese may not be lost to the cause of complete separation between religion and civil government.

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 "FOR the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 6.

**THE EARTH SHAKEN.**

THE latest deductions of seismic science seem to demonstrate that our globe is not the great mass of *terra firma* which it is popularly supposed to be; in fact, that it is susceptible to convulsions which shake its entire circumference. A writer in the *Youth's Companion* says:—

"The astonishing tremors to which the solid shell of the earth is subject are only just beginning to be made apparent by the delicate instruments of modern science. It is now known that the effects of earthquakes reach hundreds and thousands of miles beyond the points at which they are perceptible to the unassisted human senses. In fact the shocks of severe earthquakes appear in some cases to be transmitted completely round the globe.

A remarkable example of this occurred on July 28, 1889, and has only recently been brought to light. While examining the record of pendulum experiments at Potsdam, Herr Paschütz happened to consult a volume of the publications of the Seismological Society of Japan, an association for the study of earthquakes, and was surprised to find that a severe earthquake which had occurred at Kumamoto on the date above mentioned coincided in time, allowance being made for transmission of the shock, with a double perturbation which had been noticed by the pendulum experimenters at Potsdam and Wilhelmshaven.

The explanation of the double perturbation recorded in Germany is not the least interesting part of the story. It was interpreted to mean that the shock in Japan ran both ways round the globe, and as the perturbation which travelled westward had a shorter distance to go, it arrived at Potsdam about two hours and thirty-eight minutes sooner than did the perturbation which ran round the shell of the earth eastward.

The distance along a great circle of the globe from Kumamoto to Potsdam, reckoning toward the west, is about fifty-five hundred miles, while the distance along the same great circle reckoned the other way round is nineteen thousand five hundred miles. The average velocity with which the shock travelled in the earth was about seven thousand five hundred and eighty-seven feet in a second. This agrees very well with the velocity observed in some other similar cases.

Once has the solid surface of the earth yielded to the mighty forces within it, when "the fountains of the great deep were broken up," and the waters leaped forth to meet the torrents descending from the opened "windows of heaven," and form with them the flood by which the world that then was, perished; and we are told that "the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men," 2 Peter iii. 7. Fountains of fire now lurk in the depths of the earth, ready to burst through its trembling surface to meet the fire from above, in that day of final reckoning when "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest," by which they will receive "the portion of their cup." Ps. xi. 6; Rev. xx. 9.

### DENOMINATIONALISM AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

In His memorable prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, Jesus said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." John xvii. 21. Nearly nineteen hundred years later comes this comment on the words of Christ, from the lips of a prominent adherent of the Buddhist faith, Mr. H. Dharmapala, given at the "Parliament of Religions" in Chicago:—

"There are too many religions in the present day. Representatives of each urge our acceptance of their God. The Christian calls on us to accept his God; the Jew wants us to adore his God, and so on with the others. The result is we are puzzled which to accept. These conditions have led to much scepticism and materialism."

As every one familiar with the history of foreign missionary effort knows, denominationalism has been and is now the bane of the missionary work. The professed followers of Christ have not been one as He wished, and the world has not believed that God has sent Him. Those who are one with Christ are one with each other, but His professed church have not been united to Him; the multiplicity of Christian sects is most certainly not the work of His Spirit. While therefore it is true that there are Christians in all these sects, it cannot be true, as some would have us believe, that all these sects are recognised by Him as parts of His church. In the Church of Christ there is unity. The apostle's question to the Corinthians—"Is Christ divided?" can no more be answered in the affirmative now that it could in the days of Paul.

WHILE so much is being said to call attention to the urgent necessity of relief for the physical wants of men and women, it may be well to point out that there are other wants no less real than these, and no less clamorous for relief, although the dull ears of mortals are insensible to the sound. For those misfortunes which affect visibly the bodies of men, have their counterparts in the evils that fasten upon the soul. As there are around us the maimed, the halt, and the blind, the starving and the paralysed, physically, so there are also the spiritually and morally halt and blind, the starving and paralytic. There come dearths in the realm of spiritual things, just as

there do in that of things material; only the minds of men are so dull and stupefied as regards the reality of spiritual needs that the dearth is often not perceived. A person will starve spiritually from the lack of spiritual food, just as truly as he will starve physically from the lack of that which supplies the muscles and tissues of the body; only the one process is perhaps a little slower than the other. And spiritual starvation ends in death, just as physical starvation does. The individual becomes "dead in trespasses and sins." Then indeed is his condition truly deplorable. While taking care for the wants of the body, we must not forget this great truth, that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. iv. 4.

### "AWAKE, THOU THAT SLEEPEST."

THIS is the call that is sounding to-day from the throne of Divine mercy, to the children of men. But it falls, for the most part, upon ears that are dull of hearing. We read in the book of Proverbs that "wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates; in the city she uttereth her words." Prov. i. 20, 21. But how many realise the fact and discern her voice? She says, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scornors delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at My reproof; behold, I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My words unto you." "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Prov. i. 7. The voice of wisdom is the voice that calls men to turn to the Lord. Through the night of sin, to the myriads that lie in darkness and the shadow of death, benumbed by the stupor of sin, it calls, and its language is, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 14.

The world is asleep, and their sleep is as the sleep of death. The voice of wisdom calls, but they know it not; the hand of Mercy is reached down to save them, but they know not the day of their visitation. While their destiny is trembling in the balance, and the hours are burdened with the awful events which turn the scale for life or death, they are engaged in oblivious revelry or the pursuit of gain, like Belshazzar feasting with his lords, not knowing that he was the same night

to be slain, and his kingdom given to another. Consider the case of Sodom. There was the wicked city wholly taken up with its vain and licentious pleasures, living its life of "pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness," without a thought of righteousness or judgment to come; while the same day, only a few miles distant, the patriarch Abraham, with face bowed to the earth, was talking with the God of the universe, and saying, "Peradventure ten [righteous] shall be found there," and receiving the answer, "I will not destroy it for ten's sake." But the ten were not found, and the wicked inhabitants were overtaken in a moment by "the vengeance of eternal fire." Or consider that more momentous scene, many years later, in the garden of Gethsemane, where the Son of God, in human form, poured out the agony of His soul in prayer. There the awful burden of sin forced from His lips the words, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me;" and if that prayer had been answered, the world would have been left to its fate. But while this momentous scene, upon the outcome of which its destiny hung, was taking place in Gethsemane, the world was asleep. The inhabitants of the earth were totally oblivious to the crisis which had come, in which their eternal destinies were involved. Even the three disciples, whom the Saviour had chosen to accompany him to the scene of His suffering, were wrapped in the same oblivious slumber; "for their eyes were heavy." Only the inanimate trees and the watchers that looked down in pity from above, beheld the scene when the iniquities of the world were laid on the world's Redeemer. With men, there was no thought of the awful crisis that had been reached in the history of the human family. They slept, and rose and went about their accustomed rounds of duty or pleasure as if that night were like all others, and not darkened by a great tragedy in which every interest of their existence, both for time and eternity, was involved.

And so it ever is with those who sleep when they should be awake to spiritual things. They know not the day of their visitation. The crisis comes when their destiny for eternity will be decided, and they perceive it not. Like the blind inhabitants of Jerusalem spending in self-righteous ease the last day before the Divine judgment was pronounced upon the city, or the licentious Sodomites feast-

ing and revelling through the very hours when the question of their doom was being decided, these sleeping ones pass on and know not their position until their fate comes upon them. Then their eyes are opened, but the awakening comes too late.

So it may be with us who live in the world to-day; for there is a spiritual crisis which must come to us as well as to those that have lived before us, a time when the decision must be made for us, as it has been for the destiny of others. And how near that hour may be, who can tell? How far off are we from the day of our visitation? We cannot do better than to turn to the words of Paul in the exhortation given on this point in his epistle to the Romans: "And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." It is not necessary that the crisis should overtake us asleep. The apostle says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of the light and the children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thess. v. 4-6. Let us "awake to righteousness, and sin not." 1 Cor. xv. 34. The righteousness of Christ is offered to us, and will be ours if we awake and grasp it. That is the light which Christ will give to those that awake and "arise from the dead."

But if we heed not the call of wisdom, if we hear not her voice saying, "Turn you at My reproof," the day will surely come when we will hear her saying, "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded: but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." Prov. i. 24-29. "Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

"MAN proposes, but God disposes."

**"IF THOU HADST KNOWN."**

"When He beheld the city He wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known." Luke xix. 41, 42.

"If thou hadst known!" so spake the Saviour Lord

To those who spurned His life-giving word,  
As o'er Jerusalem His tears were poured—

"If thou hadst known!"

"If thou hadst known!" heaven-chosen, favoured race,

What meant the lifting on thee of His face,  
Thou could'st not have despised such wondrous grace,

"If thou hadst known."

Lord, make us know, "while it is called to-day,"

The things that to our peace belong, and may  
We never hear Thee, sorrowing o'er us, say,

"If thou hadst known."

Salvation seeking only in Thy cross,  
May those eternal things our hearts engross,

For which we surely must count all things loss,  
Did we but know.

Though now at best we know Thee but in part,  
Yet all we can receive of what Thou art

Do Thou reveal to each believing heart,  
That we may know.

—Alice Jane Muirhead.

**OUR REASONABLE SERVICE TO GOD.**

"I BESEECH you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Young men and young women need more of the grace of Christ, in order that they may bring the principles of Christianity into their daily life. The grace and righteousness of Christ are offered as a free gift; the subject of justification by faith is to be studied and put into practice. Let us all realise that young and old, if they would behold the glory of Christ, must go into the cleft of the Rock. If we would become Christians, we cannot retain our natural habits, and hold fast to the weakness of our character that dishonours our Saviour. We can find no excuse in the plea that this or that sin is the result of "my way." The professed followers of Christ will always be filled with wavering, will always be tossed like the waves of the sea, unless they give up their way, and take Christ's way. To cherish our own way, to do those things which naturally please us, will bring upon us the sure result of separation from the presence of Christ, and then we shall be without strength.

God is our owner. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. What a price has been given to redeem men from the slavery of sin! We are not to

love the world, or to be conformed to its customs and practices. Jesus says of His followers, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." If we have true religion, we shall consider how we should dress, how we should speak, and how we should deport ourselves, realising that we have been redeemed, soul, body, and spirit, and that we are to be wholly sanctified.

This subject has relation to the practice in which the women of this day indulge,—that of compressing the waist by tight lacing. This practice has no sanction in the word of God, and is injurious to the health of those who follow it. Those who profess to be children of God, who acknowledge that they have been bought with a price, dishonour their Maker when they employ any means, or follow any practice, whereby physical strength is lessened. Do you think to improve upon the form that God has made, by compressing the vital organs, and dishonouring your body? David says, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." The habitation of the body should be tenderly guarded; for it is the habitation of God, the property of God, and it is to be preserved in soundness.

The human body has been terribly abused by following the fashions, by conforming to that demand that requires the compression of the delicate, vital organs. Those who are given to this practice, bring injury upon the lungs, the heart, the stomach, the liver, the kidneys, and the delicate organs of the abdomen. We see women about us who have broad shoulders, broad hips, and wasp-like waists, and their very appearance is painful, and testifies against the character of the fashion-maker and the fashion devotee. Common-sense, reason, and conscience are all laid aside, that the body, mind, and spirit of these fashion-followers may be laid upon the altar of custom; but women who ruin their health by this injurious practice, shorten the life God has given them and will be held accountable.

Our Creator made no mistake in fashioning the human body. He gave appropriate space for the free action of every organ, and formed us in such a way that every muscle could come into play without trespassing upon the function of any other muscle. But health and life are imperilled by becoming a slave to injurious fashions, and the offspring of those who thus injure themselves come into the world robbed of their rightful vitality, because of the sins of the mother. If women would allow reason to control them, and intelligence to be their guide, these harmful fashions would soon die a natural death. In sustaining fashions of this character, you exert a wrong influence in the world, sin against the body God created for you, sin against Christ, who gave his life to redeem you from the thralldom of all health-and-life-destroying practices.

God is the owner of the body; and when the body, purchased at infinite cost, is made to serve the customs and practices of this world, by following the fashions of this degenerate age, then testimony is borne to the world that pride and sin reign in the heart, that Christ does not abide in the soul-temple. The Lord Jesus will not be made to serve with your sins. He claims the undivided throne of the heart, and would banish from the life every worldly, unsanctified action, whose influence would tell against the fact that you are His sons and daughters. We must remember that we are the purchase of Christ's blood. Body, soul, and spirit are His, and we are to be His agents, and not serve sin and the world, but yield to Him, that we may be wholly sanctified. "Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The moment the eye of faith is turned away from Christ, and there is a seeking after the world in conforming to health-and-life-destroying fashions, that moment the soul begins a course that will lose for it the favour of God. Ye cannot serve God and Baal. The Lord Jesus died in order that we might have tender consciences through committing ourselves to God, and having our mind and will in harmony with God's mind and will. The reason why so many have a crippled experience in the things of God, is that they do not commit themselves, soul and body, to do God's will, to be conformed to God's way. The world is permitted to creep into the heart, and is there cherished as a welcome guest. When the world holds control over us, the atmosphere we breathe is of a dark, murky character, and body and soul deteriorate. The soul becomes diseased, and spiritual life is infected with spiritual consumption. The world steals the thought, and self is served and indulged, and views of the purity, goodness, and matchless love of Jesus, are eclipsed and dimmed. Peace is gone, and the soul is no longer committed to Christ in simple trust, and the whole Christian life becomes wavering and uncertain. The Holy Spirit of God is not welcomed into the soul as a reprover and comforter. The eye is no longer fixed steadfastly upon Jesus, but turned upon self, and thus contemplates the spiritual weakness of the natural character separated from God. The time that should be spent in communion with God, is spent in looking at the feelings. The moment the eye is turned from Jesus, darkness is seen, darkness is felt; for Jesus only is light and life and peace and assurance for ever. "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in

thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" What is it to have a single eye?—It is to have a disposition to look upon Christ; for by beholding, we become changed from glory to glory, from character to character.

As we keep Christ in view, the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon us, and flood the chambers of the mind and heart, and fill the soul-temple with light. As the Light of the world shines upon us, we diffuse it to those around, "as when the bright shining of a candle doth give light." The soul that is stayed upon God, commits to Christ all that perplexes, all that annoys, all that gives anxiety. The light of Christ shines in the soul in all goodness and peace; for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Those who behold Christ will never plead that their own will may be done, or that their old ways and habits may be left undisturbed. As they behold Jesus, His image becomes engraved on heart and soul, and in all their practices they reflect His example upon the world. Day by day, the hands, the feet, the tongue follow the dictates of the spiritual nature, and faith makes their path a path that grows brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Everything that keeps us from attaining unto the likeness of Christ, is working out for us eternal loss. Then let no one plead for a continuance of his own way. Let no one seek to excuse his deficiencies of character by saying, It is "my way." Co-operate with Jesus Christ, and you will see that your own way is a way full of deficiency and fault, and that if it is not corrected, it will cause you to put into your character-building, traits that will be as rotten timbers that will not stand the test of the judgment. Let none of your own way appear; let nothing of these defects of character be found in your building. Build on the rock Christ Jesus.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

#### CHRISTIANITY AND THE LABOURING MAN.

To show that true Christianity is always the friend of the labouring man, it is only necessary to allude to the fact that Jesus Himself was "a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter." Coming from the highest heavens, He stooped to our lowest needs.

Though He was King of kings and Lord of lords, yet no diadem was on His brow, and no royal carriage conveyed Him from place to place. His birthplace was the manger; during His early life, His hands were hard with labour; and during His ministry, foot-sore and weary, He went about *doing good*. "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He was among us "as one that served." Not the wildest imagination of man

could conceive how an infinite God could more grandly and eternally set the seal of nobility to labour than He did in the life and death of His only begotten Son.

Carlyle well says, "Sweat of the brow, and from that up to sweat of the brain, and sweat of the heart, which included all Newton meditations, all Kepler calculations, all spoken epics, all acted heroisms, up even to the agony of bloody sweat which all men have called divine—all is sacred since He has laboured." Other religions degrade the toiler to exalt the priest, but Christianity exalts every man to be both priest and king.—G. E. Field.

#### SECRET SINS.

THE public life may be free from sin which incurs the disapprobation of men, while the heart is the seat of some unholy affection or passion, that is abhorrent to the pure mind of Him who sees every action and knows every thought. A sin hidden in the chambers of the soul, and coming out in secret ways, is more dangerous to the Christian, and less likely to be overcome, than that which is visible and recognised by others; an unseen disease of the body may be less cared for than one which is known to the public, though the latter may be less serious in its nature than the former.

Bosom sin is very deceiving. It blinds the mind to a perception of its exceeding sinfulness. It makes excuses and apologies for its continuance. It assumes weakness and non-importance as a means of obtaining indulgence. It weeps, it promises, it resolves, it crouches beneath correcting power, but it only uses this means to throw dust in the eyes of man, while it gathers strength for renewed action. Hence, when the opportunity again occurs, and all things favour, it comes out of its hiding place with increased energy. Thus it goes on in its career, deceiving the soul, until, perhaps, it has obtained such ascendancy, and arrayed itself in such appearance that he regards it as a simple failing which cannot be avoided, and from which the mercy of God will deliver him before he dies. The sin now dwells in him with a bribed patronage of his knowledge, his conscience, his religion. He may be a nominal Christian, an officer in the church, a man of public benefit, against whom no one dare bring an accusation. But there reigns the sin in secret majesty, fortifying itself in its dominion, and destroying in the same proportion any strength of goodness and usefulness which he might possess. In this way the sin gathers power and boldness, until, perhaps, by some mysterious influence the cause of his declining usefulness is first suspected and then divulged; he falls from his religious position. Now the monster, unrestrained by church and

social authority, leaps from his hiding place and is no longer a secret sin, known only to the man himself, but a sin known to multitudes.

"All unrighteousness is sin." It matters not whether it is the unrighteous act of the professor, or the non-professor. It may be hidden for ever from the eyes of man, yet it is sin. "The thought of foolishness is sin." It is not necessary that it be some act done in the dark, but it may be the thought hidden in the mind. It may be so safely kept that it may never reach the mind of another, but it has been recorded in the books of heaven.

Like the cancer beneath the surface, secret sin is constantly preying on the vitals of the professed Christian. It may be a long time coming to the surface, yet it will be revealed to the world sometime; if not before, it will be seen when the Judge of all the earth sits on the great white throne. The only way it may be covered from the sight of all the earth is by confessing it to God, and forsaking it.

"Blessed is the man whose sin is covered." Reader, have you a secret sin that is eating its way to the surface? that is eating out the spiritual life? Whatever it is, small or great, give it no favour. Listen not to its subterfuges. It is your disease and will be your death if not removed. Cry mightily to God for help. He can remove the leprosy that is in your system and make you clean. Every time that you go to the Lord, bring it out and expose it to Him in humble confession. He will bid it come forth that you may be every whit whole.

J. H. DURLAND.

**TWO COMPARISONS.**

How could the Apostle Paul write of himself, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came to the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," while we know that he was not the worst of men, and in another place he writes in a half-boasting way of his own experiences, attainments, and trials? The answer to this question is that our relative standing depends upon the object with which we compare ourselves. In one instance he was drawing a comparison between himself and other men. In this case he almost felt justified in boasting, though he apologises for doing so.

In the other case the comparison was with Jesus Christ, the perfect and the pure pattern. In Him Paul beheld infinite grace and glory. In his sight he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, a rebel. He was as a brand snatched from the burning, a vile sinner saved by grace. This was his true condition. This, too, is our condition.

The reason why so many fail to see themselves in their true condition is that they compare

themselves among themselves. We can all thus find reason to thank God that we are not as other men. We are not as bad as we might be. We do not realise any special need of repentance and deep humility of heart.

But when we get a good view of Christ, self goes away down in dark contrast to the immaculate glory of His lovely face. We can but flee from self to Him who is our only righteousness.

—Bible Echo.

**"IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?"**

Is it nothing to you that a Saviour has died?  
Is it nothing to you?  
Can you carelessly glance at the Lord crucified—  
Is He nothing to you?  
Can you gaze on the dying One sad and forlorn;  
On the brow of the Royal One crownéd with thorn;  
On the hands that are nail-marked and feet that  
are torn—  
Is this nothing to you?  
Have you thought of His sorrow, so sad and so  
sore;  
Is it nothing to you?  
The stripes for your sin that He willingly bore,  
Is it nothing to you?  
Have you grieved o'er the shame that He stooped  
to endure?  
Have you longed for the pardon He died to secure?  
And the mansion prepared for the blood-washed  
and pure?  
Is this nothing to you?  
Is it nothing to you that time fleeteth so fast?  
Is it nothing to you?  
Is it nothing to you that a life-mile is past?  
Is it nothing to you?  
Is it nothing to you that eternity nears,  
That nought lies before you but trembling and  
tears,  
And the day of dread judgment when Jesus ap-  
pears;  
Is this nothing to you?  
The Redeemer now calls; will you still turn away?  
Is it nothing to you?  
There is danger in doubting, and death in delay—  
Is it nothing to you?  
Then flee to His cross, and respond to His call,  
He will save from the sins that now chain and  
enthrall,  
He will welcome you gladly and pardon you all—  
Is this nothing to you?  
—E. T. P., in *The Dayspring*.

**THE WAY OF PROSPERITY.**

THE way is this. "Give and it shall be given unto you." Luke vi. 38. While the Israelites were on the east side of Jordan, in the plain over against the Red Sea, Moses told them that they should pass over Jordan to go in and possess the land and that they should observe to do certain things, one of which was that they should tithe of their increase and lay it up within their gates, and the Levite, because he had no inheritance, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow should come and eat and be satisfied. And this they were to do that the Lord their God might bless them in all the work of their hands. Deut. xiv. 28, 29.

Again he tells them that if there shall be among them a poor man of one of their brethren they shall not shut their hand from their poor brother, but shall open it wide unto him so he shall have sufficient for his need, and when they do this they are to beware that the thought of their heart is right,

and their heart shall not be grieved when they give to the poor man, "because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto." Deut. xv. 7-10.

Again they were told that if in the time of harvest they should forget a sheaf in the field they were not to go again to fetch it, but leave it for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow, that the Lord their God might bless them in all the work of their hands. Deut. xxiv. 19.

It was enjoined upon Israel that they be generous and give to the poor and needy in order that they themselves should be blessed in their work; and these are some of the things which were "written aforetime" for our learning and are a part of the scripture which was given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness that we may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. It is as true of Christians to-day as it ever was of God's people in the past, that "the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand;" or as the margin reads, "in liberal things shall he be established." The Revised Version reads, "in liberal things shall he continue," which rendering does not suggest the thought that one will have less because of what he gives, or that giving leads to a condition of things where liberality will cease because of lack of ability to be liberal. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." Prov. xi. 24. "He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully, and he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly." 2 Cor. ix. 6. "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will He pay him again." Prov. xix. 17. "Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the first-fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty." Prov. iii. 9, 10.

"God loveth a cheerful giver;" and those who are cheerful givers enjoy God's love as those who give grudgingly or of necessity never can enjoy it; and when cheerful givers are more numerous there will be fewer Christians who will go through life wondering whether God loves them. It is well for us to keep in mind that it is in connection with this subject of cheerful giving that we are told that "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work." 2 Cor. ix. 7, 8.

After the Israelites possessed the promised land, the record says that there had failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass; and Joshua before his death said to them "ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing

hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass and not one thing hath failed." Josh. xxiii. 14. When they had been obedient they had been blessed in the work of their hands, and had been blessed by receiving much. And so we may find when we learn to be obedient that we shall be blessed. When we learn to sow bountifully then the Lord can bless the work of our hands, and we may reap bountifully, and we may find that if we give it shall be given unto us, and so we shall be blessed by receiving much. To receive much is indeed a blessing; yet there is a greater blessing. When it was said that it is more blessed to give than to receive it would have been difficult to have substituted another word for the word "receive" which would have made the statement mean so much to the human heart. What do we naturally think is better than to receive? But there is something even better than what we sometimes think is the best; and while we receive much as a result of our giving there is also for us the greater blessing bestowed when we give. "Ye ought to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts xx. 35.

W. N.

#### NO MORAL POWER BUT OF GOD.

NOT only is the State powerless to control sin and enforce morality, but the individual is powerless to control sin in his own person. No person can by any exercise of strength, will, or resolution, break the power that sin has in his own life. Every human attempt to cope with sin has proved a failure and is destined to be so. How then can a State do for its citizens what no man can do for himself? How could a community of lepers legislate the diseases out of their midst? As well may civil government undertake to counteract the evils of the human heart. They have tried it in years gone by, but the attempt has made martyrs or hypocrites of the subjects, and monsters of the zealots.

The only force that can oppose the power of evil is that represented by the gospel of Christ. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16. Only the power of God can match the power of Satan. But God works by different methods than those employed by the State. The latter accompanies its behests by no persuasions. It does not entreat obedience and respect. It lays its strong hand upon the offender with an unmistakable "come along," that has no savour of mercy or forbearance. But not such are the methods of Divine goodness. Says Paul: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye

reconciled to God." Says Christ: "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me." The Father says: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." These words represent the spirit of the gospel. Moral principle can only be cultivated by moral influences. A good character can only be formed by a voluntary choice of the good, and then the will must be mightily assisted by the grace of God. Faith in Christ as the Saviour from sin brings the soul into connection with Divine strength and breaks the bondage of sin. G. C. TENNEY.

#### THE ESSENCE OF HEATHENISM.

HEATHENISM does not consist in belonging to a dusky, scantily-clad tribe in some warm climate; nor in being dirty, poor, homeless, friendless, or the victim of evil habits in a great city, nor in all these at once. The essence of heathenism is that which repels men from goodness and from God. It is selfishness. Just so far as selfishness rules our lives, to that extent we are heathenish, no matter how cultured we may be or what church we attend. One of our polite, refined, modern city heathen may be more in fault than are the brown or black heathen who represent the lowest known types of humanity. The apostle declares that even they have enough knowledge of God to lead them somehow to Him; but their ignorance is so stolid that the selfishness which impels them to refuse or neglect to turn to Him is much less blameworthy than it would be otherwise.

Heathenism shows itself as often as elsewhere in the grasping after the gratification of desire. Is it money which you crave, or social recognition, or literary or political success, or only the name of being the best housekeeper in the village, or the best blacksmith in the county? Every one of these may be a proper and honourable object of effort, and, on the other hand, if any one of them absorbs you enough to cause you to forget to put God and your fellow-men first, then, so far as its influence extends, it is making you as truly a heathen as if you lived in China. Heathenism reveals itself, too, in an assumption of wisdom, in a foolish vanity based upon supposed intellectual superiority. How often this absurd self-conceit renders young men and women ridiculous. If that were all, it would be comparatively a small matter. But when it tempts them to deny God, to smile at Christianity, to imagine that agnosticism is clever, and that the eternal and immutable principles of righteousness somehow have been outgrown and set aside, it is making actual heathen of

them, as true and pitiable and needy heathen as if they lived somewhere five thousand miles away and talked another language.

Heathenism in its essential principle always and everywhere is the love and service of self instead of God. Let us remember it.—*Congregationalist*.

#### THE EXACTNESS OF A SCIENCE.

THE American Association for the Advancement of Science recently met at Madison, Wis. Prof. C. D. Walcott, of Washington, D. C., read a paper on "Geological Time," as indicated by the sedimentary rocks of North America. In the report of the *Scientific American* of September 2 he "conceded at the outset that it is uncertain and is in conflict with the teachings of some other sciences." Charles Lyell "assigned 240,000,000 years as the required length of geologic time; Darwin claimed 200,000,000 years; Crowell, about 72,000,000; Geikie, from 73,000,000 upward; Alexander Winchell, but 3,000,000; McGee, Upham, and other recent authorities claim from 100,000,000 up to 680,000,000." This is only a matter of difference between 680,000,000 and 3,000,000, near enough, we suppose, for scientific accuracy, sufficient at least to justify the rejection of the Biblical record of creation! Professor Walcott distributed geologic time as follows: Cenozoic age (including Pleistocene), 2,900,000 years; Mesozoic, 7,240,000 years; Paleozoic, 17,500,000 years; Algonkian, 17,500,000 years; total time of sedimentary rocks, 45,500,000 years. Says the *Scientific American*: "In commenting on this table it should be said that the data for Archean time are doubtful. Also there are no sufficient data from the duration of animal life to fix geologic time back of about 10,000 years."

Wonderful science! which asks us to turn from the inspired records of the Bible expressed in words so plain as to admit of no construction, not to what God has written in the rocks, but to man's uncertain interpretation of what God has written there! We yet prefer the records of Genesis, the record of God's power, of man's sin, and of the redemption which is in our Lord Jesus Christ.—*Signs of the Times*.

THE real test of love to God is obedience. Says Jesus, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." Men may talk sweetly and eloquently of love to God, but love is in the doing, not the saying. "My little children," says the beloved disciple, "let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him." 1 John iii. 18, 19. There is no other true test of love. Reader, do you love God? Do you obey Him?—*Sel.*

## THE HOME.



WATER LILIES.

FAIR water-lily, with heart of gold,  
With dainty apparel, laid fold on fold,  
Kissed by the ripples that come and go,  
Tell me, whence cometh thy raiment of snow?

Dark is the soil where thy rootlets twine.  
Whence come thy beauty and fragrance divine,  
Waving aloft at the sweep of the tide,  
Pure as a virgin, and fair as a bride?

Often thy house is the stagnant mere,  
That gathers its blackness year by year;  
Shining above it in stainless white,  
Swingest thou ever a thing of light.

Down in this great wide world below,  
Where teeming millions go to and fro,  
Angels look ever and wait to bear  
Their tidings above of the robes we wear.

And nightly the shining ones sing on high,  
And the music rings clear through the starlit sky,  
"Down in the world, 'mid the 'mire and clay,'  
Souls have been walking in white to-day."  
—Selected.

### "GROW AS THE LILY."

How many of you have seen a water lily on the pond? Do you know how it grows? If you tried to pull one up, you would find that it had a long stem, reaching far down, and that its root was firmly planted in the soil of the river bottom. Its broad, green leaves spread out on the water, making a bed for the beautiful, white blossom. But though the flower is so white, how often all round it, the pond is covered with green scum and decaying leaves. How can the lily be so fair amid the slime and filth? Oh, it does not live on the scum. Far down in the clear sands are its roots, and it drinks only of God's sunlight and God's dew, and lifts a pure, white cup to heaven, so sweet, so pure that angels look down and smile.

Jesus has told us to "consider the lilies . . . how they grow." He says that a king, even king Solomon was not arrayed as one of these. You may take a microscope, and look deep into the beautiful lily, and you will find the leaves fairly dazzling, as though diamonds fine and bright, had been woven into their fairy robes. You will see the golden stamens, dusted with fleecy pollen, as though God had drifted a beautiful veil of white lace over the golden heart, and you will exclaim "Oh, how beautiful." Your heart will go out in a kind of tender longing toward God, and though you say nothing, your inner soul will be filled with a dumb prayer that God understands, and your unspoken prayer will be, "Make me like the lily."

Let us look upon the world as a great pond. It is very full of evil, covered with scum and filth and decay. Once God planted a heavenly Lily in this great dark pond. Some one was called a lily. Who was this heavenly Lily? It was Jesus. How sweet, how beautiful was Jesus! How noble, how true, how upright was Jesus! He lived like the lily in the pond. Surrounded with evil, "tempted in all points," yet, like the lily, He was pure. "He did no sin."

You may take the microscope of God's law and look deep into His heart. There is the spotless leaf of purity. No evil thought, no unclean desire is found, only beautiful, stainless holiness. Over His heart, full of the gold of love, the fleecy veil of humility and lowliness rests. Oh, could we have looked in His eyes, we would have read purity. His eyes never would have fallen at the most searching gaze. His holy mind had no unclean thought to hide. We would have known He was the Lily. Angels could look down on him through all His childhood, through all His youth and manhood, and smile; for His soul was stainless. The scum was all round Him, but He did not bear any mark of its pollution. His life while in the world was not of it; for He drew His strength from God, and drank God's sunlight and dew, and lived a life of purity.

Can we have our dumb prayer answered? Yes, God can make us like the lily. Jesus says we are to "grow as the lily." He says, "As a lily among thorns, so is My love among the daughters." Those who love Him will be as different from their surroundings, as is the lily in the midst of thorns, as different as the lily from the scum and filth. We are to be "Whiter than snow," "Pure in heart." This is like the lily.

Now how can we be made so beautiful? The Bible says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Christ, the Lily, gave His spotless life for us. He suffered all our sin to be put upon Him that we might be made white.

But can we be "like the lily," if we draw into our life some foul evil thing? Oh, no, however secret may be our sin, however far from home, however in the dark, if we listen to evil words that we would not like mamma to hear, if we do evil deeds that we would not like others to know, we cannot be like the lily; for we are living on the scum of the river. An evil thought, an evil deed, if ever so shut away from sight, will be like a worm in the lily's heart. It will eat away the gold of love, it will change modesty to boldness, it will turn innocence to shame, it will blacken the fair leaves of character and ruin your life. Not only will your soul be defiled and made ugly, but the sin will find you out. Just as the awful worm, by devouring the lily, exposes

itself, so your sin will be brought to view as your beautiful flower of innocence is corrupted; and heaven and earth will behold your defilement. Angels will see the worm eating in the dark. Jesus will know your filthy secret, and heaven will be sad and songless as you destroy yourself with evil.

Your frank, beautiful eyes will get bold, or have a look of shame. The look of beauty will be gone, the sweet fragrance of innocence will be for ever fled.

O children, you are Jesus' flowers. Will you let a dreadful worm into your heart? If some secret evil is marring your blossoms, tear it away. Ask Jesus, your Gardener, to tear it away. It will ruin your life here, take the song from your lips, the joy from your heart, the light from your eye, the rose from your cheek, the lily from your soul. Where the worm of secret sin is at work, the life is falling into ruin, physically, mentally, and morally. Mind and spirit and body are going to decay.

Nothing is hid from God. "Thou God seest me." Angels are round us, and most of all Jesus, our lovely Saviour, He who has died for us, looks ever upon us. He is wounded by our transgressions. Every sin of ours pierces His heart, and we crucify Him afresh. We are guilty of the death of God's Son. Jesus loves us so that it pierces Him with the sorrows of death to see us sin, and destroy ourselves. But while sin will ruin us, a life hid with Christ, drawn from Christ, will heal us, make us fair like Him, so that there will be no spot in us. From us a precious fragrance of purity will flow.

Round each of us is an atmosphere of thought, and it is as real in its influence as is the air we breathe. This influence tells men whether we are living on pure thoughts, on Christ, or on the scum and filth of the world. This influence leads others to purity or to sin. But if we sow evil we shall reap corruption. O children, do you talk naughty things to each other? Do you tell secrets to each other that have a bad influence and lead to destruction? Do angels see you do evil things that you do not want others to know about?

All things are known, and the books of heaven contain all that we say and do. Soon, soon, all heaven will know the record. Yet Jesus loves us, He cries to each one, "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" We are dying while in sin, actually dying. Sin destroys us. It hurts us, it ruins our minds, our hearts, our bodies. It makes us ugly. Our sins write on us their cruel marks, and no matter how secretly we do them they leave their mark upon us, the mark of the beast, the mark of the low, the devilish.

O children, how beautiful you may grow for Jesus. "Like a lily." Your manners may be modest, lowly, your

hearts may be full of the gold of love, the veil of sweet humility may be over you, the stainless beauty of Christ may be in your life.

Ask Jesus to make you like the lily. Keep this beautiful flower before you, and wherever you are say, "I am God's lily. I cannot drink the scum. I will not listen to evil words. I will not commit secret sin. I will not allow a hidden worm to eat out my life. I am growing for God and heaven." Let the lily be your flower, and angels will smile as they look down into your life.

Jesus has said, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." "Pure in heart!" Oh, may you be white in thought, then your deeds will be pure, and you will see God's glory even now and here. You will see beauty in everything, where an evil-minded person cannot see beauty. Your spiritual vision will be clear to see holy, lovely things, and by and by you will see Christ, and will not be consumed by the brightness of His coming as will the wicked.

Jesus says He is "like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap." His Holy Spirit can burn out the dross, and wash away the stain before the day of trial, and then we shall be able to stand at His coming. Do not allow any girl or boy to tell you an evil story, a vile joke, a wicked thought. Satan is behind everything evil, and he would ruin your soul. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Christ is soon coming. It will be a great day. Oh, may you be like the lily then, may you be like the lily now, growing each day like the lily, more like the great Lily, Jesus, and have a place among those who have washed their robes of character in the blood of the Lamb.

FANNIE BOLTON.

#### WHERE ARE THEY?

A LADY who has recently visited in one of the best families in a certain large city was surprised at the way in which the children there were treated. They were bright and interesting children, a boy of thirteen and a girl of eleven, and, naturally, very dear to their father and mother. The former was a professional man with large interests; the latter was an intelligent woman, not wholly given to society, though fond of it, and a good judge of literature and art. A day or two after the lady's arrival she observed that though the children were usually present at meals they were conspicuously absent between them.

"Where are the children?" she asked of the mother.

"I'm sure I don't know," answered that individual, brightly. "Aren't they around somewhere?"

"I haven't seen them since I have been here, excepting at meals," returned her friend. "They were at

breakfast this morning, but it is now after eleven, and, if they are in the house, they are keeping very still."

"O, I've no idea they are in the house," returned the mother, laughing. "You would know it fast enough if they were, I assure you. They are probably off visiting among their mates. Molly spends a great deal of time with Lettice Ault, on the next block. Perhaps she has gone to the park with her doll, it is so pleasant. She is safe and will be back to luncheon, never fear!"

"But aren't you afraid they will get into mischief, wandering off in this irresponsible way?"

"My dear!" with some spirit, "do you imagine children brought up among such associations as mine have could stray away from what is right? I trust my children."

"Excuse me, but they are so very young," murmured the friend, and the subject was dropped.

Another mother, this one with five children to look after and living miles away from the one who has been described, remarked when she was asked a series of questions similar to those which have been quoted, "I'm so thankful to have them out of the way that I don't trouble myself to find out where they are so long as they are on hand three times a day and in time to go to bed at night." And this was not a "tenement house woman," either. She kept two servants and was a member, as was also her husband, of a prominent church, living on one of the best streets of a small city and in every way highly connected.

Considerable inquiry has developed the fact that a dangerously large proportion of well-to-do and respectable mothers share the feelings of the two who have been described. So long as a child of eight or ten or over will keep out of the way and not "make any bother" it is all right. This is certainly laying a confidence in chance circumstances which would hardly be entertained by an idiot regarding any other kind of property than children, if, for the purposes of comparison, they may be termed "property." So valuable, so easily soiled, so impossible to replace when ruined and so difficult to repair! One shudders to think of the risks which these women, thoughtless and lazy to the verge of insanity, are daily taking.

A certain gentleman attracted the notice of a visitor in his family by the care which he took when going to tell his wife just where he was going and how long he was expecting to stay.

"I never saw any one so particular," she said, laughingly, to the wife. "Do you exact such accounts as these every day?"

"Not at all," answered the wife, "but I confess that I like it. It is the result of a habit which my husband formed in his boyhood of always telling his mother just where he was going,

for what purpose, and when he should return."

Every boy and girl, without in the least hampering their self-respect, can be brought up so as to acquire this habit. If their resorts are innocent they will not object to telling of them. If these resorts are not innocent, parents should know it. Make it a point to interest yourself in their friends and to study them. A boy who made an excellent appearance was in the habit of visiting in a certain family almost daily. They knew that his parents were wealthy and went to a fashionable church, and thought that a sufficient recommendation. Their son and he went freely back and forth between their respective homes. At nineteen he was discovered to be a most revolting criminal. Their boy so far is out of prison, but he is not a good young man. Whether he will grow better as he grows older remains to be seen.

Know just where your children are, what they are doing there, and what kind of companions are with them every hour of the day, so far as you possibly can. It is the only way in which you can possibly discharge aright the sacred obligations of motherhood. —*Kate Upson Clark, in Congregationalist.*

#### A PARABLE.

WHILE travelling in a coal-mine district, I noticed how very dingy the towns appeared. The coal dust seemed to blacken buildings, trees, shrubs—everything. But as the foreman and I were walking near the mines, I noticed a beautiful white flower. Its petals were as pure as if it were blooming in a daisy field.

"What care the owner of this plant must take of it," said I, "to keep it so free from dust and dirt."

"See here said the foreman; and taking up a handful of coal dust he threw it over the flower. It immediately ran off, and left the flower as stainless as before.

"It has an enamel," the foreman explained, "which prevents any dust from clinging to it. I think it must have been created for just such a place."

I have often thought of the enamel of this white flower as being like the covering or protection which Jesus gives to His own in contact with this sinful world of ours.—*Sel.*

"LIKE the wind, which is invisible, yet the effects of which are plainly seen and felt, is the Spirit of God in its work upon the human heart. That regenerating power, which no human eye can see, begets a new life in the soul; it creates a new being in the image of God."

"How can we take the good things and the beautiful things that God has made for us without stopping to say, 'Thank you, dear Father!'"

**CONSIDER THE LILIES.**

Jesus made the dainty lilies,  
That so sweetly bud and blow;  
And He put a life within them  
That made each fair floweret grow  
Purer, brighter, every hour  
'Neath the sunlight's warming power.

If He then so clothed the lilies,  
Surely I, His child, may know  
He can plant a life within me  
That will make me daily grow  
Ever purer in His sight  
As I stand in Heaven's light.

J. E. O.

**A LESSON FROM THE FLOWERS.**

"Consider the lilies; . . . if God so clothe the grass of the field, . . . shall He not much more clothe you?" Matt. vi. 28-33.

LAST week we learned a very important lesson from the grass. Every time we look at it God silently whispers through it, *Do not be proud. Do not be proud.*

Our best Friend is grieved when we think of ourselves and forget Him. He has made and placed on every side of us wonderful things, not only for our pleasure but to remind us of Him—to teach us of His power and love, and of our need of Him. He is our Teacher; we are His pupils; and the whole heavens and earth is our school-room. Above us, beneath us, and all around us, His own dear hand has scattered the lessons that He would have us learn. If we search, we shall find them in the Bible, in the grass, flowers, and trees; in the insects, birds, and animals; and in the air, and clouds, and sky. When we look at any of these things we should say, Lord, what would You have me learn from this? Help me to understand what it is. Then we should study and watch it and think about it; and He will make us understand.

God will teach us many things through the flowers alone, if we but listen to His still small voice. He speaks to us through the buttercups and daisies, through the modest violet, the sweet-scented pink, the blue-eyed forget-me-not, the friendly-faced pansy, and the beautiful roses; through the geraniums, in all their pink and scarlet glory, and through the golden-hearted lily.

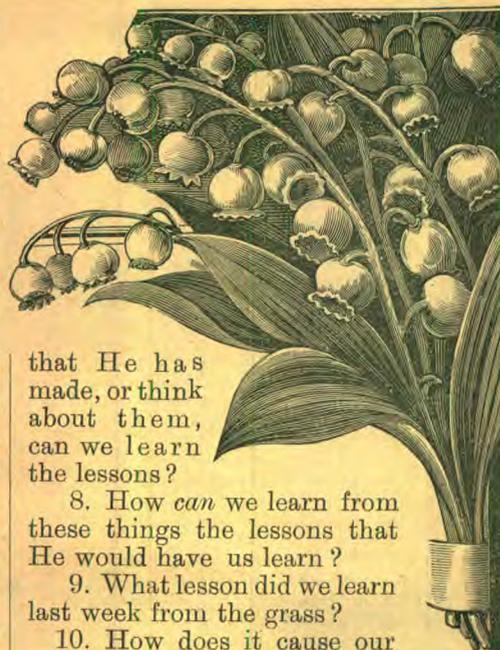
Listen to what Jesus once said about the lilies. He asked the people why they spent so much anxious thought, and so much of their time upon their clothes? He said: "Consider [think about] the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast

into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

It grieves God when we spend so much time in thinking about our clothes, and in trying to dress up so very nicely our poor frail bodies. It looks as though we could not take time for Jesus, for fear we should have to go without clothes. He says that that poor little lily out yonder in the field is dressed more beautifully than you can possibly dress yourself—no matter how hard you work or how much time you spend. You would please God more if you would spend more time in seeking the *inward* adorning—"the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit"—a pure and humble heart. This, He says, is worth a great deal more in God's sight, than outward adorning and costly clothing. Just listen what He promises. He says to seek *first* the beautiful garment of God's righteousness—a garment of purity for the heart—and try to lead others to God; and all these other things, such as food and clothing, will be added unto you. You need not fear, then, that you will have no food or clothing, if you spend a little time in thinking about and trying to please Jesus. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Matt. vi. 32. "He careth for you" (1 Peter v. 7), even more than for the lilies, and will not suffer you to want if you serve and trust Him.

In another place in the Bible Jesus says: "I am the lily of the valley." Then, as you look at the lily with its golden heart and raiment of purity, think of Jesus, the purest and best of all the lilies that ever grew upon this earth. Remember that He whispers to you through the lilies. And this is what He says: "I care for the lily, but I care for you more; I clothed the lily in its robe of snowy white, but I'll wash away your sins and clothe your heart in a robe more pure, even in my own pure robe of righteousness—if you will let Me. Do not be afraid to spend time to read your Bible and pray, and obey Me, for, remember, I care for you; you shall not want."

1. Do you go to school?
2. What school should we all attend every day? The school of Christ.
3. Then who will be our Teacher?
4. What is the school-room?
5. Where are the lessons that we should learn?
6. Who placed them there for us?
7. If we never notice the things



that He has made, or think about them, can we learn the lessons?

8. How can we learn from these things the lessons that He would have us learn?

9. What lesson did we learn last week from the grass?

10. How does it cause our best Friend to feel when we think of ourselves and forget Him?

11. How does it cause Him to feel when we spend more time in thinking of our clothes than we do in serving Him?

12. How does it look? As though we were afraid we'd have no clothes if we should take time for Jesus.

13. What little flower is clothed more beautifully than we can ever clothe ourselves?

14. Who gave it its beautiful dress?

15. For which does God care more, the lily or you?

16. Then do you think that He would forget to give you what you need when you love and obey Him?

17. Which does He say for us to seek first, outward adorning, or inward adorning?

18. What is this inward adorning which God prizes so much more highly than outward adorning and costly clothing? 1 Peter iii. 3, 4.

19. If we take time to seek this, shall we not be in danger of having no food and clothing?

20. Who knows that we need such things?

21. What precious promise does He make about it? Matt. vi. 33.

22. What did Jesus once say about the lilies? Matt. vi. 28-33.

23. Who cares for them and gives them their beautiful clothing?

24. What should you remember every time you see a lily? Jesus, the purest of all lilies, cares for the lily, but He cares for me more. He gave the lily its robe of purity, but He will make me pure like Him if I ask Him; then I'll be purer than this lily.

25. And what does the Lord promise to the pure in heart? Matt. v. 8,

## OUR FLOWERS.

Oh, Maggie loves the lily fair!  
And Annie loves the rose;  
But John and I, and Willie too,  
Love every flower that blows.

We love the golden buttercup,  
We love the daisy white;  
The violet blooming in the shade,  
And the roses in the light;

The wall-flower and the marigold,  
And the pretty London-pride;  
And the blue-bell hanging down its head,  
Its laughing eyes to hide;

And the hollyhock that turns about  
Its head to seek the sun;  
Oh, dearly do we love the flowers,  
And we love them every one.

Far better than our painted toys,  
Though gilded bright and gay,  
We love the gentle flowers that bloom  
In the sunny summer day.

For it is God who made the flowers,  
And careth for them all;  
And for our Heavenly Father's love  
There is not one too small.

He fans them with the gentle wind,  
He feeds them with the dew;  
And the God who loves the little flowers  
Loves little children too.

—*Youth's Companion.*

## TRUST IN GOD.

Look at the wild flowers. They seem to be left to themselves. They have no human care-taker. And they cannot take care of themselves. As Jesus said, "They toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." The dress of the flowers is richer, and finer, and more beautiful than that of the greatest king in the world. And it is God who takes care of these flowers. He sends the sun to shine on them, and the rain and the dew to water them, and the wind to stir their leaves and make them grow. The flowers never trouble themselves about how they are to live. They never worry about the weather. Whether there will be as much rain as they may want to-morrow, or next week, or next month; or whether a frost may come and nip them; or whether the sun may be too hot for them, are things that never give them any anxiety. They leave all these things with God. They trust to Him to take care of them, and He does so. And when we see them springing up by the roadside, or in dreary, desolate places, and growing so brightly there; or when we see them about our homes, looking so fresh and beautiful, without any labour or effort of their own, we may well learn from them the lesson of trust in God.—*Nature's Mighty Wonders.*

## THE FIRST GREAT LESSON.

ACCORDING to Warden Brush, of Sing Sing penitentiary, who has had more experience with criminals than almost any other man in America, the most prolific source of crime is not rum or idleness, but disobedience to

parents, and lack of parental control. He says that the scorn of the law which leads to prison begins with the scorn of the parent; that the weakness of the child is bred of the weakness of the parent in failing to compel obedience and respect. When the child is permitted to say "I will" and "I won't," he has learned to despise authority, and to travel the road that leads to the penitentiary.

This is worthy of the most serious consideration by both parents and children. The one great lesson which God wishes all people to learn is submission to proper authority. He who has learned none of this lesson in childhood is sure to make trouble for himself and others in every relation of life.—*Selected.*

## A SILENT PREACHER.

In a little room at the top of a house in London, where every room was the dwelling-place of a family, a Bible-reader met an old woman. She had only about five shillings a week to live upon, and that was hardly enough to keep her alive. The visitor was surprised to see a strawberry plant growing and flourishing in a broken teapot that stood on the window. As he came there from time to time he saw how nicely it was growing, and was pleased to see with how much interest the old woman watched over and cared for it.

One day he said to her, "Your little plant is growing finely. It has some nice blossoms on it now, and you will soon have some strawberries ripening there."

"Oh, it's not for the fruit that I take so much care of it," said the old woman.

"Then why do you take so much interest in it?" he asked.

"Well, sir, you see I'm very poor. I'm too poor to keep a living creature of any kind. But it's a great comfort to me to have this living plant. For I know it can only live by the power of God; and as I see it live and grow from day to day, it tells me that God is here, and it teaches me to trust in Him." That little plant was a silent preacher to that poor old woman in her loneliness.—*Sel.*

## Interesting Items.

—The health of Prince Bismarck is said to be improving; also that of Ferdinand de Lesseps.

—The schooner, *Star of the Ocean*, from Shields to Ramsgate, was run down by a steamer off the North Foreland, and six lives are supposed to have been lost.

—An attempt is being made in Hampshire to weld the Free Churches together into one strong association. Meetings of delegates are being held in the chief district centres.

—It is telegraphed from New York that an English syndicate has purchased the Lower Californian peninsula from the Republic of Mexico. It will be annexed to the United States.

—A conference of French Socialists was begun in Paris Oct. 7. It is attended by eighty-five delegates, representing 419 groups, and includes some Socialist members of the Chamber of Deputies.

—The war in Morocco seems likely to subside as suddenly as it commenced. There has been no resumption of fighting at Melilla, and the Moorish tribes are said to be divided on the subject of continuing hostilities.

—The Sunday-closing question is being fought over again in connection with the prospective midwinter fair at San Francisco, Cal., at which it is proposed to have an exhibition many of the exhibits now at the Fair in Chicago.

—Some fishermen on the Gulf of Riga have picked up a bottle, which had been washed ashore, containing a message from one of those who went down in the Russian war-ship *Roosalka*, in which it is stated that the vessel had run aground.

—The new session of lectures and classes in connection with the Oxford Extension Delegacy is just commencing, arrangements having been already made for 179 courses of lectures, to be delivered at 149 different centres in every part of England.

—Spain is still troubled with Anarchists. An announcement that a body of the latter intended to make an attack upon Xeres caused considerable alarm in that town. Nothing, however, transpired, and several well-known Anarchists were arrested.

—By the breaking out of a fire at the barracks at Roslavl, in the Russian government of Smolensk, twenty-eight soldiers were burned to death, and eleven others, who escaped by jumping out of the window, are not likely to live, owing to the injuries they sustained.

—Cholera has again appeared at Grimsby. The Local Government Board's report states that since the 6th inst. five cases of a choleraic nature, two of them fatal, have been recorded at that place, and one fatal case of cholera is reported to have taken place at Rawmarsh, near Rotherham.

—Signs of the end of the great coal strike and lockout are becoming visible, and victory seems to be turning on the side of the miners. Many thousands of the latter have gone back to work at the old rate of wages. The result is largely due to the generous sympathy shown by the public in contributing to the support of the men and their families.

—Active hostilities have been begun in South Africa, the initiative having been taken by the Matabele, who are supposed to have broken loose from the restraining hand of their king Lobengula. A Cape Town telegram says it is expected that the combined British forces will proceed to Buluwayo and make a simultaneous attack on Lobengula's kraal. It is not thought that the campaign will last more than a month.

—Oct. 9 was "Chicago day" at the World's Fair, being the anniversary of the great fire in 1871. Nearly 800,000 persons passed through the gates. A number of accidents are reported, owing to the tremendous increase in the traffic, several people having been killed and some thirty injured by being struck by grip-cars and other vehicles, or crushed in the crowd. Terrible scenes resulting from the crowding took place at night.

—A Nonconformist house-to-house visitation is now in progress at Leeds, and is expected to be completed on Oct. 20. One or two of the churches are not participating in the work, having already carried out a visitation in their own districts, and the Unitarians have not been invited to join in the movement. The visitor's card of introduction bears the intimation that "this visitation is undertaken with a sincere desire to extend the religion of Jesus Christ in the community. It is entirely unsectarian in character."

—No decided change in affairs is reported from the Brazilian insurrection, but the probability of ultimate success seems to lie with the insurgents. Manifestoes have been issued by President Peixoto and Admiral de Mello. The former is understood to infer that if the elections to Congress go against him he will bow to the will of the country, while the insurgent Admiral declares that in the event of his success he will adhere rigidly to Republican institutions and forms of government. He also defends, at considerable length, the line of action he has taken up, and charges President Peixoto with violating the Constitution.

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## The Present Truth.

"I am the way, the truth and the life." "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

LONDON, OCTOBER 19, 1893.

FOR TERMS, SEE FIRST PAGE.

THE question of religious education in the public schools is being forced upon the attention of the London School Board. A deputation of Primitive Methodists have waited on the Board and declared that the present unsettled state of the question is due to the High Church party, who are trying to insert into the public school system the thin end of a wedge which would force upon it an intolerable religious test. The *Chronicle* says (and very truthfully), "It is too late in the day to have any 'ism' whatever taught in the public schools at the public expense."

*Apostolic Succession.*—The Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, in a recent sermon, had this to say on the subject of "apostolic succession," in allusion to claims put forth by a prominent speaker at the Church Congress:—

"What is this apostolic succession? Mr. Gore appeals to the epistle of Ignatius, the epistle of Clement, the record of the second century tradition as represented by Hegesippus and Irenæus, and asks how in face of them any one can doubt the immense strength of the doctrine of apostolic succession. What do I care for the epistles of Clement or Ignatius, or the traditions of the second century. They are only valuable as historic records of the state of the Church at that period, and as showing the rapidity and ease with which it had lost its pristine beauty and lost its first love. They are no more guides to my faith than the words of Rev. Chas. Gore himself!

"When he appeals to the Acts of the Apostles and the pastoral epistles, however, it is a different thing, and my reply to him is, 'How anyone can read them and find in them any warrant for the doctrine of the apostolic succession, or the exclusive rights of an episcopal organisation, I am at a loss to understand. It is not there, and was only manufactured by the fathers of the second century.'"

This is the simple truth about this much-mooted question. "Apostolic succession" can no more have been handed down from the apostles' day to ours by men, than could the faith and righteousness of Abraham be handed down from his time to the Christian era by means of a literal descent. The Pharisees put as much confidence in the virtue of Abrahamic succession, if we may so speak, as is put now by some who partake of their characteristics, in "apostolic" succession; but the truth is that the faith and love necessary to make one an acceptable

labourer for God, are the gifts of God, who Himself calls His servants, as He did Paul, and gives them the true commission of the Holy Spirit.

### MR. MOODY EXPECTS A SMASH-UP.

THE great evangelist, D. L. Moody, has written to the *Independent* (New York City) his reply to the question (asked him by that journal), "Is the world growing better?" His view of the subject is one that will command the attention of English-speaking people in all lands. He says:—

"In reply to your question, 'Is the world growing better?' I would say that God has a plan in the history of this world, and He is constantly carrying it out. The Gospel has converting power, and wherever it goes men are being converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel also has an elevating influence in many ways upon those who do not accept it.

"While all this is true, on the other hand, men who reject the truth grow worse and worse, and we see the development of the kingdom of darkness going on side by side with the development of the kingdom of light. The facts which every one who is not blinded by prejudice must see about him on every hand, as well as the teaching of Scripture, clearly indicate that "in the last days perilous times shall come." There is every indication that the present dispensation will end in a great smash-up; but I believe that out of that smash-up the most glorious age in the world's history will come. So I look into the future, not with despair, but with unbounded delight."

The last two sentences are somewhat vague and ambiguous; perhaps purposely so. But the fact that one of so wide an acquaintance with the ways both of God and of men, looks for this dispensation to end in a general smash-up, should lead to a closer investigation of the subject in the light of the prophetic word. And if his view of the approaching catastrophe is that held by the Apostle Peter and other inspired writers, it may well be said that out of it the most glorious age in earth's history will come; for out of it will come "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." See 2 Peter iii. 3-13. And we may well "look into the future with unbounded delight," for that is only to fulfil the Saviour's words, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke xxi. 28.

*Cannot Be Harmonised.*—A leading religious journal in the United States professes to be greatly puzzled by the fact that while people there "have listened to beautiful addresses in Chicago [at the Catholic Congress] by Cardinal Gibbons and Bishop Keane and Archbishop Ireland and

dozens of other distinguished representative Catholics, telling us about the liberality of the Pope and his sympathy with free institutions, his love for Republics and the freedom of the American Catholic Church," the Papacy still perpetuates the institution of the *Index Expurgatorius*, which, by a deliverance from "his holiness" published last July, excludes from all Catholic homes several copies of *The Nineteenth Century* magazine, since they contain some articles which the pontiff and his associates have seen fit to proscribe. The directions aforesaid read as follows:—

"Therefore, let no one of whatever rank or condition dare in future either to publish or to read or to keep these above-mentioned condemned and proscribed works; but let him deliver them over to the local bishops or to the inquisitors of heretical doctrine, under the penalties which have been prescribed in the Index of Forbidden Books."

But why will any sensible person undertake to harmonise the beautiful talk which we listen to from Catholic prelates, about the pope's love of freedom and the liberality and humanity of the Catholic Church, with facts of this nature which ever and anon come to light? Why will not people believe that "actions speak louder than words," even the words of a Catholic cardinal or archbishop? The *Index Expurgatorius* of Rome used to contain not only the names of books, but the names of persons, and would to-day if she had any means of making the theory practical. How can a pope who makes no protest against intolerance of Protestant worship in Spain, the oppression and hatred manifested toward it in Austria, the killing of Protestants by Catholic mobs in Mexico and the countries of South America, the exclusion of Protestant missionaries from Ecuador, and the mental and moral degradation of the masses in all of them, when a word from him would be powerful to check such bigotry,—how can he allow all this without a protest and yet be the liberal and benevolent father, the friend of democracy and lover of popular rule, which these smooth-tongued prelates would have us think? When they have satisfactorily answered this question, it will be time to put some faith in their representations.

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