

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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—FOR—

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As Occasion Serves.—One of the most noticeable things in connection with working for the salvation of souls is the fear of departing from precedent. People hear of some man who has been used by the Lord for the accomplishment of a great work, and straightway they want to find out from him how he did it. They want to know what he said, how he laboured, and just the methods he employed. Then they will do as nearly as they can the same as he did, and wonder why they do not have the same success. They forget the one thing that is needful, and try to substitute method for the power and instruction of the Holy Spirit. Such should take a lesson from Samuel's instruction to Saul. “And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee.” 1 Sam. x. 6, 7. When one learns from the Spirit of the Lord, he will not need to ask somebody how he shall present the Gospel, and what he shall say on different occasions. The same condition never occurs twice, and therefore however closely he may study another's method of working, it will not give him success. The work of saving men is the Lord's work, and no one can engage in it successfully except the one who has learned of Jesus.

A Slight Mistake.—Some time ago Mr. Herbert Spencer charged the apostle Paul with lying, basing his accusation on the words of the apostle, in the third chapter of the book of Romans, “If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?” At the time we made a mental comment to the effect that the philosopher did not know what he

was talking about. He himself has since admitted the same thing. He confesses that he had not verified the quotation, but depended upon some assistants for accuracy in the statement, and that he had not read the context, and therefore did not perceive the meaning of the apostle. On examining the passage for himself he sees that he was mistaken, and frankly acknowledges it. That is to his credit. But, at the same time, it should for ever discredit him as an opponent of Christianity and the Bible. It places his opposition on the same level with that of the carpenter, who announced that he was glad to find that he need not believe all that the Bible says, because many of its statements could be demonstrated to be impossible. Being pressed for an example, he cited the statements concerning the ark. He said that it was understood to be 450 feet long, 75 feet broad, and 45 feet high, and filled with live animals; and he was sure that had it been that large *the Israelites could not have carried it around with them for forty years!* Opposers of the Bible are never found among those who are best acquainted with it.

“REASONING TOGETHER.”

“COME now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isa. i. 18. What a wonderful promise! It seems too much to be true, but it is truth. Think of it! A man that is thoroughly defiled by sin, made as pure as the snow fresh from heaven. That is the wonder of the universe.

How is it accomplished? Well, it is in a way that no man would ever have thought of. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” 1 Tim. i. 15. “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.” 1 John iii. 4, 5. “If we walk in

the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” 1 John i. 7. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Verse 9. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” Rom. iii. 23–25. “To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Rom. iv. 5.

THE sum of all this is that the sinner is saved from sin by receiving the righteousness of God in Christ. He is redeemed, cleansed by the blood of Christ. But the blood of Christ is the life of Christ. See Lev. xvii. 11. When Christ shed His blood for man, He poured out His life for sinful man. Whoever acknowledges that he has sinned, and takes Christ by faith, receives His life into his soul. Then he is a new creature, and the life that he lives he lives by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him and gave Himself for him. Gal. ii. 20. That man has simply exchanged lives with the Son of God. Being crucified with Christ, he gives his old life to Christ, and thus it, with its sins, is nailed to the cross. But since he is crucified with Christ, he must also be made alive with Christ; for “if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.” Rom. vi. 8. But only Christ has the power to live after giving up His life; therefore the new life that the redeemed one lives is the life of Christ. Thus he has exchanged lives with Christ.

ALL this is contrary to human reason. “The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.” 1 Cor. i. 18. “We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are

called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Verses 23, 24. Man would say, "Do right, and then you will be right." That seems to the human mind to be the only reasonable way. But God says, "Let Me make you right, and then you will do right."

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." John iii. 14, 15. The children of Israel had sinned in the wilderness, "And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Then the people confessed their sin and begged that the serpents might be removed from them. "And the Lord said to Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Num. xxi. 6-9.

It would be strange if there were not some among the people who refused to look. They would "reason" in this way: "It is all nonsense to think that looking at that brazen serpent can heal a snake bite. If we could climb the pole, and rub the wound against the serpent, there might be some virtue in that; but just looking can never be of any use, and I am not going to make a fool of myself." That is just the way that men reason about the Lord. It seems to them foolishness that a man can be made perfectly righteous by simply looking at Christ. No; if they are ever to be made righteous they are confident that it must be by some more promising means than that. They will not risk their salvation upon a look. They can trust their own efforts, but to lie passively and look seems to them too presumptuous.

The truth is that the facts of the Gospel cannot be reasoned out by men. They are altogether above and beyond the reach of human reason. Man left to his own reason will reason himself into heathenism every time. See Rom. i. 20-25. "But doesn't God tell us to reason together?" some will ask. Yes; and here is where so many pervert the text with which we started. They use their reason as a basis for faith, forgetting that faith must be the instructor of reason. God does not tell us to apply our reason to the task of figuring out a way of salvation, but says, "Come now, and let us reason together." Who does the "us" include? Why, ourselves and the Lord, of course. The trouble is that so many read that call, and then they proceed forthwith to begin

to reason alone, leaving the Lord out altogether. Then they come to fatal conclusions.

We are to reason together with the Lord. Well, it is only reasonable that in reasoning with the Lord we should defer to Him, and let His reason direct. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. lv. 8, 9. Even "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." So it is not with our mind that we are to reason about the things of God, but with the mind of the Lord. First we are to submit to the Lord, that He may put in us the mind that was in Christ, and then we shall see clearly, for we shall be walking in the light as He is in the light. Then it is that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. That which seems foolishness when looked at from a human point of view, is very reasonable when seen with the mind of God; for as "God is love," and as He "delighteth in mercy," it is the most natural thing for God to save sinners. But it is none the less wonderful, for the smallest of God's ways affords matter for the never-ending wonder of man.

IS IT NOT SPIRITUALISM?

Nothing is more pitiful than to see people running into danger of which they are unconscious. And the fact that they might have known of the danger ought not to prevent people from sympathizing with them, and trying to help them. We do not refuse to help a drowning man, although his own carelessness has precipitated him into the water. But nothing calls for more sympathetic help than that of men who are running into the snares of the devil when they think that they are in the way of life. True, the word of God is so plain that there is no need of anybody's mistaking the way, but that should not cause us to censure. Men pity the blind, even though their blindness is due to their own fault.

It is therefore only for the purpose of helping those who may be in danger, that we call attention to the following paragraph; for we are sure that very many are in the same condition, who do not know their danger. On December 4, Dr. Talmage preached a sermon about "Rizpah on the Rock," watching the dead bodies of her relatives. After drawing many parallels, he said near the close:—

I wonder if now there is an after-death watching. I think there is. There are Rizpahs who have passed death and who are still watching. They look down from their supernal and glorified state upon us, and is not that an after-death watching?

I cannot believe that those who before their death were interested in us have since their death become indifferent as to what happens to us. Not one hour of the six months during which Rizpah watched seated upon the rocks was she more alert, or diligent, or armed for them than our mother if glorified is alert and diligent and armed for us. It is not now Rizpah on a rock, but Rizpah on a throne. How long has your mother been dead? Do you think she has been dead long enough to forget you? My mother has been dead twenty-nine years. I believe she knows more about me now than she did when I stood in her presence, and I am no Spiritualist either. The Bible says: "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation?" Young man! Better look out what you do and where you go, for your glorified mother is looking at you. You sometimes say to yourself: "What would mother say if she knew this?" She does know. You might cheat her once, but you cannot cheat her now. Does it embarrass us to think she knows all about us now? If she had to put up with so much when she was here, surely she will not be the less patient or excusatory now.

Oh, this tremendous thought of my text, this after-death watching! What an uplifting consideration! And what a comforting thought. Young mother, you who have just lost your babe, and who feel the need of a nearer solace than that which comes from ordinary sympathy, your mother knows all about it. You cannot run in and talk it all over with her as you would if she were still a terrestrial resident, but it will comfort you some, I think, yea it will comfort you a good deal to know that she understands it all. You see that the velocities of the heavenly conditions are so great that it would not take her a half second to come to your bereft heart. Oh, these mothers in heaven! They can do more for us now than before they went away. The bridge between this world and the next is not broken down. They approach the bridge from both ways, departing spirits, and coming spirits, disimprisoned spirits, and sympathizing spirits. And so let us walk as to be worthy of the supernal companionships.

Dr. Talmage says that he is no Spiritualist. We can, however, leave him entirely out of the question while we consider for the benefit of others whether or not that to which he has given utterance is Spiritualism. The question is, Does a belief in the conscious existence of the dead, and that they are interested in human affairs, and can even communicate with the living, constitute Spiritualism? Surely none can answer this better than those who acknowledge themselves to be Spiritualists. In order to learn what Methodism is, we go to Methodists themselves; to learn about Presbyterianism, we apply to Presbyterians; and so for a definition of Spiritualism, we must ask Spiritualists. From the standing motto of the *Spiritual Magazine*, for many years the leading Spiritualist pub-

lication in England, we take the following statement:—

“Spiritualism is based on the cardinal fact of spirit communion and influx.”

Also from a leading Spiritualist journal of America, we take the two following definitions:—

“The central idea of modern Spiritualism is the key-stone of the religious arch. That is, a continued existence.”

“The very central truth of Spiritualism is the power and possibility of spirit return, under certain conditions, to communicate with those in the material form.”

The idea that the spirits of the dead have a conscious existence, and that they can under certain conditions, return and communicate with the living, is the sum and substance of Spiritualism. Therefore all who believe that the dead are conscious, and that they can return to earth to communicate with those with whom they were associated in life, are Spiritualists, whatever name they may bear. And it is a fact that there are thousands who would be shocked at the intimation that they could ever by any possibility become Spiritualists, who hold exactly these ideas. Why is it that they have such a dread of the name? It is because they think that Spiritualism is nothing but jugglery and trickery. They have associated it with table-tipping, immorality, etc. It is true that such things have been connected with Spiritualism; but they are but manifestations of Spiritualism. Spiritualism itself, is, as we have seen, nothing but a belief in the return and communion of the dead. Whatever is connected with Spiritualism is an outgrowth of that idea.

Having learned in brief what Spiritualism is, we shall in the next article consider the question of whether or not it is wrong in itself, and if so, wherein the evil consists.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE BIBLE.

In the preceding article we have found out what Spiritualism is. We have learned from the words of Spiritualists themselves that it is nothing more or less than a belief in the doctrine that the dead do not really die, but that after the change which men call death they continue to exist with keener perceptions and larger knowledge than they had while on the earth, and that they can under certain conditions communicate with people still on the earth. The question now before us is, Is this true? The Bible must furnish us with the answer to this question.

“The writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: I said, In the noontide of my days I shall go into the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not

see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is removed, and is carried away from me as a shepherd's tent; I have rolled up like a weaver my life; he will cut me off from the loom; from day even to night wilt Thou make an end of me. . . . But Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back. For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day.” Isa. xxxviii. 9-19, R.V.

“For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun.” Eccl. ix. 4-6.

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Verse 10.

“While I live will I praise the Lord; I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. Put not your trust in princes nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Ps. cxlvi. 2-4.

Still further, the patriarch Job asked the question, “If a man die, shall he live again?” and immediately answered it thus, “All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands.” Job xiv. 14, 15. What this “change” is, we learn from the word of the Lord by the apostle Paul:—

“Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Cor. xv. 51-54.

Once more: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast,

neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” Rev. xx. 4, 5.

Note carefully all these scriptures. The first four plainly state that the dead have no consciousness whatever. Therefore to claim that the dead are conscious is to contradict the Bible. Spiritualism does make that claim. Therefore Spiritualism is a direct contradiction of the Bible. The last three texts speak of “living again,” and of a change that takes place in order that men once dead may “live again.” A man cannot go to Paris “again,” if he has never been there once, and gone away. If he was born in Paris, and has never left the city, it is impossible to speak of him, and speak correctly, as being in Paris “again.” So with living. The man who has never ceased to live, cannot be spoken of as being alive “again.” In order for that to be truly said of him, he must have ceased to live, and then have been made alive once more. So the scriptures last quoted teach us that when man dies he ceases to live, and that in order to live “again,” so that he may praise the Lord, and receive a reward, a change must take place in him. This change takes place at the coming of the Lord. But Spiritualism teaches that men never cease to live; that at the change which people call death, they are more alive than ever before; therefore, again we find that Spiritualism is in positive contradiction to the Bible. But the Bible is the truth of God. Therefore Spiritualism is a lie of the devil.

And so we find it. In the form of a serpent the devil deceived Eve, and thus caused the loss of Eden. God had told our first parents not to eat of the tree in the midst of the garden, saying that if they did so they should surely die. But the devil said to the woman, “Ye shall not surely die.” That is just what Spiritualism says. It is because Spiritualism is only a deception of Satan, that we feel so sorrowful to see men embracing the teaching of Spiritualism, while they think that they are opposed to that system. And now that we have given the matter this much attention, we wish in the following article to show how directly the doctrine that the dead do not really die is subversive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the natural source of all immorality and vice.

SPIRITUALISM AGAINST THE GOSPEL.

LET it not be forgotten that Spiritualism is simply the belief that the dead are conscious, that they are interested in the affairs of men on the earth, and that they may communicate with them. That it

is against the Gospel is sufficiently shown in the fact that it contradicts the Bible. But we wish to trace a little more minutely its natural working. Take, for instance, the paragraphs quoted from Dr. Talmage, in the first article. Read them carefully again, and see what is set forth as the motive for right doing. Is it the approval of the Lord Jesus? Not at all, it is the approval of dead friends. The words are, "Young man! Better look out what you do and where you go, for your glorified mother is looking at you." But that is not the motive to set before any man, in order to get him to do right. Even if his mother were alive, something higher than the fact that she is looking at him ought to be the motive of his actions. But the idea that people are alive after they are dead, and that they are watching the living, puts them in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ and the angels.

Here is a fragment of an editorial in a religious paper that has a circulation of many thousands among all denominations of Christians:—

"Some of the saintly faces of fathers and mothers, which are a benediction to all who look at them, could never have shone as now with the reflected light of heaven, unless they had been summoned to frequent upward lookings through the clouds in loving communion with their children in heaven. There are manly and womanly children, who are more serious and earnest and devoted in their young life struggles, because of their constant sense of the overwatching presence of their dead parents.

That is the Spiritualist way of being glorified. But now read the Bible way: "But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory." "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 6. That which can in reality be done only by the Lord Jesus Christ, Spiritualism thinks to have done by the spirits of the departed. Thus the Lord is robbed of the honour due Him.

But further. Life and righteousness are inseparable. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." Rom. viii. 6. This is so because God alone is good. See Rom. iii. 9-12, and Mark x. 17. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and therefore the life of Christ was the life of God. His life is the only perfectly sinless life that was ever manifested on this earth. Therefore no one can be righteous unless he has the righteousness which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God by faith. It is by the righteousness of one that many are to be made righteous. Rom. v. 19. That one is Christ.

But as the life of God in Christ is the only righteous life, and righteousness is inseparable from the life of Christ, it follows that all who are made righteous by His obedience, are made so by having His life in them. It is in Him that we are made the righteousness of God. So we read, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Gal. ii. 20.

Now since righteousness is inseparable from the life of God, it follows that both eternal life and righteousness are attributes of Divinity. For one to claim that he has life in himself, regardless of his faith, is to claim that he has also righteousness in himself, and that he has no need for the Saviour. For nothing is more certain than that Christ came to this earth for the sole purpose of giving life to men. See John iii. 16; Col. iii. 3, 4; John x. 10. Therefore Spiritualism is opposed to the very fundamental truth of the Gospel.

In a previous number of the PRESENT TRUTH we have seen that Christ gives righteousness by giving His own life. But that teaching that would make out that man has life in himself, frustrates the grace of God, and makes out that Christ died in vain. The apostle Paul, after showing the necessity of faith in Christ as the only means of righteousness, says, "I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Gal. ii. 21. And in the next chapter he says, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Wherever life is, there is righteousness. Therefore the man who thinks that he has life in himself, unconsciously denies that Christ is the source of righteousness for men.

The tendency of this teaching is to throw man upon himself for righteousness. Thus the Pharisees who would not come to Christ that they might have life, "trusted in themselves that they were righteous." But this tends most directly to vice and immorality, for man is by nature corrupt, and out of evil only evil can come.

Again, take the temptation by which Eve was made to fall. Satan said "Ye shall not surely die." Being deceived, she ate, and gave to her husband, and he ate. This disobedience "brought death into the world, and all our woe." All the iniquity in the world has resulted from a belief of the words, "Ye shall not surely die." Nothing but evil can come from that belief.

For this reason we lift up our voice in warning against any approach to the doctrines of Spiritualism. Shun as a pesti-

lence any teaching that makes Christ and His sacrifice of none effect; accept nothing but the teaching of the word of God; and remember that man has life only by that same word.

THE RESULT OF SPIRITUALISM.

THE statements made in the last paragraphs of the preceding article may seem too strong by some who have not given the matter much consideration, and therefore a few words further are in place. It is not charged that all who have held the doctrine that man does not in reality die are immoral. That would be a gross perversion of facts. Among the adherents of that doctrine have been some excellent men, and so there are still. Yet that does not disprove the charges made against the doctrine. An error is not made truth, nor is its error lessened in the least, because it is held by good men. The fact that Luther believed in the Real Presence did not make that theory true, nor diminish the evil which must result from it.

While it is true that many good Christians have held the doctrine that the dead are conscious, let it not be forgotten that they held that doctrine in common with all the heathen. Moreover, that doctrine was at the very bottom of the heathenism. There has been this difference, however, namely, that comparatively few of the Christians who have believed it, have in time past carried it to its logical conclusion, and held that the dead could return and communicate with the living. But it is an alarming fact that of late years a belief in spirit return and communication has greatly increased among professed Christians. It is in this feature that the greatest danger lies; but whatever results from this must be charged to the belief of consciousness in death, from which it springs.

The way has been prepared for the prevalence of vice in the last days, even as great as it was in the days of Noah. In connection with what has preceded, a few quotations will suffice to show how it will be brought about. A few years ago, Dr. Curry, one of the leaders of the Methodist denomination in America, died. In a conversation with a visitor, as he lay on his death bed, he said, "I have perfect confidence in the truth of Christianity, although I expect my conceptions to be changed when I get over there."

Most people would doubtless consider that a very natural thing. It only serves to show that they are expecting to have their conceptions of Christianity changed after death. And that indicates a doubt as to the perfect truth of that which they now hold. But what we are concerned with is the effect that such ideas may have on the living. As a matter of fact, those who die have no consciousness of truth or error; for there is no work, nor

device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave. When a man dies, he returneth to his earth, and in that very day his thoughts perish. But it is a fact that many people have seen the appearance of their departed friends, and have talked with them. How was this? Why, simply that Satan, who originated the doctrine that the dead are alive, and who is able to transform himself into the appearance of even an angel of light (2 Cor. xi. 14), is working to propagate the false doctrine which he started in Eden. All the appearances of the dead, and the communications from them, are in reality from the spirits of devils.

Now for another point. A few years ago a popular Baptist preacher in California became an avowed Spiritualist. He had, however, for a long time before he gave up his Baptist pulpit, been holding communications with spirits, whom he supposed to be the spirits of his dead friends. These spirits were familiar visitors in his family. Speaking of some of his experiences, he said: "Nearly half a score of old Baptist preachers, with whom I have been associated in the past, have already come to our home, and explained wherein their former teaching was erroneous. The whole system of Biblical interpretation is far away from the truth, as every one will find when he enters the spiritual world."

At a great religious gathering held in London less than two years ago, at which there were leading Protestant ministers from all parts of the world, one of the most applauded remarks was by a member who said, "We speak of holding fast to the faith of the fathers; how do we know what the faith of the fathers is now?" The idea was that the fathers may have made great changes in their faith since their departure from this life. Well, the spirits of devils will take care that all who are willing to be deceived in that way shall know what the faith of the "fathers" is now. These spirits will come with every appearance of those departed ministers, and will tell them, as they did the Baptist minister before referred to, that the Bible means a great deal differently from what it says. And those who believe that it does not mean what it says in regard to the condition of man in death, will be prepared to believe anything that these spirits tell them as to what it does mean.

This is an exact fulfilment of the words of inspiration by the apostle Paul. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy." 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

When men have thus cut themselves loose from the Bible, what is going to hold them? Manifestly nothing. The Bible is the only safeguard against sin.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Ps. cxix. 11. "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." Ps. xxxvii. 31. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John xv. 3. Man can live only by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. So when men come to trust themselves into the hands of the devil, for an understanding of the Bible, what can follow except that he will lead them into the sins of which he is the author? And this he will do while he is flattering them with the belief that they are making advancement in truth and righteousness. Thus it was when he deceived Eve, and the apostle says to the members of the church of Christ, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." 2 Cor. xi. 3.

It was even thus that the flood of error and superstition and immorality came into the church in the first centuries after Christ, resulting in the Dark Ages. As the result mainly of the influence of Origen, the mass of professed Christians came to believe that the Bible does not mean what it says. His teaching was that it means often directly contrary to what it reads, and can be understood only by a certain few. Of course the practical result of this was to take the Bible out of the hands of the people. For they would soon cease to read a book which they were told they could not understand, and which would be more apt to mislead them than to lead them right. Consequently they had nothing by which to test the truth of that which was given to them by their teachers, and so imbibed the grossest errors.

More than this, the teachers themselves soon ceased to read the word of God. For since when they did read the Bible, they put their own interpretation upon it, making it mean whatever they pleased, it naturally came to pass that they soon fell into the practice of manufacturing scripture without the formality of reading the Bible before giving it to the people. Since it was only their own ideas that they taught the people, it made no difference whether they read the Bible, and then gave out their opinions, or gave out their opinions without reading the Bible. And so the whole world was open to the reception of the grossest errors. The result was seen in the frightful immorality that prevailed everywhere, and nowhere more than among those who professed to be Christians.

When Moses went to Pharaoh to demand the release of the children of Israel, the magicians withstood him with their enchantments. These magicians were Spiritualist mediums, and their enchantments were by the power of their master, the devil. Now read the apostle's de-

scription of how it will be in the last days, even among those who profess godliness.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts. Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." 2 Tim. iii. 1-8.

There are many good people who do not believe that they could ever be thus deceived. They cannot, if they hold fast to the truth of God. But as long as they hold to error they have no safeguard. It is the first step that contains all the rest. There are many who believe that the dead are conscious, who do not believe in Spirit return and communication. But when they see the exact images of their departed friends, and receive communications from them, they will believe errors in spite of themselves. Only those who are settled beforehand in the truth that the dead know not anything; that life comes from Christ alone, and that immortality is bestowed only at His coming, and that all spiritual manifestations are from the devil, will be able to stand. May the Lord help all the readers of this to cleave to Christ and His word.

A PLEA FOR HELP.

THE *Sunday Closing Reporter* gives the following copy of a letter recently received from the manager of a public-house:—

"Gentlemen, I have the greatest possible pleasure in signing your petition for the closing of all public-houses on Sundays. Though a manager of licensed premises, I am in thorough sympathy with your movement, not only from a personal view, but because I consider it would be much more beneficial to the working classes of this country to be without drink on Sabbath than to have it. Sunday opening, I am convinced, is the cause of much evil both to the soul and to the body. Moreover, gentlemen, why should we be deprived of our one day in seven? Publicans, like all men, need spiritual nourishment, and would be glad, indeed, if an Act was passed enforcing the closing of public-houses on Sundays."

Then why does he not close? Nobody compels him to keep open on Sundays, or on any other day. He is con-

vinced that Sunday opening is the cause of much evil both to soul and body, and therefore he wants an Act of Parliament passed, so that he will be compelled to stop doing that which he knows is wrong! It may be that those who are blinded by the glamour of Sunday closing think that this man's confession is an evidence of his sincere desire to do what is right; but to one who looks at it with clear vision, it can be nothing but a pitiable confession of weakness, and of deliberate wrong doing.

This confession accurately gauges the status of all "morality" that is the result of legal enactment. Many people think that if Government would only enforce all the institutions of religion, there would be the dawn of the blessed millennium. There would actually be the beginning of the reign of hypocrisy. The man who wrote that letter doubtless thinks that when he stops selling liquor at the decree of Parliament he will be doing a Christian act. And this only demonstrates the fact that the enforcement of religion by law inevitably tends to the degrading of the standard of religion. For even supposing that Sunday were the Sabbath of the Lord, there would be no virtue in compulsory closing. If there were, then all that would be necessary to make Christians of all the thieves in England would be to lock them up in Gaol. Then they could not steal. But they would not be any better unless their thievish disposition were changed, and that cannot be done by Government. It is necessary for the safety of society, that thieves be punished, but no one is so foolish as to suppose that forcibly detaining a man where he cannot steal effects a change in his heart. It may make him in the future refrain from stealing through fear of the law, but there is no virtue in that.

So with enforced observance of the Sabbath, supposing that any people were in favour of enforcing the observance of the real Sabbath of the Lord. Religion enforced by law is always at the expense of real godliness. It is the greatest device of Satan to hold men in sin while they fondly imagine that they are Christians.

How any one can read the publican's pathetic plea for an opportunity to rest and receive spiritual refreshment, without laughing, we cannot tell. "Moreover, gentlemen, why should we be deprived of our one day in seven? Publicans, like all men, need spiritual nourishment." There is not the slightest doubt in regard to this last statement. Certainly those who are engaged in the work of dealing out to their fellows *spirituous* destruction, have great need of *spiritual* nourishment for themselves.

But there is more than an amusing side to this matter. It exhibits the artful

turn that is everywhere taken in the plea for Sunday laws. Those who are deliberately working on Sunday, because they want to, because they have no regard for the day, are paraded before the people as being sorely oppressed. There must be a law passed to compel them to rest on Sunday, because they are not able to rest without such a law! The absurdity of the thing cannot be fitly put into words. But it is not simply absurd, it is wicked. The idea that men cannot do right without the compelling power of the civil law, is an insult to the Spirit of God. It puts at a discount all righteousness which is the fruit of the Spirit, and declares that there can be no righteousness by the power of the Spirit, but only by the power of the law of man. It is not strange that men in the darkness of heathendom should make such a plea, but that men in lands where the Gospel has free course, and who themselves have the Bible, and profess faith in Christ should make such a plea is indeed a marvel. It is, in fact, the working of the mystery of iniquity.

PERSECUTION FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE.

WE have frequently made brief reference to the persecutions in America, but the facts in the case have not been fully set forth before our readers. Accordingly we reprint the following from the *Arena*, one of the leading American monthlies. It is a part of an article by the editor, and shows that the spirit of the Inquisition exists to-day the same as it did in the Dark Ages. This is not the complete history of the persecution, but it is sufficient to enable one to form an idea of it.

The facts relating to the persecution in Tennessee are briefly as follows:—

At the town of Paris, Henry Co., Tenn., on the 18th of July, 1892, three conscientious, law-loving, God-fearing Christian men who had been lying in jail for a month and a half, were marched through the streets, in company with some coloured criminals, and put to work shovelling on the common highway. All were men of families. One was an old man of sixty-two years; another was fifty-five years old. The State's attorney, who, in the interest of fanaticism, prosecuted these men with the same ferocity as a bloodhound would exhibit in attacking its victim, was constrained to admit that *aside from the crime charged, that of working on Sunday, after they had religiously worshipped God on Saturday (their Sabbath) they were otherwise good citizens.* It will be noted that these men had not robbed their fellowmen, either legally or illegally; they were not extortioners; they were highly moral and exemplary citizens. Moreover, they were God-fearing men. They belonged to the

little band of earnest believers in Christ known as Seventh-day Adventists, a body of Christians who find in the Bible an injunction which they hold to be divine, requiring them to work six days in the week and to keep holy the seventh day, and who do not find any passage repealing this command in the holy Scriptures. These sincere men worshipped God according to His word as they understood it, by keeping holy the Sabbath or seventh day of the week. But they were poor men. Fifty-two days in the year were all the rest they could afford if the wolf of want was to be kept from the door. Now, the Constitution of Tennessee declares that "All men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience; . . . that no human authority can, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience; and that no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious establishment or mode of worship."

From this it would seem self-evident that any law which might operate so as to render it impossible for God-fearing citizens to support themselves and families without doing violence to their consciences by having to disobey what they believed to be God's imperative command, would be unconstitutional and consequently void; while it will appear equally evident that if any percentage of the population of Tennessee believe that God had commanded them to keep holy any day other than the first day of the week, to compel poor people in the present fierce battle for livelihood to work on the day they believe holy, as to rest over one hundred days in the year would mean starvation to them and their loved ones. I do not see how any mind that is not blinded by bigotry can escape this conclusion. With this thought in mind let us proceed. In Tennessee, as in many of our eastern States, there are ancient statutes,

RELICS OF A SAVAGE PAST;

statutes which partake of the nature of the Blue Laws of colonial days. These enactments have for generations been practically obsolete. Hate, spite, and fanaticism have occasionally resurrected them; but constitutional guarantees, the enlightened sentiment of the age, and competent judges, have usually rendered them of no effect. The law in Tennessee which is of this nature was an heirloom from the theocracy of England, coming to Tennessee through North Carolina. It forbids any Sunday work, "except acts of real necessity" or "of charity," and prescribes a fine as punishment. If the fine is not paid, the convicted party is to be imprisoned. Another statute declares that any one who maintains a nuisance may be fined one hundred dollars; while according to recent rulings of the State

courts in Tennessee, a succession of such offences as working on Sunday is a nuisance and is indictable.

On May 27 the Grand Jury of Henry County indicted five farmers living on small places near the village of Springville, Tenn. The cases were tried in Paris before a certain Judge, W. H. Swiggart. The prosecution did not attempt to prove that any one was disturbed by the work of these poor farmers; indeed, the witnesses for the State each declared that he was not disturbed. One of the prisoners had been seen ploughing strawberries on Sunday, another cutting sprouts, and still another loading wood on a waggon.

THE ACCUSED DID NOT EMPLOY COUNSEL, but each made a simple statement of his case, relying upon the guarantee of the Constitution and the intelligence of the judge and jury for acquittal. The following is the statement made by Mr. W. S. Lowry, whose case came first:—

I would like to say to the jury that, as has been stated, I am a Seventh-day Adventist. I observe the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. I read my Bible, and my convictions on the Bible are that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath, which comes on Saturday. I observe that day the best I know how. Then I claim the God-given right to six days of labour. I have a wife and four children, and it takes my labour six days to make a living. I go about my work quietly, do not make any unnecessary noise, but do my work as quietly as possible. It has been proved by the testimony of Mr. Fitch and Mr. Cox, who live around me, that they were not disturbed. Here I am before the court to answer for this right that I claim as a Christian. I am a law-abiding citizen, believing that we should obey the laws of the State; but whenever they conflict with my religious convictions and the Bible, I stand and choose to serve the law of my God rather than the laws of the State. I do not desire to cast any reflections upon the State, nor the officers and authorities executing the law. I leave the case with you.

This simple, eloquent, and noble statement of a high-minded Christian gentleman would have made an impression on any mind not blinded by bigotry, and would have rendered just any heart not dwarfed and shrivelled by religious fanaticism. But like the ill-fated Huguenots of the sixteenth century, these victims of religious prejudice lacked broad-minded, liberty-loving, and Constitution-revering patriots for judge and jurors. The prosecuting attorney struck the key-note of the true animus of the prosecution when in closing his speech he made use of the following significant expression:—

I cannot conceive that a man who claims to be a peaceable law-abiding citizen can go on disregarding the day openly in the face of the law, openly in the face of the protections that are thrown around

the holy Sabbath, as we believe it and hold it, and protected by the laws of this State; and this is a question that I presume you gentlemen will not have any difficulty in coming to a decision upon.

The accused were promptly found guilty by the jury, and on refusing to pay the unjust fine were remanded to jail on June 3, where they remained for over forty days. The sheriff had a higher conception of justice than the judge. He remarked to the latter that the convicted were "sincere in their belief." "Let them educate their consciences by the laws of Tennessee," exclaimed the judge, who had sworn to uphold that Constitution which declares that—

"No human authority can in any case whatever control or interfere with the rights of conscience," and that "no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious establishment or mode of worship."

After lying in jail for over forty days, three of these conscientious, upright citizens were taken out, and set to work on the public highway. What

A HUMILIATING SPECTACLE

to a justice and liberty-loving American! Three upright, noble-souled men, who, like the early Christians and the children of the Reformation, were loyal to the voice of conscience, were chained to depraved and brutalized criminals.

The outrage might not call for such extended notice, were it not for the fact that in recent years in Tennessee and Arkansas these conscientious, Christian people, known as Adventists have been systematically persecuted. The case above noted is only one of a number of similar instances where pure-hearted, Christian people have been cruelly persecuted for conscience sake; and it would seem evident, from the systematic prosecutions and the heartless ferocity with which just and upright persons have been pursued, that they are victims of an organized effort, which has for its ultimate aim the securing of a series of judicial rulings calculated to further aid the determined effort being made to unite Church and State and abridge the rights of American citizens. Against the infamy of these persecutions I wish to raise my voice in indignant protest. To me there is nothing so terrible as the spectacle of just and upright men suffering as criminals. Think of that sixty-two year old, silver-haired father, who had harmed no one, who had committed no crime, who had striven to follow the Golden Rule as a line of conduct for life, being driven in a chain-gang with hardened, brutalized negro criminals simply because of his sublime loyalty to what he conceived to be right. Think of this high-handed infamy, and remember that this crime against liberty, this crime against human rights, was perpetrated in the name of

law, and instigated by persons who *impiously* claim to be Christians.

The persecution of Jesus by the Pharisees of His day finds its parallel in the persecution of the Seventh-day Adventists by those who masquerade under His name to-day. And yet these same sleuth-hounds of bigotry call themselves Christians! Let us see how their actions square by the Golden Rule, which Jesus gave as the great basic principle of moral government.

Let us suppose that in Louisiana, for example, the Catholics being numerically in the majority, should enact a statute that on certain days made holy by their church, all men must abstain from work "other than acts of real necessity." Let us suppose that Protestants refuse to keep these days, first, because they denied the right of the church to canonize men or make holy days, and secondly, because the fierce struggle for bread made it imperative that they work. Now let us further suppose that a number of the most upright citizens openly disregarded this unjust statute, and for this violation were dragged to prison, doomed to lie in jail, and finally put to work in New Orleans in the chain-gang with morally debased criminals. Would not there be a mighty uprising over the length and breadth of the land at such an un-American and iniquitous enactment, which so clearly trampled on the right of conscience and disregarded the spirit of free government? "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Jesus taught this as a cardinal truth, the sum of laws and precepts.

ARE PERSECUTORS OF THESE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS CHRISTIANS?

No, a thousand times, no! They are essentially pagan. Appollo-loving *Constantine*, and not the tolerant and ever-compassionate *Jesus*, is their model. But let us pursue this thought one step further. Suppose that in Michigan, where the Seventh-day Adventists have some strength, that they should be able to combine with the Hebrews, and were so disposed, and that through such a combination they were enabled to enact a law compelling all citizens of Michigan to rest on the seventh day. Would our Protestant and Catholic citizens peaceably acquiesce in such a statute? Would not our people call upon the Constitution to nullify such a wrong? Would we not hear on every hand that to compel people to keep Saturday would be equal to forcing a large per cent. of them to do violence to their consciences by breaking Sunday, as a comparatively few could rest one hundred days in the year and yet earn a livelihood? And yet such a case would be exactly analogous to the persecutions now being carried on by persons who insult Jesus by calling themselves Christians. No, gentlemen, I grant you are the legitimate children of the holy (?) Inquisition, but your action will not square by the Golden Rule.

General Articles.

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

"AS THE WINGS OF A DOVE."

"Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

THOUGH ye have lien among the pots,
Covered with grime and mould and must,
(Hear the promise of Him who saves
Unto the uttermost.)
Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove,
Covered with silver, mounting higher
Into the beams of the Sun of Love
Unto thy soul's desire.

As the wings of a dove, covered with gold,
Covered with silver, taking flight
Into the atmosphere of heaven,
Flushed with celestial light;
Up from all earthly, sensual things,
Freed from the selfish lust,
So shalt thou mount with dove-like wings,
Saved to the uttermost.

O depths of woe, and heights of bliss
Compassing in words divine
What chain of love can reach down like this
From the throne to this soul of mine?
Thou who hast lien among the pots,
Freed from defiling things,
Cleansed from evil, freed from spots,
And fair as the dove's glad wings!

To the heights of love that expand and reach
To the infinite, untold things,
By faith we mount as from star to star
As a soul with dove-like wings.
And our thoughts that have been so dark and low
By faith mount out of the mould,
And are bright as an altar flame aglow,
Like the wings of silver and gold.

FANNIE BOLTON.

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST.

"THEN they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord, of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Isaiah not only beheld the glory of Christ, but he also spake of Him. While David mused, the fire burned; then spake he with his tongue. While he mused upon the wondrous love of God, he could not but speak of that which he saw and felt. Who can by faith behold the wonderful plan of redemption, the glory of the only begotten Son of God, and not speak of it? Who can contemplate that unfathomable love expressed in dying upon the cross of Calvary, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life, and have no words to utter to extol the Saviour's glory? Who can become partakers of His love, and not admire and reverence and adore?

As they behold Christ, those who love and fear the Lord will be led to assemble together and speak to one another in words that are full of fervour. "Yea, He is altogether lovely." He is "the chiefest among ten thousand." "In His temple doth every one speak of His glory." The sweet singer of Israel

praised Him upon the harp: "I will speak of the glorious honour of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works." "And men shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts: and I will declare Thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory of Thy great goodness, and shall sing of Thy righteousness. . . . They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom." Such will be the conversation of those who are specified in the scripture, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." And God is represented as listening to their words and writing them in a book.

The testimony of John the beloved disciple is, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

Surely, those who speak to one another of the goodness of the Lord are highly privileged. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an 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." We have rich themes for thought and conversation, themes that it will interest and encourage and uplift the soul to dwell upon; and if God's witnesses, those who are the subjects of His grace, upon whom the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness are shining, should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. God will be glorified.

If the members of the church are one with Christ, they will be in union with one another. And this unity of believers will be a living testimony to the world of the power of the Gospel. United in one, they receive bright beams of light from the Sun of Righteousness, and diffuse this light to a world in darkness. Oh, why cannot we see from the lessons and especially from the prayer of Christ, how Christians may be perfect in one, and thus represent the glory of their Redeemer? If those who believe the truth would bring the prayer of Christ into their practical life, they would grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. They would grow up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. As believers in Christ, "they are built upon the

foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

The believer in Christ needs to understand the working of the powers of darkness to bring dissension and division into the church, that its members may not present the oneness for which Christ prayed. God's people have greatly dishonoured His name, and misrepresented the truth by their alienation, their lack of love for one another. As love for God has grown cold, they have lost the childlike simplicity that knit heart to heart in love and tenderness. Hardheartedness has come in. There is a drawing away from one another. Many are saying by their actions I care not for the prayer of Christ. They feel under no special obligation to love one another as Christ has loved them. Jesus can do little for these souls; for His words and Spirit are not permitted to enter into the heart.

Many are in darkness, and know not the cause. They are not at peace with God, they are not one with Christ, nor in unity with one another. They seem to think they are at liberty to act out the natural feelings of the heart. Words and actions testify that they do not desire to be in union with those who do not exactly meet their minds, even among believers. Now all who entertain these ideas and cherish these feelings need to be converted. They need to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The religion of Christ is not to be controlled by impulse.

Love for one another is not to be manifested in praise and flattery, but in true fidelity. If we see one in danger, we should tell him plainly, kindly, even at the risk of his displeasure. We must lean wholly upon God; we need to pray much. We should hold the truth with firmness, but we are to hold it in righteousness. While we speak the truth with fidelity, we should speak it in love.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

"GIFTS OF POVERTY TO THE CHURCH."

"THE gifts of poverty," says an eminent writer, "are the richest gifts to the churches. I refer not now to the widows' mites, richer though they be than all the gifts of wealth; but to gifts richer than the widow's mite. A few years ago, on a wintry morning, a boy in the habiliments of poverty entered an old school house among our western mountains, and avowed to the master his desire for an education. There was poverty laying one of her richest gifts on the altar of religion; for that boy was Jonas King. On his humble shoemaker's bench Carey laid the foundation of British Baptist Missions. John Newton found in his congregation an unfriended

Scotch boy, whose soul was then glowing with a new-born love to Christ. He took him to John Thornton, one of those noble merchants whose wealth, whose piety, and whose beneficence increase together. They educated him; and that boy became Claudius Buchanan, whose name India will bless when the names of Hastings and Clive are forgotten. John Bunyan was a gift of poverty to the church. Zwingli came forth from an Alpine shepherd's cabin; Melancthon from an armourer's workshop; Luther from a miner's cottage; the Apostles, some of them, from fishermen's huts. These are the gifts of poverty to the church.—*Sunday-at-Home.*

"GODS MANY AND LORDS MANY."

IN China there are gods celestial and gods terrestrial, *dei majores* and *dei minores*; gods of heaven and gods of hell; gods of the earth, sun, moon, and stars; of thunder, lightning, wind, and rain; of water, fire, wood, earth, and metal; and of the seas, rivers, mountains, hills, seasons, snow, frost, tides, trees, and flowers. There are Indian gods and Chinese gods; and gods, demi-gods, Buddhas, Bodhisattwas, immortals, fairies, ancestors, emperors, sages, heroes, warriors, statesmen, dragons, devils, demons, and spirits are worshipped. There are 500 disciples of Buddha, 500 disciples of Confucius, 70 masters, 60 cycle deities, and 30 prime ministers to be sacrificed to. There are good gods and bad gods; the gods of the door, the kitchen, the city wall, the theatre, and the prison. The carpenters have their gods, and the fishermen theirs; so has the silk merchant and the saloon-keeper. Horses, cows, sheep, snakes, and lice have each their presiding deities, and so have crackers and fertilisers. Pestilence, medicine, smallpox, and measles have a host of gods. The eye, ear, nose, tongue, teeth, heart, liver, hands, feet, and skin have each a special god. A bridge, bed, a compass, happiness, tea, and salt have their presiding deities. At Yangchow there is a temple with 10,000 gods.

Some gods are of stone, others are of wood, clay, and bronze. There are images, pictures, and tablets. There are white gods, black gods, yellow gods, and red gods. The smallest are an inch in height, and the tallest 50 feet. A god can be purchased for a farthing, and another will cost £200. Some are the laughing Buddhas; a few have mild and beneficent countenances, while the greater horde have hideous, cadaverous faces, to inspire awe in the worshipper, and to frighten the impious. The "Pantheon Picture" is worshipped on New Year's day. Behind Buddha, facing inwards in the large temples, there is, in *basso relievo*, a representation of the gods in the clouds, and Neptune rising from the waves of the briny deep.

The land is filled with idols. They are to be found in the temple, the

monastery, and the nunnery; in the cities, towns, villages, and hamlets; on the streets, at the crossings, and over the gates. The Yamens, stores, workshops, and homes all have them; the door, the main entrance, the hall, the chapel, the chamber, and the roof have their gods; they are seen by the canals, and the bridges, and on the boats; the shrines in the alleys and the miniature temples on the table are full of them; the picture galleries give an exhibit of celestial beings, and they are "portrayed on the walls" of public halls, and at times the face of a hill is carved with images; they crown the mountain, and make holy the cavern, and are worshipped in the valley and under the "green tree."

In the country, meeting an old man, I inquired, "Have you any gods around here?" "Oh, yes," said he. "What gods?" I asked. "The three Pure Ones." "Any others?" "The god of the fields." "Any others?" "The goddess of mercy." "My old friend, I am afraid your gods are not a few." "Foreign teacher," was his literal reply, "verily, verily, our gods are ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."—*The Dragon, Image, and Demon, by H. G. DuBose.*

THE EARTHLY AND THE HEAVENLY FATHER.

"Like as a father pitieth his children."

A CHILD'S griefs are soon over, but they are very real while they last. They are by no means trivial to the little one. May, with pitiful face brings me her doll, which in some baleful accident has suffered the loss of a limb or the excision of part of the features, and her distress is, I verily believe, as intense for the time being as her mother's would be, were she similarly injured. Of course these feelings are transient, such distress as this does not last; but while it lasts it is a very vivid and poignant grief.

When our favourite dog, that with her knowing and gentle ways had been such a favourite in the household, was found dead by the roadside one morning, evidently wantonly shot by some cruel straggler, it was real grief that all day long, whenever the thought of the dead playmate came into mind, bedewed the eyes of her three-year-old mistress.

Did not I pity the little one in her grief? Did I count it nothing that her child-heart should be so touched? Indeed no one could resist the impulse to comfort the little mourner, much less her father. I pitied my child in almost the first real grief that had shadowed her young life.

What is that? A thumping, bumping, sliding down the stairs; and I rush out to take the little form in my arms, and see what is the extent of the child's injuries. No bones broken, no bruises on the head—more frightened than hurt, is the verdict. But the fright is misery enough, and I pity the little thing as

she nestles close to me, and sobs out in baby accents, "I was careless."

It is perhaps an older child that claims my affection. His griefs—those that he has—with his growing apprehension and enlarging capacities, are becoming deeper. He has trials—in the process of his education, among his schoolfellows, in disappointment of cherished plans. Do I not pity him? I know it would be mistaken kindness to shield him from these, even were that in my power; for these very trials are toughening the stamina of his character, they are helping to make a man of him. And yet I can but pity him; I can but wish I could remove these obstacles from his path. I enter into his feelings, I sympathize, suffer in common with him.

Now God tells us that this is an image of his sympathy with us. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him; for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." I enter into the feelings of my child, and the little one knows it. He brings his grief to me in the full confidence that he will find a listening ear. Why should I doubt that my heavenly Father enters into my griefs, cares for me in my trials, pities me?

We come too far short of the idea we ought to have of the infinite, pathetic tenderness of God toward us. We figure him too much to our minds as concerned simply, or mainly at any rate, with the vast interests of the great universe of which we are only infinitesimal atoms. But so doing, we do both him and ourselves wrong. He compassionates us in all our trials—those that wring our hearts with anguish and those as well that scarce pass above the grade of annoyances. He permits these trials to come upon us, for character is made perfect by suffering. But think you that God, though He sit upon the circle of the heavens and counteth the nations of the earth but as vanity when they oppose themselves against him—think you that He forgets to pity one soul that He has made, as, in weakness and sorrow, it struggles on toward the eternal Home?

"Like as a father pitieth his children"—how sweetly the words sound, how suggestive they should be to our faith? No care of mine is too trivial, no pain of mine is too slight, no burden is too little, no woe is too unimportant to be carried to the heavenly Father? I can go with the assurance that I shall not meet with a rebuff, that no cold reception will chill my longing heart. I can go in the full confidence that for me, his child, the father-heart is moved, the father-love stirred. "Like as a father pitieth his children." I go not to the Almighty Ruler; I go to the Father whose heart will embrace me.—*Quercus.*

GOD by His providence proportions our trials to our strength, and again by His grace proportions our strength to our trial.—*Matthew Henry.*

POWERLESS PRAYERS.

THERE are many prayers which bring no answer and produce no effect, or rather no good effect; for they sometimes cause scepticism and unbelief. President Finney almost became an atheist through listening to the powerless prayers of certain church-members whose petitions seemed to bring no answer. He writes:—

"This inconsistency, the fact that these Christians prayed so much and were not answered, was a sad stumbling-block to me. I knew not what to make of it. It was a question in my mind whether I was to understand that these persons were not really Christians, and therefore did not prevail with God; or did I misunderstand the promises and teachings of the Bible on this subject; or was I to conclude that the Bible was not true? Here was something inexplicable to me; and it seemed at one time that it would almost drive me into scepticism." When Mr. Finney was asked if he did not desire the prayers of these people, he said: "No; I am conscious that I am a sinner, but I do not see that it will do any good for *you* to pray for me; for you are continually asking but you do not receive. You have been praying for a revival of religion ever since I have been in A——, and yet you have it not. You have been praying for the Holy Spirit to descend upon yourselves, and yet complaining of your leanness."

He rightly decided that the powerlessness of their prayers was the result of non-compliance with the plain commands of God—they did not ask in faith; and there was no reason why they *should have faith* to believe that they should receive the things which they asked for, while continuing in disobedience to God's will.

The fact is, that many people who pray *do not want what they ask for*. They would be more astonished to have their prayers answered than they would be to have their houses struck by lightning. There are men who ask for the Holy Ghost, "the spirit of truth," and yet if truth were unpopular or contrary to the traditions of their elders they would not receive it. There are many who ask for the blessing of God upon them, but if that blessing were to turn their feet from paths of worldliness, to bring down their pride, to stop them in their schemes of money-getting, and place them among "the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom," they would not desire any such blessing as that. They ask for the Spirit of God to be upon them, but if the Spirit of God was upon them it would cure them of their sinful sectarianism and their pharisaic pride, and would turn them from their unscriptural ways and thoughts, and they have no desire for such a change. Why do men pray for that which they do not desire?

There are people who pray for power.

Power for what? Power to do things which God has forbidden, power to build up institutions which He has never established and will finally subvert? Power to strengthen sects which He would prefer should cease out of the earth? How can we expect power from God to do things which the Lord Himself *does not wish to have done*? If we wish to have the spirit of power and of truth we must learn to stand for the truth, and obey the truth, and walk uprightly and straightly before the Lord; we must confess our sins, knowing that He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins; we must make restitution to those whom we have wronged; and if we do this our prayers will not be hindered; we shall pray and the Lord will hear and answer and help and save.—*The Christian*.

STAY, MORTAL, STAY.

STAY, mortal, stay thy wild career,
There's no continuing city here;
All thy fond hopes may cease to be,
May vanish in eternity.

Stay, mortal, stay awhile and think,
Oh, pause on life's uncertain brink;
The fairest flower in hope's bright wreath
May wither in the bower of death.

Stay, mortal, stay, thy time is short;
Oh, meditate upon the thought—
That this is not thy final home;
There is a city yet to come.

—Selected.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE ABOVE HUMAN METHODS.

MEN are very slow to learn that "power belongeth unto God." The endeavour to improve upon His wisdom is sure to end in failure, and deservedly so. To seek to thwart His providence is equally futile. This truth has been practically forced upon our attention not very long ago. When men destroyed the birds and beasts of prey, which God made to keep down the too rapid increase of voles or field-mice, which might otherwise destroy the farmer's crops, some men seemed to think such creatures superfluous, and that they could improve upon God's plan. With this intent, the eagles, falcons, hawks, and weasels were killed, and the result was that the voles or mice swarmed in millions in Teviotdale, the herbage over thousands of acres was destroyed, so that the sheep were suffering for want of pasture. In this manner, men who profess to be wise and prudent brought about the demonstration of their own folly. The Lord has made all things for Himself, and all His earthly creatures—man excepted—do His bidding. He showed His command over His creatures by the plagues of Egypt. The frogs, the lice, the flies, were obedient to His order. Birds of prey were ordered to carry the food to Elijah.

God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." His counsel is infinitely wise and infinitely good; and to murmur at it is rebellion. A sparrow cannot fall to the ground with-

out Him. This consideration is joy to the afflicted, who know that they have been made His children by adoption and grace. His ways are mysterious, but they are perfect; they are far above our understanding.

God's wisdom is, indeed, a hidden wisdom, and His ways are "past finding out." "Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour." How frequently He hides Himself in providence, to accomplish His counsel by revealing Himself in grace! When the veil is lifted a little, so that a small part of His working is seen, how amazing it is! "He makes Jacob a cripple, and then a prince to prevail with God. He gives him a wound and then a blessing. God has many purposes to answer in the same action, and they are more remote than man can see. Joseph's brethren probably intended to prevent the fulfilment of his prophetic dreams; for they "said one to another, 'Behold this dreamer cometh.'" When they proposed to slay him, and tell a falsehood to their old father, they again referred to his dreams, as if they had some anxious forebodings that they might prove true. They said, "We shall see what will become of his dreams." They do not seem to have thought of God in the matter, but probably looked on His providential dealings, as they are generally looked upon now—that circumstances might be altered according to *their* will instead of God's. The sleepy consciences of these brothers were not troubled till God roused them, when the dreams were fulfilled. All their wickedness did not frustrate God's providence, though they meant it so.

Ezekiel's mysterious vision of the wheels exhibits God's providence in a striking manner. We are told that there were eyes round about the wheels, and that the wings of the cherubim were full of eyes. The most secret thought cannot escape Him. The human monsters who, in the hidden dungeons of the Inquisition, inflicted their fiendish tortures on God's people, were all seen by Him! What a determination Jonah exhibited to frustrate God's command! But the Creator of earth and sea and sky knew how to manage him. He stirred up the winds to arrest him in his disobedience; "For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof." He also prepared a great fish to swallow up the disobedient prophet; and when God's course of instruction was ended, Jonah was humbled. Ahab endeavoured to thwart God in His word by Micaiah, and it might be for this purpose that he disguised himself and went into the battle. But God saw through the disguise, and led a soldier to shoot an arrow—at random, as it appeared to himself—but God never acts at random; He directed the arrow in its flight, so that His word by Micaiah was fulfilled. "The way of man is not in himself." Haman—the Prime Minister of Ahasuerus—sought to destroy Mor-

decai, and with him all the Jews in the Persian dominions. God so ordered every circumstance that Haman was hanged on the gallows which he had erected for Mordecai.

Herod's cruel massacre of the infants of Bethlehem, in order to destroy the Lord Jesus amongst them, will occur to every one. The Lord just fulfilled His own counsel, and sent Joseph into Egypt, with the young Child and His mother. God baffles human pride. Men are apt to seek great things for themselves, and to brood over the disappointment if they do not succeed; but it is often in mercy to their souls when God keeps them back. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." He "will work, and who shall let it?"—*Churchman.*

MISSION TO DEEP SEA FISHERMEN.

NEWS of an accident by rail or by road is instantaneously flashed from one side of the world to the other; but of the important and equally disastrous events in the sailor's life nothing is heard by the public, save in the case of an unusually severe gale. Nevertheless, the danger and mortality of the fisherman's calling deserve a passing thought. During the last eight years 1,304 fishermen have lost their lives through the foundering of fishing vessels, and, in addition, 825 men have been washed overboard. To this record we must add the long roll of those disabled either partially or entirely by the accidents to which only those are liable who go down to the sea in ships, and are the more dangerous, because the small boats which form a fishing fleet do not carry a doctor as part of the crew. This state of things, thanks to the mission, is better than it was; but one instance of many in the old days is the story of a sailor, who was severely injured by the falling of a beam. None of the crew could help, and he lay from five o'clock on Tuesday morning till the following Friday with his wounds unattended to. He was then transferred to a cutter, after which he had to undergo two days' voyage to London.

The society has now 11 hospital and medical mission smacks at work in the North Sea. The use of each is fourfold, and it is fitted accordingly:—(1) as a church, (2) as a hospital, (3) as a temperance hall, and (4) as a library or club; and, in addition, all are stored with the fishermen's warm knitted garments which are always associated with the mission. The fishing fleets at work in the North Sea number from 100 to 150 vessels, each containing five or six men in her crew; thus each fleet offers plenty of opportunities for work to the mission vessels and chaplains. The value of the medical work will be seen from the fact that during the first two months of 1892 191 out-patients were treated on board one mission-vessel, and 296 out-patients and five in-patients on another.—*The Echo.*

THE JOY OF HELPFULNESS.

I TRUST that all my readers have, at one time or another, tasted the cup of joy which follows the doing of a kindly deed. It is a cup which you can drain to the last clear, sparkling drop, and never find a dreg at the bottom of it. It is a cup which you can hold up in the sunlight, and never see a speck floating there, or a stain clouding its crystal purity. Some joys leave a bitter taste behind them. Others, which we thought before they touched our lips, would be as sweet as nectar of the gods, prove flavourless and palling to the taste; others, burn us like liquid fire, and in our anguish we dash the cup from us, crying out that we will never dip it in pleasure's fount again. But there is one joy which is sweeter than anything we ever dreamed of, and which leaves nothing but sweetness behind it. It is the joy of doing good, the joy of trying to help others to bear their burdens and their troubles. Whenever you stretch forth helping hands, though you seek nothing for yourself in return, God fills your hands with treasures of joy. Science tells you that you cannot grasp the sunlight, but love says you can! As often as you put your hand beneath another's burden, you lay hold of this golden sunlight of happiness. Try it, and see if this is not so.

Young men and young women, do you deny yourselves for your parents' sake? Do you give up selfish enjoyments for the sake of being helpful at home, when those enjoyments conflict with your filial duties and privileges? If you do, you know what it is to drink the sweet, pure, uncloying cup of true happiness. If you do not, I do not need to remind you how much more insipid the draught of selfish pleasure tasted than you thought it would, nor how bitter the taste it left after you had drained it.—*James Buckham, LL.D.*

READING THE BIBLE.

1. READ the Bible regularly. A good man of old says: "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." This is the true idea. The Bible is daily bread, to be taken regularly, that the soul may grow thereby.

2. Read the Bible attentively. The meaning of the Bible is in the Bible. Unless he who reads gets the meaning, it will do him no good. Hasty reading of a great many chapters at once is of no advantage. Read slowly, a little at a time, and think on what you read, and you will understand and remember it.

3. Read the Bible as God's book, not merely because your father or mother wishes you to read it, but for a better reason,—because God speaks to you in the Bible. When I have seen a little girl run, her eyes sparkling with joy, crying, "O mother, here's a letter from

father to me, for my name is on the outside," I always wish she might look thus on the Bible; for it is a letter from our Father in heaven. So feel and read, and you will not grow weary of the good book.

These few hints are enough for once. Will not our young readers remember them, and read every day with great attention the book of God?—*The Golden Lesson.*

IT CANNOT BE DONE.

"GATHER up my influence, and bury it with me," were the dying words of a young man to the weeping friends at his bedside. What a wish was this! What deep anguish of heart there must have been as the young man reflected upon his past life—a life which had not been what it should have been! With what deep regrets must his very soul have been filled as he thought of those young men whom he had influenced for evil!—influences which he felt must be eradicated, and which led him faintly, but pleadingly, to breathe out such a dying request,—"Gather up my influence, and bury it with me."

Young men, the influence of your lives, whether good or evil, cannot be gathered up by your friends after death, no matter how earnestly you plead. Then remember, your influence is now going out from you; you alone are now responsible; you have now the power to govern and shape it. Then live noble, true, heroic, Godlike lives.—*Selected.*

"BEGINNING the Christian life is a co-ordinate act, man's free will and God's Spirit meeting together. God will not unless we will. We cannot unless God will. The law of conversion is the law of growth. These free wills are not taken away at conversion. It is the essence of religion to keep giving them to God every day. The Christian life is not a petrified conversion. It is conversion renewing itself every moment."

TRUE KNOWLEDGE.—The excellent John Newton on being asked his opinion on some topic, replied, "when I was young I was sure of many things; there are only two things of which I am sure now: one is that I am a miserable sinner: and the other that Jesus Christ is an all-sufficient Saviour." This is the sum of all saving knowledge, and he is well taught who gets these two lessons by heart.

THANKFULNESS.—A Christian sailor, who lost one of his legs in the battle of Trafalgar, said that he could very often measure the spirit of the people who conversed with him, by the way they alluded to his misfortune. Nine out of ten would exclaim, "What a pity you lost your leg," and only one in ten, "What a blessing the other was preserved."

The Home.

"Whatever things are true, whatever things are honest
whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, what-
soever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report,
if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these
things."—Phil. 4:8.



BESSIE'S FAITH.

"MAMMA," said my little Bessie,
As she climbed upon my knee,
"Who takes care of all the birdies,
Flying round from tree to tree?"

"Jesus keeps them all, my darling,"
Lovingly I made reply,
"All the birdies in the tree-tops,
And the birdies in the sky."

Bessie turned her brown eyes upward,
As she whispered trustingly,
"If dear Jesus cares for birdies,
I am sure He cares for me."

—R. M. H.

THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCES.

"O MOTHER, isn't it hard for me to have to lie here abed while the other boys are playing football?" said Walter Warren to his mother, as she sat by his side with an aching heart, watching the boy who but a year ago had carried off the honours of his class in the high school, but who was now prostrated with a lingering, and perhaps fatal disease.

"Yes, my dear, it is very hard; but still it might be worse," she added, cheerfully.

"How could it be worse?" asked the sufferer, gloomily. "Don't I have pain all the time?"

"Yes, my boy, you suffer steady pain of body, I know; but you don't suffer from lack of care or kindness."

"Seems to me I'd change places with anybody in the world," continued the poor boy, wearily.

Presently Mrs. Warren rose, and, bringing a new note book and pencil, said, "Now, let us write down in this book all the kind things people have done for you since you have been ill. We'll begin with Cousin Jennie. Here's the plate of grapes she sent you this very day."

"That's so, and some days she comes in and reads me nice stories," said Walter, with some interest.

"Yes; and once she brought in her new game of tiddlewinks to show you how it was played," added his mother, as she wrote.

"And wasn't it funny to watch her play it!" said the boy, now actually

smiling. "Then George Barnes brought in his new battery and showed me how he was going to rig up a little electrical machine. Don't forget to write that."

"I'll write all you can think of, only you must give me time enough," said Mrs. Warren.

"Then you remember how Joe Harris brought in his model yacht, and let it stay here for a week, so that I could learn it all by heart. Didn't the little brass binnacle shine on it!"

Walter had already forgotten his pain and confinement, and, with a happy face, went on recalling little acts of kindness done toward him by one and another friend while his mother wrote, till he finally fell asleep, and then she prayed that he might not forget to include the goodness that had followed him all the days of

his life, bestowed by the Friend above all others.

Day after day at intervals this little note-book was taken up and more entries were made in it, till finally Walter asked to keep it under his pillow so that he could write in it himself, and very often he would ask to have it all read to him. "But don't look at the last page," he would add, "though some time you may."

"Why, mother," he said often; "it seems as if everybody I ever knew had his name written down in my book of remembrances for doing some kind thing for me since I've been out of school." And though he grew weaker the complaining all ceased.

One day there was much harder pain than usual, and Walter never woke from the sleep that followed it.

When his mother took away the precious note-book it opened to the last page, and she read these feebly-written lines and was comforted: "No book of remembrances could be big enough to have written in it all the kind things my father and mother and all of our family have done for me, but God has done more, because He gave me this home. If I never get well I know that my heavenly Father has got a home for me that is even better than this, and that Jesus loves me even more than my mother does; so I'm not afraid to die. I only wish I had done more in return to Him and to all those I love, but now I can only say from my heart that I thank you all."

Would not many unhappy and complaining boys and girls forget all the trials that seem so hard to bear if they, too, should try to remember all the bright and happy and kind events of life, and keep their attention fixed on these alone?—*Ellen Howe.*

A PERFECT faith would lift us absolutely above fear. It is in the cracks, crannies, and gulfy thoughts of our belief, the gaps that are not faith, that the snow of apprehension settles, and the ice of unkindness forms.—*Macdonald.*

BELFAST AND TEA-DRINKING.

THE city of Belfast is noted for its tea-drinking capacities. The returns for 1892 show that it has consumed no less than 5,000,000 lbs. during the year. This gives an allowance of 20 lbs. to each man, woman, and child. Estimating it at 2s. a pound we have £2 spent by each individual for tea. In most families there are six souls (sometimes twenty-four), so that these poor families pay at the rate of £12 a year for this worse than useless and health-destroying article. Add to this £500,000 spent for tea, the amount spent for tobacco and drink, and there would be enough to support the whole town so that every person would be well fed and cared for, and poverty a thing of the past.

As one passes through the squalid streets of the poor, and sees the abject poverty, suffering, dirt and degradation, it is overwhelming; one's heart is wrung for the misery of these poor souls. Yet the remedy is partially in their own hands. How different all would be if they would only practise a little self denial, instead of looking for help to such a broken reed as Parliament, or listening to the frothings of the well paid agitator. Poor souls, they perish for lack of knowledge.

FRANCIS HOPE.

Belfast.

TEA AND COFFEE POISONING.

IT is a fact which is pressing itself more and more emphatically upon observing physicians in all civilized countries, that the undeniable disease called "nervousness" is increasing in prevalence at a most alarming rate. This is a matter of common observation and remark. There is a decreasing number of physicians who do not believe that the apparently harmless practice of tea and coffee drinking, is, in part at least, responsible for this growing depravity of nerve-cell and fiber. To prove this beyond any possibility of cavil, to the satisfaction of every man, is a task which not one will attempt to undertake, since the complexity of the forces in operation which tend to modify or to deteriorate the human constitution under the artificial conditions of civilization, renders every problem relating to the physiological or pathological influence of habits most difficult of solution.

That tea and coffee have a decided influence in the direction suggested, will not, we think, be disputed by any intelligent, observing medical man, since evidence of a very positive character is afforded in the fact that while the influence of moderate doses, even though long continued, may be inappreciable or undiscoverable in the midst of a multitude of other possible causes, and without any morbid manifestation, it requires only a slight excess to develop the toxic properties of theine or caffeine? And furthermore, it is well enough known that what might have been, for one person, a moderate dose, that is, a dose so

small in quantity that its effects are not immediately observable, may be for another person sufficient to produce toxic effects.

The toxic effects of the "cup that cheers, but not inebriates," are familiar to everyone as the sleep-banishing property of a strong cup of tea. Not one would dispute for a moment, that a drug capable of producing drowsiness or sleep in a person who is not fatigued or in a condition to require sleep, must be possessed of a toxic property. Is it not quite clear that a drug capable of producing, temporarily, the most obstinate insomnia, even in a person whose physiological state is such as to demand recuperation or sleep, must be possessed of poisonous properties of a very positive kind?

Lehman, the eminent German physiological chemist, unhesitatingly pronounced caffeine to be a poison, notwithstanding the claim that he, even at that day, had made it apparent, as an apology for the use of a mild narcotic, that it was a food; and the evidence that he was right, which was based upon the results of experiments upon himself and others as well, in studies of the close relation between the chemical constituents of caffeine and those of the well-known alkaloidal poison, is constantly affirmed by evidence accumulated by the experimental researches of physiologists and physiological chemists.—*Bacteriological World and Modern Medicine.*

WHY WILL YE DIE?

In the desert near to Edom,
Underneath a scorching sun,
In that nation bound for freedom,
Is the work of death begun;
Sinning Israel now are reaping
Fruit of seed which they have sown;
God withdraws His wondrous keeping;
Israel dies when left alone.

But the Father's lovingkindness
Has not left them, help is nigh—
Speaks to Israel in their blindness,
"Look and live; why will ye die?"

We are bitten, bruised, and weary,
In this wilderness of sin.
All disheartened, dying, dreary,
Death without and sin within;
But the Father's lovingkindness
Lifts the Crucified on high,
Pleads with sinners in soul-blindness,
"Look and live; why will ye die?"
—*Signs of the Times.*

LOOK AND LIVE!

HAVE you ever taken a ride on a railway train? How the trees and houses seem to whirl past, how fast you go, and how soon you reach the place for which you started! Long ago people could not travel so fast and so comfortably, for there were no steam engines and no railway trains. They had to ride on horses, donkeys, or camels, or else they had to walk. Sometimes they would take long journeys on foot.

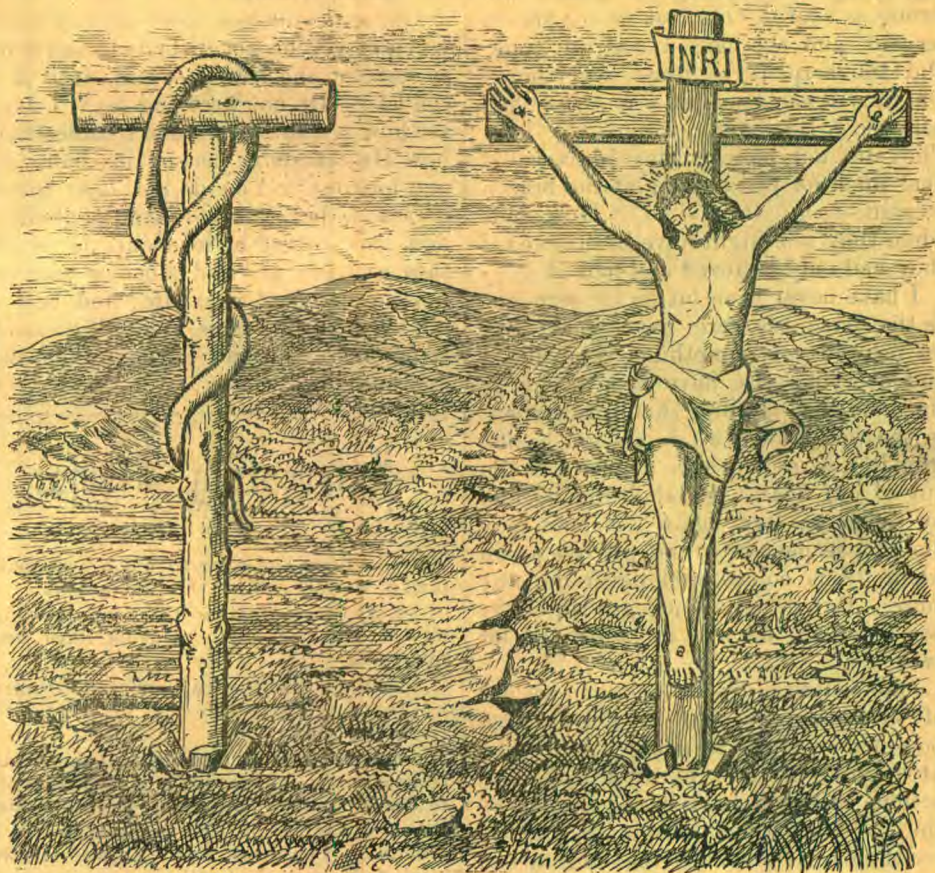
The Israelites once took such a journey. They had been living in Egypt for a long time, but finally were treated so cruelly by the Egyptian king and his

people that the Lord pitied them and sent Moses to lead them out into a better land, where they would not need to work so hard, and where they could have time to serve God. They therefore took their little ones, and all their neighbours who were willing to put away their idols and worship the true God, and started on their long journey. What a procession it must have been!—"six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children, and a mixed multitude that went with them; and flocks and herds, even very much cattle!"

They had to pass over miles and miles of sandy deserts and rocky plains, where there was no food and but few springs of water, and where there were no living creatures but wild beasts, poisonous insects, and fiery serpents.

blessings that He had showered upon them, but they thought of themselves, and looked at themselves, and thought about the disagreeable things that they feared might come, until they could see and think of nothing else. They forgot that Jesus was caring for them and protecting them from danger every day. Because they could not have everything just as they did at home they complained, and found fault with Moses, and murmured against God again and again.

It grieved the Lord very much to see how little they cared for Him, and how they were afraid to trust Him after all His tender love and care. He knew that they never could have a home in the promised land unless they learned to trust Him at all times and in all places, and His love for them was so great that



But they were not alone. Jesus Himself went before and took care of them. When they hungered and could find nothing to eat, He pitied them and rained bread (manna) from heaven for them; when they thirsted and became faint because there was no water to drink, He caused clear, cool waters to gush out of the solid rock and run down like rivers. He kept them from being ill, and although they walked day after day over the burning sands and sharp stones, He kept their feet from swelling, and their clothes from wearing out! And He kept the wild beasts and poisonous serpents from hurting them.

How many things they had to thank God for! How much He had done to make them happy! But they were not happy. They did just as we often do now. They did not look to Jesus and think of Him and count up the many

He could not bear to think of their all being lost. He therefore sought to make them see what they were doing. He knew of no better way than to remove His protecting hand for a short time. Then they would see how faithfully He had been caring for them.

As soon as the Lord stopped driving back the fiery serpents, they of course came into the camp of the Israelites, wriggling through the tents, and stinging the people with their fiery tongues. Many of the people died, and those that did not die were sore afraid that they also would be killed by the poisonous creatures that swarmed on every side of them.

They then saw how good the Lord had been to them, and how wicked they had been. They came to Moses, and with sorrow confessed their sin and asked him to pray to God to take away the

serpents. Although God hates sin, He loves the sinner, and He is always willing and glad to forgive those who really feel sorry for their sins. Therefore He immediately told Moses to make a large serpent of brass and put it upon a pole where it could be seen from all parts of the camp. And He said that if those who were bitten would look at the brazen serpent, they should be healed.

Moses did as he was told. A man was sent through all the camp to tell the good news to the people. Many believed God, and gladly turned their weary eyes toward the serpent on the pole. What a change took place! Suddenly the stinging pain ceased, the burning fever cooled off, the swelling went down, the dazed eyes brightened, and the trembling limbs put on new strength,—the fainting, dying souls sprang up as well and strong as ever! One look at the brazen serpent, and the poison was all gone! Did the serpent of brass heal them? Oh, no: it was Jesus in whom they had believed. But some would not look. They did not believe that Jesus would heal them for just looking at the brazen serpent,—and they died! How sad! when they too might have been saved if they had only believed and looked.

I have never been bitten by serpents, as the Israelites were, have you? But let me tell you something: You and I and everyone else have been stung by sin; and that is worse than any serpent in the world, for if we do not get healed from it, if we do not have its poison taken out of our hearts, we shall die by and by never to live again. A man may die of a serpent bite, and yet live again when Jesus comes, and never die any more. But if he does not get rid of the poison of sin he will be destroyed for ever.

One could tell by the looks and actions of the Israelites that they had been poisoned by the serpents. And even little children show by their looks and actions that they have been poisoned by sin. We see them look cross, and we see them quarrel, and strike, and say bad words, and disobey their parents, and hate, and envy, and lie, and do many other sinful things.

God says that if any one of these poisonous things is left in your heart they will cause you to die, as surely as the poison of the serpents caused the Israelites to die. And you cannot heal yourself any more than they could. No doctor in this world can take the poison of sin out of your heart. Your father cannot do it, nor your mother. No one in the world can take it away. God knew this. He saw how you were going to be lost for ever unless some one could save you. He saw that no one but His only Son Jesus could ever do it; and He could not do it without suffering and dying. Think of it! *God loved you so that He gave His only Son to die that you might live, that you might have the poison of sin taken out of your heart. Jesus was nailed to the cruel*

cross and lifted up, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness. God says that He was lifted up for you, and that if you will look to Him believing that He will heal you from sin, He will do it, just as surely as He healed the Israelites when they looked at the brazen serpent.

Jesus will know if you look up to Him and say in your heart, "Lord, I do believe," for He is not dead now, He is alive again and in heaven. If you are really sorry for your naughty sins that caused Him to die, and tell Him so, and ask Him to forgive you as the Israelites did, He will do it. He will take the sins all away, and will put His own gentle Spirit in your heart in place of them. Then if you let Him, He will use your tongue to say kind words, your hands to do loving acts, your feet to run on willing errands.

Oh, will you look to Jesus and live? I beg of you do not disbelieve and wait, as some of the Israelites did, until it is too late. Do not wait and say, "I don't see how it can be," "I don't understand how He can do it just by my believing and looking." You do not need to understand, but you do need to believe and look. Just believe and do as He says, and you will find this new year the happiest year of your life; and best of all, when Jesus comes, you will be ready to go with Him and be happy for ever and ever.

Interesting Items.

—The Pope has mapped out a systematic plan of warfare against the Freemasons.

—Very severe weather has of late prevailed on the Atlantic, and accidents have been numerous.

—Two thousand extra men were required by the London post-office to handle the Christmas mail.

—The Turkish Government will shortly ask contractors to tender for the construction of a bridge 400 metres long across the Euphrates.

—A dynamite outrage was perpetrated in Dublin on Christmas Eve. An attempt was made to blow up the Castle, and one detective was killed.

—The Limerick magistrates have decided to grant no new public-house licences, and to gradually reduce the number to one-third of the present figures.

—Cholera has again appeared in Hamburg and in Russia. The fact that it appears in midwinter occasions the gravest fears for the approach of warm weather.

—The 247th anniversary of Nonconformity in the City of Canterbury has just been celebrated at the local Congregational Church, which was formed in 1645 with nine members.

—Bishop Potter, of the Episcopal Church, has just laid the corner-stone of a cathedral in New York, which is to cost between £1,000,000 and £2,000,000, and is to have chapels for simultaneous service in seven different languages.

—The trial of those charged with participation in the serious cholera riots, in resistance to the enforcement of the sanitary regulations, last July, has just been concluded at Tashkend, Russia. Eight of the accused have been sentenced to death by strangulation. Others have been sentenced to exile and imprisonment.

—The construction of new railways last year in the United States amounted to 4,100 miles, making the total mileage 174,600.

—The French Government has just issued the population returns for 1891, which show an excess of deaths over births of 10,000; but for an excess of births among foreigners, the number would have been 19,000. It is worthy of note that in the five preceding years the total population of France had shown a small increase of 25,000; the increase of 5,000 a year is now converted into a decrease of 10,000.

—The *Chronicle* says: "According to private information from Finland a large proportion of the inhabitants of that country are perilously near starvation. Out of a population of 2,000,000 inhabitants more than 200,000, are entirely destitute, and before the winter comes to an end it is expected that one-fourth of the total population will be in the same pitiable plight. In many districts in the north the people have commenced to live on bread either wholly or partially composed of birch-bark."

—Russia is again threatened with famine. Crops have failed in consequence of drouth, and the people, already impoverished, have little hope. Count Bobrinsky, Marshal of the Russian nobility, says, "We find ourselves face to face with the consequences of a bad harvest under much worse circumstances than last year. And to crown all he says, typhus and epidemics among children are appearing. Cold, damp huts, with mouldy walls, the snow falling through the apertures of the roof, the thatch having been used as fuel, the flooring coated with mud, while on the top of the spacious stove lie huddled together five or six individuals in the paroxysms of typhus fever, unattended, and without even bread and milk."

—Some time ago an Act was passed in the United States, known as the Geary Act, which provided that all the Chinese should register their names, addresses, description, etc., or else be expelled from the country. Only a very small number have registered, and as the time limit expires on May 1st, it will require a great deal of expense on the part of the Government to carry out the provisions of the Act and expel them from the country. Steps are being taken to test the constitutionality of the Act in the courts, and then to use diplomatic means, and, finally, to resort to retaliation, if necessary, by withholding protection to Americans in China. When the expense of sending back to their own country over a hundred thousand Chinese is considered, it will be seen that it is sometimes much easier to enact oppressive laws than it is to enforce them.

—Following are the persons to be prohibited from entering the United States according to the provisions of the Bill just introduced into the United States Senate: 1. All persons physically capable who are over twelve years of age, but who can neither read nor write their own language with reasonable facility, except that all aged persons who, although unable to read or write with facility, are the parents or grandparents of admissible immigrants, may accompany or be sent for by such immigrants.

2. All persons not provided, in addition to the means for reaching their final destination, with sufficient money for their comfortable support, or not being members of families able thus to support them for two months after their arrival. The amount thus required shall not exceed \$100 for each single person or head of a family, and \$25 for each member of a family accompanying or being sent for by the head of the family.

3. All persons who are blind, crippled, or otherwise physically so disabled as to wholly or partially unfit for manual labour, unless it is satisfactorily shown upon inquiry that such disabled persons are sure of support and not likely to become chargeable to the public.

4. All persons belonging to societies which avour or justify the unlawful or criminal destruction of life and property.

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THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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

LONDON, JANUARY 12, 1893.

It is not alone upon the Atlantic that severe storms have been raging, and that disasters have occurred. Over thirty steamers are said to have gone down in a storm on the Black Sea. These things should serve to remind men of the insignificance of their works in comparison with those of God. The nations of earth put great confidence in their great navies; but they will be as nothing when the waters of the sea roar and are troubled, and even the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.

LAST year the members of the American Congress were made to believe that the country was overwhelmingly in favour of Sunday closing of the World's Fair, and that if they did not pass a measure to secure its being closed they would lose their seats. Accordingly they at once became very religious, and earnestly pleaded for the protection of the "fourth commandment." But since then it has transpired that the "public sentiment" was manufactured by a very few people, and so a bill providing for Sunday opening has been introduced at the present session.

RELIGIOUS institutions that rest upon the will of human legislators are very uncertain things. There is only one certain thing about religious legislation, and that is that it will invariably be wrong. To this the history of the world affords no exception. Although Sunday as a religious institution has not the slightest authority from the Bible, and the American Congress did a wicked thing in voting for its observance at the World's Fair, it would do an equally wicked thing in voting that the Fair shall be kept open on that day. Although the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, it would be just as wicked for Congress to vote that the Fair shall be closed on Sabbath. The wickedness consists in the very fact of religious legislation itself. Congress should do nothing. The Directors should be left free to open or close the Fair on Sunday, as they see fit, and people should be left free to attend or stay away, as they please.

THE facts in regard to civil legislation on religious matters may be briefly put thus: If there is in the law of God no warrant for any practice, then to pass laws enforcing that practice is to try to compel men to sin; for God's law requires all that He wants man to do, and whatever His laws do not require, He does not want to have done. And if the law of God does require a certain thing, then a human law requiring its observance is unnecessary, and not only so, but presumptuous. If the Lord will, the relation of civil government to the law of God will be considered more at length in the next number.

ACTING on the instruction of the Methodist Conference, the Wesleyan Committee of Privileges has been in communication with the Committees of the Liberation Society, the Dissenting Deputies, the Congregational and Baptist Unions, the Presbyterian, and minor Methodist bodies, with the result that a "Joint Consultative Committee" has been formed, the chief object of which is to consider all legislative proposals affecting the rights of English Nonconformists, and to take concerted action. Thereby they cut the sinew of all their opposition to the Establishment. In the face of such a combination for political purposes, it will be but too evident that opposition to the Establishment is prompted by a desire to share in the emoluments, and not by conscientious convictions against the union of Church and State.

"ARE they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14. This question is really an emphatic statement. It admits of only one answer, and that is, Yes. But who are they who are thus sent forth to minister? They are the angels, as the preceding verses show. The first chapter of Hebrews is devoted to showing that Christ is superior to the angels. He is the Creator and Saviour of men; they are simply His servants in that work. But angels are not men. The second chapter of Hebrews shows that Christ is greater than man, although He was made like man; but when He was made like man, He was made "a little lower than the angels," because man even in the beginning was made a little lower than the angels. The angels existed before man was created, for when the foundations of the earth were laid, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job xxxviii. 7. Men on earth may minister to one another, but they are not "ministering spirits." And the ministry of man in the Gospel is confined wholly to this present life, for when he dies there is no more work nor wisdom for him until the Lord comes to give him life again. And then they do not become angels, but remain redeemed men throughout eternity.

TUESDAY, September 4, 1893, is the date fixed upon for the opening of the great Catholic Congress to be held in connection with the World's Fair in Chicago. By the way, there is no doubt but that the Columbus celebration will first and last do very much toward uniting professed Protestants and Catholics. The fact that Columbus was a Catholic, and that he was sent out by a Catholic queen, who had in view the advancement of the Roman Catholic Church, will be kept before the public. Mr. Justice Brewer

has decided that the United States is a Christian nation, on the strength of the religious proclivities of those who made the first settlements. Consistency, therefore, would demand that the form of religion professed by the nation should be the Roman Catholic, since it had the first hold upon the country. It matters very little what the form of religion is that is professed by a State, for the very best would soon become as bad as the worst.

LORD YARBOROUGH, the owner of the famous North Lincolnshire pack of hounds, has been gathering some interesting statistics in regard to fox hunting. He says that there are 330 packs of hounds in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and estimates their cost and keeping to amount to £44,850. Adding to this the cost of keeping the 99,000 horses that are used in the sport, he gives a total annual expenditure for fox hunting of over four and a half millions. There are many conclusions that might be drawn from this, but we leave each reader to make his own application of the facts.

ALL rightminded people can sympathize with the forcible words used in the following item from the *Echo*:—

"We are threatened with two disastrous visitations this year—one from Hamburg, the other from Paris. We might leave Dr. Collingridge to grapple with the cholera, but who shall deliver us from crinoline? It is that mighty potentate M. Worth who threatens us with the latter plague. Here is a splendid opportunity for the champions of the rights of women. Perhaps their battle for the franchise is to be won after all through the petticoat itself. Should they be able to make a successful stand against such an odious, ugly, indecent revival, they will win a host of new converts. No woman with any sense of self-respect, who has any recollection of the comments of the other sex when crinoline was last in vogue, would suffer her daughters to wear it on any consideration."

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