

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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"Jesus of Nazareth."—"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see." John i. 45, 46. A whole volume could not describe the standing of Nazareth any better than Nathanael's question of astonishment. It had a bad reputation. It was so bad that nobody expected any good thing from it. Yet Jesus was all His earthly life associated with Nazareth, and He is still known as "Jesus of Nazareth." It would have been according to human nature to associate His name with some more renowned place. Any ordinary man would have taken care that he should be announced as from Jerusalem, or from Capernaum: but Jesus was content to be heralded as "Jesus of Nazareth." He "made Himself of no reputation," for our sakes.

FROM this simple fact we may derive both comfort and instruction. We may be comforted by the knowledge that Jesus identifies Himself with the humblest and the most despised. No matter how poor and despised people are, nor how degraded they are, if they but come to Him in faith, "He is not ashamed to call them

brethren." This is most comforting. And we should learn also from "Jesus of Nazareth," not to despise or reject any person because of his birth or station. Many a man who has lived all his life in a hovel, and had only shabby clothing, will yet dwell in a mansion, and be clothed in light as the brightness of the firmament. Martin Luther was a miner's son, John Bunyan was only a tinker, and one of the grandest titles of the Lord of all worlds is "Jesus of Nazareth."

"Come and See."—When Nathanael said to Philip, can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip's only reply was, "Come and see." He did not argue the question, but took the only sure way to convince the questioner; he led him to Jesus, that he might see for himself. It was thus that the woman of Samaria convinced her neighbours. She did not argue with them, but said, "Come and see." When they saw Jesus, they believed on Him, as Nathanael did. That is the Christian's strongest and only valid argument. He may argue, but the unbeliever can argue also; but when a man sees Jesus there need nothing more be said. So in everything Jesus is to be lifted up and presented to the people, and He will do the convincing. Blessed are they whose lives, as well as their words, say, "Come and see."

Wanted—A Saviour.—In the *Review of the Churches* for October there is an account of a conversation between a young Brahmin and a missionary. Said the Brahmin, "Many things which Christianity contains I find in Hindooism, but there is one thing which Christianity has and Hindooism has not." "And what is that?" asked the missionary. "A Saviour," was the reply. That is a point which is overlooked by people who extol other systems of religion. It is true that there

are excellent precepts in Hindooism, Mohammedanism, and among all pagans, from the most ancient time; but none of these religions give the man any help in carrying out those precepts, and in forsaking evil. With them it is each one for himself. And so they can never give satisfaction and perfect peace. They do not satisfy the desire of the heart. But Jesus, "the Desire of all nations," saves from sin, and lives in the soul the righteousness which He requires. Let Him then be lifted up before all the world.

GOD IS FOR US.

WE have not learned the greatest and most precious truth in the world, if we have not learned that God is for us. God is not for sin, but He is for the sinner. He hates the one, but He loves the other. This is what the Gospel means. It is God for us and God with us. It "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and it is sent to no one who is not a sinner.

Here is a world of comfort for every person who will open his eyes and heart to realise the fact. Wheresoever he may be, whatsoever may be his surroundings, whatever his dangers and difficulties and enemies, he is not beyond the reach of this mighty truth. He is not beyond its power and its comfort. He is not beyond the love and the mercy of God.

God has given to all men a revelation of Himself. He has surrounded all with the tokens of His creative power; He has sent His word to all, telling that that power is for them,—that the power of God in creation is "the power of God unto salvation," to every one that believeth. The salvation is salvation from sin, which means victory over every temptation, and therefore victory over every opposing force or influence that wars against our eternal welfare.

It matters not what this opposing power may be, whether it be within us or without us,—the pride and lust of our own hearts, the misfortunes that come upon us, the scorn and hatred of those around us, or the fiery temptations of the evil one himself,—all fall far beneath “the power of God unto salvation.” To every fear that arises in the heart as these obstacles loom up in the pathway, the answer of God is, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” Most assuredly; for all these opposing forces are finite, while the power of His grace is omnipotent!

“Who,” says the apostle, “shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. viii. 35-39. There is nothing that can keep us from the love of God, and His love includes His power, His wisdom, and everything else that can be needed for our salvation. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

Only we ourselves can take ourselves out from the hands of Him who would do this work for us. Only we ourselves can close to ourselves the floodgates of the mighty tide which is the power of God unto salvation. We may forget that God is for us; we may become discouraged at the difficulties and trials of the way; we may doubt the power or willingness of God to carry us through, and so remove ourselves, in a great measure, from the channel of His grace, for He can never work for any person except in a way that will bring glory to His name. He cannot reward doubt or distrust. He must guard His glory for the welfare of His creatures, for His glory is their strength. The greater the glory of our God, the greater is the hope and confidence which we may have in Him.

But we need not doubt or distrust God. We may know that He is for us; we may know that His salvation

is for us. We may know it on the authority of His word, for He has sworn by Himself that the blessing of an inheritance in the new earth—which is eternal life—shall be to all that are the children of faith, the seed of Abraham. See Heb. vi. 13-20. He has said it, and we may know it by believing it. It is a way that is not too difficult for any one. True, it will be contradicted by many things that appeal to our feelings, our natural senses, or our reason; but God is greater than all these, and His word is as great as Himself. The question for all is, Will you believe? Will you have the faith which works? If you will, you can in no wise lose its reward.

“ONLY A CONJURER.”

EVER since Spiritualism has been before the public attention, there have been men who have gained a livelihood by “exposing” it. There are two ways of exposing Spiritualism. One is by setting it forth in its true character, as the working of Satan, as is done in the PRESENT TRUTH. Another is the more common way of professing to show that it is nothing but trickery and sleight-of-hand performance.

The last number of PRESENT TRUTH contained an article entitled, “The Great Deceiver,” in which attention was called to some writing that had been received by a gentleman, through a medium. The gentleman was a minister, and the medium was a “Professor” Baldwin. It now appears that Mr. Baldwin does not claim to be a Spiritualist, and announces himself as only a conjurer. Some of the daily papers are making merry over the manner in which Mr. Stead and the minister were duped, yet the doubt is expressed if either of them will be convinced, by Mr. Baldwin’s confession, that there is nothing to Spiritualism. We see no reason why they should be, for even admitting that the phenomena exhibited were mere trickery, the fact remains that again and again, through the mediumship of avowed Spiritualists, phenomena have taken place that were manifestly supernatural, the most expert scientists and trained observers being witnesses.

Satan is a great deceiver, and the Bible warns us against his deceptions. It tells us that in the last days he will work with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.” 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10. He is the Destroyer, and his sole work is to destroy. See 1 Peter

v. 8. It is evident, therefore, that he would be very likely to seek to conceal all traces of himself, and to make it appear that he has nothing to do with that which is performed through his own power. This is evident, because if Satan’s work were labelled with his own name, and men knew and realised that it was from him, they would shun it; few would deliberately walk into what they knew to be only the trap of destruction.

Consequently we are never surprised when we hear that some professed Spiritualist medium is proved to be only a trickster, nor when some professed conjurer or magician “exposes” Spiritualism, by seeming to do the same things, or by actually doing them. It is all in accordance with Satan’s plan to get people accustomed to his work without detecting his agency. All this prepares the way for the time when Satan himself will appear in person, doing the same and even greater wonders, and will be received by the people, not however as the devil, but as a great benefactor, even as Christ Himself.

It is not, however, by any means proved, in the present instance, that Mr. Baldwin is not a Spiritualist after all. The “explanation” that “An Amateur Magician” gives of the way in which the writing is done, is no explanation at all. Some years ago “slate-writing” was professedly exposed by a learned society, which published the statement that the slate always had to be in the hands of the medium, which is not the case. So in the case to which reference has been made, writing was done on paper that never left the observer’s hand.

But allow the claim that the supposed medium is only a conjurer, what then? The case is the same, for conjuring, the practice of magic, and Spiritualism are all of the same nature. Satan himself is a mighty conjurer or magician, his work being to make people see things that do not exist. He will make the sinner see safety in a course which leads directly to destruction; and when the sinner has repented and been forgiven, and his sins have been washed away, he will present the appearance of them before him, to make him believe that they are in existence to his condemnation, when they are not. All the practice of magic and conjuration is from Satan.

Some will disbelieve this, thinking it to be a wild statement; but it is the truth. It will not be denied that in everything of that kind deception is

practised. There is always a successful attempt to bewilder the senses, and to deceive the judgment. Now nothing of that kind comes from God. He "cannot lie." Titus i. 2. With Him is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James i. 17), or as the Revised Version has it, "neither shadow that is cast by turning." He is straightforward in all His ways. He is the truth, and "no lie is of the truth." 1 John ii. 21. Therefore the practice of magic and all kindred arts, is of the devil, who is a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies.

Remember that the ones who opposed Moses and Aaron in Egypt were magicians. They performed miracles, but they were false miracles, wrought for the purpose of deceiving. The Apostle Paul speaks of the perils of the last days, and says of some, "now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these resist the truth." 2 Tim. iii. 8. So it will be with the practice of magic, by professed conjurers, that will lead people astray in these last days. People will not admit that there is anything supernatural in these false miracles, until they are ready to go to the opposite extreme, and attribute them to the power of God. So we would utter an emphatic warning, that people may be on their guard, giving no heed to anything that is not the open truth, the standard of which is the Bible—the word of God.

Faith, Hope, and Love.—"Now abideth faith, hope, love: and the greatest of these is love." In some way it has come to be the common opinion that love is the greatest because it continues longer than the others, although the text says that they all remain. There is no indication that love will outlast faith and hope. Certainly the saints in glory will never lose faith in God, and hope will eternally be new, as each unfolding pleasure gives promise of still greater pleasure beyond.

Wherein then is love greater than faith and hope? The seventh verse of 1 Corinthians xiii. suggests the answer. Love "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Love is greater, because it contains both faith and hope. The statement that love believeth all things is limited by the preceding verse, which says that it rejoices only in the truth. Faith comes only by the word of God, so that the meaning of the text is that love believes all things that God says. Where love is, it is easy to believe.

He who "loves" God, has no doubts, no unbelieving questions to ask. And surely it is not difficult to love God, for God is love.

USURPING GOD'S PLACE.

Two weeks ago three Lincoln tradesmen were fined by the magistrates, for offences under the "Lord's Day Act," the defendants having refused to cease trading on Sundays. The Lincoln Town Council prosecuted.

Such an action as that will arouse little comment, because people generally think it sufficient that it was "due process of law." A law has been violated, and of course punishment must follow; but some cannot help inquiring what is the basis of such a law.

We will suppose, in the first place, that, as we are sometimes told, the law is solely in the interests of humanity,—to prevent people from overworking, by compelling them to rest one day in seven. But a man who does not know enough to rest when he is tired, needs, not a Sunday law, but a home in the asylum for the feeble-minded. Fewer people, by far, are killed by overwork, than by the dissipation of leisure. We must therefore seek another basis for Sunday laws.

We may be told that such laws are in the interest of fairness and equality, since (as it is claimed) it is unjust for a few men to be allowed to carry on their business while others are at rest. The same reasoning would force all to close their places of business on every holiday; but that is not done, and if it were attempted, an indignant protest would be raised against such interference with people's liberty. If one man wishes to take a holiday, that is no just reason why his neighbour should be forced to take one also. If it is unjust on one day to compel a man to stop work because his neighbours do, it is unjust at all times. Therefore we must seek a different basis still for Sunday laws.

And this is found in the very title of the laws. The act under which these men were prosecuted, was the "Lord's Day Act." Sunday is a day invested with a religious character, and this makes the difference between it and ordinary holidays. So the makers and enforcers of Sunday laws persuade themselves that it is zeal for the Lord, and not selfishness, that actuates them.

Suppose we allow for the moment that Sunday is all that is ever claimed

for it; that it is indeed the Lord's day; by what process of reasoning is it made to appear that men have any business to enforce its observance? The very title that is given it,—the "Lord's day,"—takes it out of human jurisdiction. If it is the Lord's day, He is the one to enforce its observance, if He wishes it enforced, or to punish for the non-observance of it; and if it is not the Lord's day, then the simplest principles of justice demand that every man should be allowed the same liberty on it that he enjoys on other days.

Unless men can show a direct commission from the Lord, for enforcing His laws, and for punishing those who disregard His laws, it is evident that all who do so, or attempt to do so, are doing what they have no business to do. There is no nation that would think of enforcing the laws of another nation. The United States Government once passed an infamous law, which demanded that, whenever a slave escaped from bondage, anyone who found him should return him to the one who had held him in bondage. Scores of slaves escaped to British possessions, and not one was ever returned. If a slave could find refuge on board a British man-of-war, he was safe; not a man would pay the slightest attention to the law which demanded the slave's return.

Perhaps this is not a perfect illustration, because the law in question was unjust. But the principle is true, no matter what the law; the British would say of the best United States law, "Let the Americans enforce their own laws," and so of the Germans, or any other nation. Moreover, it would be considered the height of impertinence for the people of one nation to interfere with the institutions of another nation. If a German or an American should be found passing sentence upon and imprisoning British subjects, and claiming the authority to do so as an officer of the British Government, he would soon be ousted from his self-assumed office, and would receive severe punishment. Yet men of every nation presume even to make and enforce laws for the King of heaven.

Many think that such zeal for the Lord is very honouring to Him, but that is a great error. Nothing in the world could be more dishonouring to God, than the assumption by men, that they must execute His laws. An incident recorded in the Bible will show just what men really teach concerning God, when they assume that

it is their duty to execute His laws, and defend His name.

A young man named Gideon was prompted by the Lord to throw down the altar which his father had erected to Baal, and to cut down the obscene image (improperly rendered "grove") that stood by it. When the men of the city found out who had done the deed, they demanded of Joash, the father of Gideon, that he should bring out his son that he might be put to death for destroying the altar of Baal. "And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death while it is yet morning; if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar." Judges vi. 31.

That was sound sense, as all will admit, and it convinced even the infatuated worshippers of Baal. They saw that if Baal could not protect his own altars, he was no god, and consequently could not protect them. "If he be a god, let him plead for himself." All heathen know that the gods they worship, are not indeed God. "They must needs be borne, because they cannot go." The sense with which God has endowed men, is sufficient to teach them that an image which must be carried from place to place, is not God; and they show their knowledge of that fact by resenting any insult to their god. They know that it cannot defend itself, and so they constitute themselves its defenders.

Now when men make laws for God, or think to execute His laws, they unconsciously show their opinion of Him. They show that they do not believe Him to be the true and living God, but altogether such an one as themselves. To make or execute laws for Him, is for man to put Himself in His place, and to assume to be His equal, if not His superior; and a greater insult to Him could not be devised.

For "Jehovah is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation. . . . He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion." Jer. x. 10-12.

Surely such a Being is able to execute His own laws, and needs not the help of puny man, who, in comparison with Him, is "less than nothing, and

vanity." And He will vindicate His own laws. "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." Jude 14, 15. What harder speech can be uttered against God than to say, in action, that He is not able to execute His own laws?

And then the case is aggravated by the fact that the day which is enforced as the Lord's day, is not His day at all. "The seventh day is the Sabbath," and it is that which He Himself calls "My holy day." Men have presumptuously dared to pass laws for God, putting His name to that with which He has had nothing to do, and then enforce them in His behalf. Could human presumption go higher?

We say nothing about the magistrates and Town Council of Lincoln. They are simply executing laws which they find on the statute books, with no thought as to what is implied by the very existence of those laws. But what of those who make such laws? and what of the people who, professing to act as servants of God, demand them? What will they say when He arises to execute His own laws, and to reprove men for their hard speeches against Him? Will they not repent before that day comes?

◆◆◆◆◆ "THY KINGDOM COME."

THERE is no thought which is given greater prominence in the word of God than that expressed in the above sentence. All through the pages of both the Old and New Testaments, it stands out prominently as a leading thought in the minds of prophets and apostles. Paul, in Titus ii. 13, calls it "the blessed hope." It was that to which the church in all ages looked forward, as the brightest prospect which their faith revealed, and the realisation of their fondest hopes.

In the heart of every true Christian this thought, this hope, will be uppermost. We are taught to give it this prominence by the Lord Himself. The very first petition of the "Lord's prayer" is, "Thy kingdom come." And this prayer is one for all Christ's followers. In the sermon on the mount, also, the first utterance is one concerning the coming kingdom: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Other sentences which follow allude to the same thing. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." This inheritance cannot be until the coming of the kingdom, by which the wicked shall be destroyed (2 Thess. i. 8, 9), and the earth made ready for its future inheritors. Ps. xxxvii. 10, 11. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." The time of comfort of the saints is when the tabernacle of God is with men, and "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying." Rev. xxi. 3, 4. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." They shall see Him at the coming of His kingdom. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The blessings which come to the poor in spirit, the meek, the pure in heart, and other possessors of heavenly graces, are many in this life; but they are not to be compared with those that will be realised at the coming of the kingdom of God.

The very first prophecy that was ever uttered by inspiration, so far as we have any record, is a prophecy of the coming of Christ in His kingdom. We find the record in Jude. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh, with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." Jude 14, 15. And the very last prophecy of the Bible is also a prophecy of the same event. "He which testifieth these words saith, Surely I come quickly." Rev. xxii. 20.

The sacred writer adds, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This is the prayer of every Christian heart, the goal toward which he strives, the event for which he labours. Let others make their pilgrimages to Mecca, or to the shrine of "our lady," or to Rome; the Christian's pilgrimage is to Mount Zion. And the one inspiring thought that leads him on over the rough and narrow path is "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus ii. 13. Would you be of the mind of Enoch, and of John, and of Paul, and of Christ? If so you will say with them, "Thy kingdom come." For that you will hope, for that you will pray, for that you will work. And

in the hour of trial you will find comfort in the thought, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." Isa. xxxiii. 17.

A SPECIMEN CRITICISM.

In their haste to rush to the front to assure the people that the Bible is not all true, but only such portions as chance to accord with their ideas, many ministers of the day are fairly stumbling over one another. Not all of the ministers, by any means, but a rapidly increasing number of them. There was a time when the distinguishing feature of Protestantism was that it stood for the Bible, in opposition to Roman Catholicism; but now those who are foremost in attacking the old Book, and in seeking to shake the faith of the people in it, are professed Protestants. They seem to understand the injunction, "Preach the word," if they ever think of it, as though it read, "Criticise the word."

THIS is not written in any carping spirit, but with sorrow, and exceeding great alarm. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" In their most persistent and aggressive teaching that the Bible is not all true, these men are undermining the very foundations of the Gospel. Not that the Gospel, which is the power of God, can ever actually be destroyed, for the Lord is still in His holy temple; but so far as many people are concerned, it will be the same as though it were destroyed. We write solely for the purpose of saving some, if possible, from being led astray by the array of titles and the show of learning that are paraded by those who thus oppose the Bible.

As a specimen of the wickedness, to say nothing of the shallowness, of this onslaught upon the Bible, we give the following which appeared in one of the leading religious journals, in an article from a man who writes "Rev." before, and "D.D." after, his name. He is a man whose influence, through his position and writings, is extensive. It is not necessary to give names, as we are dealing with a principle, and not with men. Here is the passage:—

"In Acts vii. 4, Stephen says that Abraham came to Canaan 'after his father was dead.' But by comparing Gen. xi. 26, 32; xii. 4, we learn that Terah lived many years after Abraham left Haran. The error is easily accounted for by the mention of Terah's death before the migration of Abraham. It does not affect either the spiritual teaching of the story of Abraham or the great

facts underlying that teaching. But it is inconsistent with Mr. Urquhart's assertion, [namely, that the Bible does not contain errors.]

"This case is specially interesting because Stephen could claim the special inspiration promised to those brought before judges: 'It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.' No inspiration richer than this was promised to or predicated of the sacred writers. And as we read Stephen's heroic defence we feel how abundantly the promise was fulfilled in him. Yet it did not save him from two clear discrepancies, however, which in no wise weaken his defence."

LET us read all the texts that are referred to in the above. In reading the following verses, remember that "Charran" and "Haran" are the same. The Hebrew letter beginning the word is a guttural, very difficult of pronunciation and of representation in English. In this case, as in the case of many other proper names, the common version of the New Testament gives a different spelling from the Old. Now for the texts:—

Acts vii. 2-4: "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, He removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell."

Gen. xi. 26: "And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran."

Gen. xi. 31, 32: "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran."

Gen. xii. 1-4: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; . . . so Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran."

THE trouble with the critic is this: He reads Gen. xi. 26 as though it stated that Terah was just seventy years old when Abram was born, and then putting that with the statement that Terah died in Haran, at the age of two hundred and five, and that

Abram left Haran when he was seventy-five years of age, he concludes that Terah was only one hundred and forty-five years old when Abram left Haran, and that therefore Abram left Haran sixty years before his father died, instead of after his death, as stated by Stephen. This is one side of the case, the side of unbelief, or of the "Higher Criticism."

All the texts referred to are simple and harmonious, and very easy to be understood, provided we accept the Bible as true. One who believes the Bible will have no trouble with the statements. It is the one who disbelieves the Bible, who cannot understand them. In this we shall see a demonstration of the fact that unbelief is not caused by the difficulties in the Bible, but that the greatest difficulties are caused by unbelief.

FOR example, our critic says that Stephen's statement cannot be correct because it disagrees with the account in Genesis. With just as much reason he might say that the record in Genesis cannot be true, because it is not in harmony with the statement by Stephen. But if either of these assumptions be true,—that is, if it be so that one or the other of the statements is not true,—how may we know that the other is correct? And if it could be proved that part of what Stephen said is not true, what confidence can we have in anything that he said? And, further, if what Stephen said when he was so filled with the Holy Spirit that his face was transfigured, and he could look directly into heaven, is in any degree doubtful, what confidence can be placed in any part of that which "Holy men spake from God, moved by the Holy Ghost." Thus we see that this is not simply a trifling question as to when a certain man died, but is an exceedingly grave one, involving the truthfulness or falsity of the entire Bible.

Now see how easily the whole thing straightens out when we approach it in a spirit of belief, accepting the whole Bible as the living word of the living God. Moses writes that Terah was two hundred and five years old when he died, and that Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran. But Stephen tells us that Abram did not leave Haran until his father was dead. Accepting both statements as the simple truth, we

have a very simple problem to solve, namely, If Terah died at the age of two hundred and five, and Abram his son left Haran immediately afterward, at the age of seventy-five, how old was Terah when Abram was born? Subtracting seventy-five from two hundred and five, we have the answer,—one hundred and thirty.

BUT what about the statement that "Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran"? Let us first look at a similar statement in Gen. v. 32: "And Noah was five hundred years old; and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth." The careless or unbelieving reader would conclude that the three sons of Noah were all born at once. But on reading Gen. x. 21 we find that Japheth was the eldest of the three. Two years after the flood Shem was one hundred years old (Gen. xi. 10), and as the flood lasted nearly a year, he must have been ninety-seven at its beginning. But Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came. Gen. vii. 6. Therefore he was five hundred and three years old when Shem was born. The text in Gen. v. 32 therefore does not mean that all three of Noah's sons were born at the same time, but that he was five hundred years old before the first one was born. So with Terah; he was seventy years old when the first of his sons was born. Abram, though not the eldest, is always named first, because he was the most prominent, as in the case of Ephraim and Manasseh.

THE case is simple and easy, if one believes the Bible; it becomes difficult only when one approaches it with a spirit of doubt, and the fear, if not the settled belief, that the Bible is not all true.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

The trouble is that men will not allow God a chance to speak, or will not believe Him when He does.

WE have called this a sample criticism. It surely exhibits in a marked manner the spirit of the new criticism, and that is what we wish to emphasize. Many of the criticisms cannot be disposed of so easily as this one, but no one need be troubled over that. The question is, Shall we believe man in preference to God? We see that in their criticism of the Bible, men do not hesitate to impeach the testimony of the

Holy Spirit. Stephen was "full of the Holy Ghost," and the Doctor of Divinity from whom we have quoted, allows that Christ's assurance, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you," was fulfilled in a special manner in his case; yet in the face of that he does not hesitate to charge Stephen with making a mistake. But to charge Stephen with making a mistake under such circumstances, is to charge the Holy Spirit with error. To such fearful lengths does the spirit of criticism and unbelief lead men. There are honest souls who might be confounded by the questions which these critics may propound, who we are sure will refuse to listen to them when they are reminded how dishonouring to God such criticism is. There are many who yet reverence God, and honour His word, notwithstanding the words of the Lord are fulfilled:—

"Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Jer. ii. 12, 13.

RELIGION IN SCHOOLS.

FOR some time there has been a controversy over the policy of the London School Board, in regard to religious instruction in the public schools. The controversy is not as to whether or not there shall be instruction, but as to the amount. Those who are opposing an increase, agree that there should be some, and thereby they deprive their protest of all force. The following letter to the *Daily Chronicle*, from the member of the Board who is making desperate efforts to have specific religious teaching in the schools, and more of it, gives opportunity to speak briefly of the principles involved in the question:—

The Education Department, acting upon certain rumours, has inquired as to the kind of instruction which is being given to the Jews in the London Board Schools. The answer of the Board, as reported yesterday, discloses the fact that for nearly twenty years a more or less organised system of Jewish instruction has been in force in certain of the schools, that the Board has made a regular practice of appointing Jewish teachers, and that at the present moment the Board is giving instruction at the ratepayers' expense in a "systematic knowledge of Judaism, with special reference to its distinctive dogmas and to tradition." This denominational teaching the Board shows no disposition to abolish—very wisely, as I think, for I have a rooted objection to teaching other people's children a religion which their parents do not believe in. But I could not

help asking the Board, as I now venture to ask your readers, why it is allowable to teach *Jewish* doctrines at the ratepayers' expense, but so very wrong to teach *Christian* doctrines in the same way. Why should the rights of Jewish parents be recognised, while the rights of Christian parents are so utterly disregarded that the writer of this letter, who has ventured to stand up for them, is treated as the enemy of religious liberty? I want justice for all, Christian, Jew, Unitarian, and Secularist alike; my only fault (surely a venial one) is that I am inclined to place the rights of parents before the convenience of a school board.

That is a fair presentation of the case. There is no reason to doubt the honesty of purpose of the gentleman who wrote it. And if the principle be conceded, that State schools ought to teach religion at all, then the position taken in the letter is a very fair one. For if religion is to be taught at all, it is plain that the teaching ought to be definite and thorough; and the proposal that the parents have a right to say in what religion, if any, their children shall be instructed, is just.

There is no place in the world where religion ought not to be, not in form, but in fact. True religion—the religion of Jesus Christ—is not form, but fact, a living reality. And that is just the reason why it cannot be enforced by law, and cannot be taught by any system instituted by law. Therefore the teaching of religion in the public schools, is a far different thing from having religion in those schools.

It is true that it is just as proper to teach Christian doctrines in schools, as it is to teach Jewish doctrines, because neither is proper. Let the thing be carried further. It is just as allowable to teach Catholicism as Judaism; just as allowable to teach Mohammedanism as Catholicism; just as allowable to teach Buddhism as Mohammedanism; just as allowable to teach Spiritualism as Buddhism; just as allowable to teach infidelity as Spiritualism. "Oh, no, no; that would never do," says the advocate of religious instruction in schools. Why not? "Oh," would be the reply, "because infidelity and Spiritualism are wicked." Of course they are, but are Mohammedanism and Buddhism righteousness? "No; and we would not allow them to be taught at the public expense." But we ask again, Do you think that Catholicism and Judaism are the truth? "No;" would be the reply, at least as far as Judaism is concerned; "but we must respect the rights of parents."

The reader can see by this presentation of the case that the rights of parents are not considered at all; for none of those who clamour for religious instruction in schools would listen for a minute to a proposition to teach

Spiritualism or Mohammedanism, no matter how many parents might be of those persuasions. But a Mohammedan, a Unitarian, a Spiritualist, a Mormon, or an infidel, is a man, and therefore entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other man. And therefore we are forced to the conclusion that those who clamour for State instruction in religion, do so only because they are persuaded that their particular system of religion—their denomination—will be the gainer by it.

The fact is, that there is no justice nor equality in the thing. There is no such person as the Government, who impartially supplies the money for religious training. All public money comes from the people. Now the writer of the above letter allows that it is not just to teach children at public expense a religion in which their parents do not believe. Neither is it just to tax people, whether parents or not, to teach the children of others that which they themselves do not believe. But that is just what is done when any form of religion is taught in the schools. For all Christians are taxed for the support of Judaism, when it is taught in schools; and when a form of Christianity is taught, the Jews help to pay for that teaching; and infidels are taxed for the support of religion, when they do not believe in any form of it.

It may be urged that equality is maintained by using in the support of each form of religion, just the proportion of money that comes from the believers in that form. This is not true, since there are many forms of religion which would not be allowed a moment's consideration. If it were the case, then why not leave all the people free to provide their own religious teaching, instead of having the civil government handle the money and provide the teaching?

Any religious teaching whatever in the public schools is manifest injustice, and in reality to none more than to those who are taught. As said before, true religion is a life, not a form, nor a creed. Christianity does not consist of a system of doctrine, but of a vital connection with Christ. But the most that can be taught in any public school, is an outline of certain doctrines, so that the child is choked with a form, instead of being fed with the Bread of life.

There are many who think that the rights of Nonconformists are in danger of being trampled upon in this attempt to increase the amount of religious in-

struction in the schools, which attempt comes mainly from the High Church party. This is true, but their protests are all useless, as long as they admit the right of the civil government to have anything whatever to do with religion. Civil government is not adapted to that end. It can indeed teach religion but not Christianity; but religion without Christianity is paganism, which is all that the State can ever teach or enforce. Therefore in the interest of pure and undefiled religion, in the interest of the pure Gospel of Christ, the PRESENT TRUTH will never cease to call attention to the essential wickedness of State connection with religion in any form whatever.

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"BLESSED ARE THE MEEK."

THESE words were spoken by Christ, among the beatitudes pronounced by Him in His sermon on the mount. The reason there assigned is, "for they shall inherit the earth." But there is a present blessing in meekness as well as a future one. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and a natural accompaniment of that "love, joy, peace," which is the Christian's heritage in this life, as well as in that to come.

Without meekness there can be no real enjoyment of spiritual blessings. The person who will take honour and glory to himself cannot be altogether at peace with Him who claims all honour and glory and power as due to Himself. So far as a man ascribes these to himself, he makes himself a rival of God. And he cannot under such circumstances love God with all his might, mind and strength. Meekness is in short the opposite of selfishness, which strikes directly against all the fruits of the Spirit, causing an individual to take to himself that which belongs alone to God. And in taking to himself that which is God's—or attempting to do so—an individual does not in reality get anything, and loses all that which God is able to give him.

But what is meekness? It may be said, in the first place, that Christian meekness (which is the only true meekness) is not altogether what it is popularly supposed to be. The common idea of meekness allies it with weakness,—lack of will. It pictures the meek person as one who makes little or no resistance to persons or things that set themselves against him. But this idea is entirely false. It has no place in the make-up of the meek characters of the Scripture record.

It should be evident, at a glance, that the Spirit, which is all-powerful, cannot produce as one of its fruits anything that lacks force and strength.

Meekness is not the absence of will, but the absence of self. Among Scripture characters with whom the idea of meekness is naturally associated, probably none are more prominent than Moses, and John, the disciple of Christ. The record of Moses is that he "was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." Numbers xii. 3. But no one at all familiar with the events of his life could think of him as a weak character, or lacking in resoluteness and power of will. While he persistently refused to be the father of a great nation, or to be angry with those who murmured against him, he was never slow to take vigorous measures for the suppression of idolatry and other sins, no matter how great the number arrayed against him. He was, indeed, one of the most energetic and forceful characters that the world has ever seen.

The same decision of character was possessed by John. John was an apt pupil in the school of Christ, and his natural traits of character were tempered by the lessons he there received. But while self was repressed, there was no loss in force of will. And this is evident from a glance at his epistles to the church. No one of the inspired writers, indeed, uses plainer or more forcible language than does John. His speech, like the speech of Paul, was "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." He simply let himself become a mouthpiece of the Spirit and an instrument of Omnipotence, and decision and force appeared as an inevitable consequence in all that he said and did.

At the very foundation of meekness, lies the conviction that the very best place for us to be in is the place where God wants us to be. If that place is up above the heads of others, it is all right; and if it is down under their feet, it is just as well. Wherever it may be, it is the only place we can afford to be in. We cannot afford to occupy a high place when God wants us to fill a humble one; we cannot afford to remain in a humble place when God wants us to fill one higher up. There is a selfishness which affects humility as well as one which is proud. Moses displayed a touch of the former at the burning bush in the desert, when he begged to be released from going before Pharaoh, on the plea that he was too humble an instrument

to accomplish the work; and there have been many since his day who evaded responsibilities in the work of God under the same plea. But such humility is only professed, not real. True humility never rebels against God's purposes under any pretext whatever. True humility is the absence of self, so that so far as the individual is concerned, there is nothing in the way of the accomplishment of God's will in any direction.

One of the greatest blessings of meekness is the peace which it brings into the individual's daily life. For if he is fully persuaded that the place God wants him to be in is the best place for him and the only place he can afford to be in, all chance for murmuring is taken out of his life. He simply feels that "all things work together for good to them that love God," and leaves the result with Him. He has "godliness with contentment," which, the apostle says, "is great gain."

But how will he know when he is in the position that God wants him to fill? The Bible has answered this question. The Psalmist says, "The meek will He guide in judgment; the meek will He teach His way." The meek person is the only one that God can teach, because he is the only one that will not trust in his own wisdom. It is with the meek person that God dwells, and that he should be led of God when God dwells with him, is inevitable. We are told that "the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity," saith, "I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Thus the meek person dwells with God, and in whatever place he may be, he knows that God is there too. God never asks an individual to be in a humbler place than He is willing to be in Himself.

The meek person dwells with God. He is safe; he is contented; he has instruction in the ways of the Highest. He will be hid in the day of the Lord's anger. Zeph. ii. 3. He will inherit the earth. Ps. xxxvii. 11. He is willing, for all this, to give up self. Is not the exchange a good one? Truly we can well afford to exchange the highest position that earth can offer for the lowest place that God wants us to fill. The highest position without God is lower than the lowest place with Him.

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"Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker."—Prov. xvii. 5.

INDULGENCES.

THE *Catholic Times* says that "the Protestant mind is apparently quite incapable of grasping the doctrine of indulgences," and as an instance in support of this assertion mentions the case of a Protestant lady who had seen people in Italy buying pictures and cards with indulgences on the back of them at the church doors. Her Catholic friend denied that indulgences were ever sold, and said that the selling only applied to the cards and pictures, while the indulgences could only be gained "by saying the prayers to which they were attached and fulfilling the necessary conditions."

Whatever truth there may be in this representation, it is certain that the Protestant mind is capable of grasping the doctrine of indulgences, for it is a doctrine known to every unconsecrated heart. This doctrine did not originate with the papacy. The devil originated it, and it has been a common thing among all over whom he has had control; not, indeed, in the precise form in which it is held and practised by Catholics, but the same in principle. The devil is an adept in revamping all his old deceptions of ancient times, and palming them off upon the modern world as something new. But the principles that run through his evil devices never change. Men, however, forget to look at principles, and fasten their eyes upon persons and forms, upon some particular things of a tangible nature, and forget that paint and whitewash can give different appearances to a thing which does not change at all in character or substance.

The Jews among whom Christ walked had the doctrine of indulgences. We have a plain record of it in the Bible. It is not mentioned that they were gained by saying a prayer, but they could be had by saying certain other things. There is an instance recorded in Matt. xv. The scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus and asked Him why His disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders, by eating with unwashed hands. In reply Jesus asked of them, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" and He added, "For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother; and he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift (by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me), and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus

have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

A son is under obligation to honour his father and his mother by his service, either of money or labour. It is a duty embraced by the fifth commandment. But the Pharisees and elders and rulers among the Jews, ever ready to obtain all that they could for the church (for their hierarchy can as well be called a church as the Catholic hierarchy), invented this way of freeing a child from his natural service to his parents, and turning it to their own benefit, ostensibly as a gift to God. And this differs only in form, not in principle, from the doctrine proclaimed by Tetzal, or that set forth in the *Times*, whereby a person, by performing certain works, can secure to himself moral privileges which he would otherwise not possess.

It is only the old Satanic principle of merit attaching to works—the principle which runs through all heathen systems, and finds ever a ready welcome in the natural heart. It matters not whether the price be money, or prayers, or other pious (?) works; the principle is the same in all. That which clamours for indulgence is self; and it is often willing to pay a good price to secure the privilege. In this way the coffers of the church have been kept filled, but the souls of men have been made eternally poor.

ABRAHAMIC FAITH.

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WHAT is "Abrahamic faith"?—A faith such as Abraham had. Was there anything particular in his faith? Must not the faith of "the father of all that believe" have the same elements as the faith of every true believer? And must not believers of all ages exercise the same faith in the same manner in which Abraham exercised it? Is not "Abrahamic faith" the heritage of all believers? Are we not the children of promise—Abraham's faith posterity? May the following suggestions aid us in comprehending and attaining unto our great faith privileges.

Abraham was surrounded by idol worship; it was practised in his own family, perhaps himself addicted to it in the earlier part of his life; but when God called him he renounced it all, and chose the true, the living God, as the object of his faith. Henceforth he had no faith in idols; he did not trust in reason; he had no faith in his own wisdom, or goodness, or sufficiency, but he had faith in God. The true God was the centre of his faith, the centre of his life. Whatever might come, under all trials and difficulties, not only in theory, but deep down in his heart, he believed in the true God.

The idea of a true and living God was a true and living reality to his faith. "Abrahamic faith" will not trust in reason. It renounces self. It believes in the true God. It lays a solid foundation. It admits of no rival, of no side issues, but centres in the one true God.

Abraham had as much faith in what God said as he had in God. God's word had meaning in his estimation. When God spoke, Abraham believed that He meant what He said, and relied on His word. We never find him criticising, explaining away the meaning, speculating on, or toning down the Lord's words; he simply believed what God said, and acted as if he believed it. When God spoke, he expected the fulfilment of His word just as positively as if he already saw it. It is not in the nature of faith to change or modify God's word, but to believe it, take hold of it, and prove its truthfulness. May we not all have this simple faith of Abraham—just be childlike enough to believe all that God says? If our faith always had this simplicity, we would have less trouble about believing.

It was enough for Abraham to know that his God called and commanded. However dark the way before him, however contrary to his feelings the bidding, however difficult or arduous the work to be performed, it was enough for him to know that God directed him. He did not stop to argue the case, or even to ask what the outcome would be, but simply obeyed. When called to go to a strange land he did not stop to inquire about the particulars of the journey, nor to ask how he should fare; neither did he send out spies to search out the way and the land and report the distance or difficulties, the "but's," the "if's," and the "peradventures"—he simply went. "Abrahamic faith" obeys promptly, even when some Isaac is to be offered. When faith can see the way open for only one more step in the way of God's bidding, it takes that step promptly and confidently. It deals with the present and leaves the future in God's care, obeys, and leaves results with God. It was sufficient for Abraham to know that God had promised. He believed, no matter what seemed to stand in the way of the promise. His faith knew no impossibilities. Those things which nature and human reason declared to be in conflict with the promise, he "considered not," they were not in the way of faith—gave him no concern. He lost sight of all discouraging and seemingly contradictory circumstances and arrangements, and simply "believed God." His faith was beyond human reasoning, resting in the promise. "Abrahamic faith" rises above human agencies, above difficulties, above discouragements, above secondary causes, above self, above the cares of the world, the malice of Satan, and the

powers of darkness, and rests in God and looks to the promise.

The sum and substance of "Abrahamic faith" is crowded into three words, "Abraham believed God." Two parties,—God, Abraham, and a connecting link—believed. This was the bond of union making them one. "Abraham believed God," that is all. How wonderfully great, yet how inexpressibly simple! To such an un-mixed, simple faith, all God's promises stand open. If we would have this faith, we must simply believe God. Oh, that it might echo throughout the length and breadth of the church, and deep down in the inner chambers of every heart—"believe God"!—*Christian Worker*.

MY ROCK.

"He is my Rock,"
Whereon I stand secure,
From which, once smitten, flows a fountain pure,
Where, storm-caught in the way, I turn to hide
Among the rifts, while tempests sweep outside;
And here I build where floods are all in vain;
The surges roll, but house and rock remain;
'Neath vine and palm
I sing my thankful psalm.

"He is my Rock,"
And in the height thereof
I have the mastery; I stand above,
And hold with ease the key of my defence
Behind the breastwork of Omnipotence;
My weapons gather swiftness as they fall
To head my foes if they would scale the wall;
Safe only where
I stand in instant prayer.

"He is my Rock,"
Above the damp miasm,
And lifted far above the danger chasm,
The vital wafture of the upper air
Seems like the breath of heaven, and like a
stair
The vista opens upward, till I see
By faith the "Rock of Ages," where for me,
In love confessed,
Shall be my home and rest.

—Rev. Dwight Williams, in *Christian Advocate*.

THE NATURE OF SIN.

GOD in His wisdom permitted Satan to carry forward his work, until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed, that their true nature and tendency might be seen by all. Until fully developed, sin would not appear the evil thing it was. Heretofore it had had no place in the universe of God, and holy beings had no conception of its nature and malignity. They could not discern the terrible consequences that would result from setting aside the Divine law. Therefore it must be demonstrated before the inhabitants of heaven as well as of all the worlds, that God's government was just, His law perfect. The true character of the usurper, and his real object, must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works.

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan's rule, its effect upon both men and angels,

would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the Divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government and His law is bound up the well being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its punishment.

The same spirit that prompted rebellion in heaven, still inspires rebellion on earth. Satan has continued with men the same policy which he pursued with the angels. His spirit now reigns in the children of disobedience. Like him they seek to break down the restraints of the law of God, and promise men liberty through transgression of its precepts. Reproof of sin still arouses the spirit of hatred and resistance. When God's messages of warning are brought home to the conscience, Satan leads men to justify themselves, and to seek the sympathy of others in their course of sin. Instead of correcting their errors, they excite indignation against the reprove, as if he were the sole cause of difficulty. From the days of righteous Abel to our own time, such is the spirit that is displayed toward those who dare to condemn sin.

By the same misrepresentation of the character of God as he had practised in heaven, causing Him to be regarded as severe and tyrannical, Satan induced man to sin. But the Eternal One Himself proclaims His character: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." In the banishment of Satan from heaven, God declared His justice, and maintained the honour of His throne. But when man had sinned through yielding to the deceptions of this apostate spirit, God gave an evidence of His love by yielding up His only begotten Son to die for the fallen race. In the atonement the character of God is revealed. The mighty argument of the cross demonstrates to the whole universe that the course of sin which Lucifer had chosen was in no-wise chargeable upon the government of God.

In the contest between Christ and Satan, during the Saviour's earthly ministry, the character of the great deceiver was unmasked. It was Satan that prompted the world's rejection of Christ. The prince of evil exerted all his power and cunning to destroy Jesus; for He saw that the Saviour's mercy and love, His compassion and pitying tenderness, were representing to the world the character of God. Satan contested every claim put forth by the Son of God, and employed men as his agents to fill the Saviour's life with

suffering and sorrow. The sophistry and falsehood by which he had sought to hinder the work of Jesus, the hatred manifested by the children of disobedience, his cruel accusations against Him whose life was one of unexampled goodness, all sprung from deep-seated revenge. The pent-up fires of envy and malice, hatred and revenge, burst forth on Cavalry against the Son of God, while all heaven gazed upon the scene in silent horror.

When the great sacrifice had been consummated, Christ ascended on high, refusing the adoration of angels until He had presented the request, "I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." Then with inexpressible love and power came forth the answer from the Father's throne, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." Not a stain rested upon Jesus. His humiliation ended, His sacrifice completed, there was given unto Him a name that is above every name.

Now the guilt of Satan stood forth without excuse. He had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit in which he ruled the children of men who were under his power, he would have manifested had he been permitted to control the inhabitants of heaven.

But it was not merely to accomplish the redemption of man that Christ came to earth to suffer and to die. He came to "magnify the law" and to "make it honourable." The cross of Calvary, while it declares the law immutable, proclaims to the universe that the wages of sin is death. In the Saviour's expiring cry, "It is finished," the death knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain. The Son of God passed through the portals of the tomb, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Lucifer's desire for self-exaltation had led him to say, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . I will be like the Most High." God declares, "I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, . . . and never shalt thou be any more." Eze. xxviii. 18, 19. When "the day cometh that shall burn as an oven," "all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. iv. 1.

The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonour to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honour before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law.

The word of God declares, "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum i. 9. The law of God which Satan has reproached as a yoke of bondage, will be honoured as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

HUMBLE SERVANTS.

"The Lord hath need of him." Mark xi. 3.

THAT WAS not the first occasion on which the Creator of the heavens and the earth used one of the most despised and abused of quadrupeds to do His will. That He should graciously suggest that He has need of anything so lowly, humble and despised is a source of great comfort to me. Indeed but for this text I should sometimes feel that it was presumption on my part to pretend to work for the Master. My brethren, I am willing to share my consolation with you. Whom man despises, God sometimes prizes. The animal that Balaam abused the Lord used.

Did you ever contemplate the long scale of beings whom God presses into His work? What countless servants are His; all the way from archangels to asses, from cherubim to ravens and roosters! Dearly beloved, I beg that in the discussion of this subject you will make your consideration of it introspective rather than otherwise. God is willing to use you, and graciously declares that He has need of you. The despised things of the world, the things that are not, the ciphers, are effective tools in His mighty hand. We who preach and care for the flocks are inclined to ignore the little ones and lowly ones when we seek for workers for the Lord, and so many a tied foal stands idle in the vineyard. And yet there are tasks which these might perform that elephants or oxen never could.

Contrasts are often of the Lord's ordering. You would have put the Master on an Arab steed with trappings gay and escorted Him on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. But none save an imposter would have ridden into the city on a charger, and accepted the homage due to Zion's King. Some trust in horses and some in chariots, but we recall the prophecy of old, and rejoice in Him who cometh riding on an ass and a colt the foal of an ass. A manger for His cradle, an ass for His steed, the mountain side for His home, thorns for His crown, a reed for His sceptre—Zion, behold thy King cometh! I would it were mine to set at work the weak and feeble of the earth, the despised and lowly, and to make them the willing servants of the Lord. Divine strength and human weakness were long since wedded in the temple

of God, and blessed is the fruit of such union.

Ye plodding beasts of burden, plod on. The Lord has need of you. By your service will He enter into many a heart and wend His way into many a home, carrying joy and gladness. Esteemed of little worth even by your fellow Christians, silent spectators and listeners in the great convention and the world-wide convocations, never seen on platform or in pulpit or in places of prominence, there is a work for you to do. Lowly tasks await your labour. The Lord of glory sends for you; He hath need of you, and the progress of the kingdom is arrested until you enter lovingly and loyally into His service.

And can it be my Lord doth ask
E'en aught of service at my hands?
With joy I'll take the simplest task
His condescending love demands.

Earth, air and sea His servants are,
And all obey His sovereign will;
I cannot be a blazing star,
Yet I some smaller field may fill.

With joy, myself, my all, I lay
At His dear feet, content to take
My lowly part, from day to day,
In His great cause, for His dear sake.

—New York Observer.

TOLERATION.

WHAT is tolerance? What is toleration? What is the innate feeling behind the thought of tolerance? What is the mental state behind the express act of toleration? Are these words expressive of Christian principle, or worthy Christian sentiment?

Tolerance is endurance, or capacity for endurance, of that which is offensive in others,—the sufferance of the presence or existence of that, or of those, which in the absence of this especial power, or assumed virtue, of tolerance, would be injurious or non-permissible. It presupposes that those by whom this capacity or virtue is exercised, through superior strength, either spiritual or physical, are able to submit, unharmed, to the existence and presence of that, or those, which would be otherwise harmful.

Toleration is the act of putting into practice this assumption of superiority. Yet, toleration is passive, not active, simply permitting through failure to prevent. It stands a silent, but always visible, protest. As tolerance presupposes that it would be better if those things did not exist which call for the exercise of the capacity; so, toleration assumes that through its intentional inaction those things are permitted, for the suppression of which both the natural right and the power exist, and are in the possession of the tolerating agent, though unexercised.

In order to realize the possession of tolerance,—the capacity of toleration,—it is necessary that there should be pre-existent an innate feeling of superiority, and in religious matters a

Pharisaical sense of being holier than the tolerated. The primary feeling, then, is that of the superior to an inferior, and not only to one who is inferior but an inferior possessing qualities not only undesirable and disagreeable but very likely to be, in greater or lesser measure, dangerous. The innate feeling, therefore, behind the thought of tolerance, in religion, is one of unmistakable Pharisaism.

When the capacity for tolerance has reached its expression in the exercise of toleration; when the tolerant religionist has by sufferance permitted the existence and observance of some other creed than his own, the mental state of the full-blown Pharisee has been reached. There is the pride of superiority combined with the haughty spirit which is developed through the exercise of that superiority—mingled with, what is the necessary concomitant of haughtiness, contempt for the tolerated. Such a condition of mind as this necessitates hypocrisy. In order to maintain the assumption which has been made, virtues which are not possessed must be assumed, and the consummate flower of the highest and most perfect hypocrisy is reached. In that expression the mental state of the religionist who professes tolerance is summed up,—hypocrisy. So sublimely self-assured is this hypocrisy that it is wont to flaunt itself as the noblest and highest virtue of those individuals who profess its form of so-called Christianity, and of those people who constitute what it calls "Christian nations."

Do these words express Christian principle? Are the sentiments which they embody such as characterise Christian people? Do not these words express principles and sentiments held by a false Christianity? They most certainly do. No Christian man will assume to tolerate, or not to tolerate; that is not his sphere. His place is to carry the message of the gospel to men, whether they receive it or deny it, and leave the rest with God, forbearing to judge lest he himself be judged. He who tolerates his neighbour must necessarily judge his neighbour, and that is contrary to the express command, "Judge not!" No Christian will say to his brother, "I am better than thou." He knows that man cannot read the heart; and discrimination which requires that the heart of man shall be read is a prerogative of God.

Those who exalt themselves, and justify themselves in their own eyes and before men, will surely be abased, for God knows the hearts of all. It is such as these which are described in that scripture which speaks of "certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." It is one of the first principles of the Christianity which Christ taught to love one's neighbour as oneself, but tolerance and toleration, are words expressive of the very *opposite* principle,

—selfishness and discrimination against one's neighbour.

It is a cardinal principle of biblical doctrine that all men are equal in the sight of God, and that he is no respecter of persons, but the doctrine of toleration supposes that he who assumes to tolerate is superior, in the sight of God, to his fellows, and that Divine partiality has singled him out to be the instrument through which God's will is to be expressed and enforced upon earth. And the supposition of tolerance is, that this recipient of Divine favour is so fully possessed of the vicegerency of God upon earth that he acts under the seal and signet ring of Divinity and by virtue of delegated omnipotence speaks and acts for God, and among his fellows has the power and authority of God, and is God. He then, who assumes to tolerate, is guilty of the assumption of Divine right and is a pretender to the throne of God. This is not an expression of the principles or sentiments of Christianity but of its great antagonist, the "mystery of iniquity." At first the possession of a spirit of toleration and the exercise of toleration is claimed as a virtue; this is but a cloak to hide the iniquity which is to follow, when under the plea that the time has come when "toleration ceases to be a virtue," fanaticism, bigotry and religious prejudice run riot, and he who takes his neighbour's property or his neighbour's life, in the name of religion, thinks he does God service.

W. H. MCKEE.

THE POWER OF APPETITE.

GOD designed that the appetite should be man's servant. When controlled by the moral and intellectual powers, it is one of God's blessed gifts; but when it becomes master, it is a debasing tyrant, crushing out of man that which is noble and godlike.

We go back in imagination over long ages, until we stand amid the glories of Eden before sin entered, and there we meet the painful fact that one of the weakest points in the character of Adam and Eve, while in all the perfection of manhood and womanhood, was the appetite. Their failure to exercise self-control upon this point—together with their curiosity and ambition—led to their fall. As the consequent moral darkness and downward tendency increased with each successive generation, the reign of appetite became more debasing and supreme. If appetite could move our first parents to an act of base disobedience, what must be its power over men and women of the nineteenth century, in whose physical, mental, and moral nature the taint of the fall still exists, with all the aggravations which have been acquired since Adam and Eve passed out of the gate of Paradise?

It is true that among the patriarchs and prophets were men who walked with God, and were the masters, not the slaves, of appetite,—like Daniel and his friends, who refused to defile themselves with the king's meat and wine. The apostles treat of Christian temperance in a most pointed manner. The Apostle Paul says that "every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things," and then adds, by way of application to the Christian life, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away."

We live in an age remarkable for Bibles, the Sacred Scriptures now being read in about three hundred and fifty languages and dialects; and yet there has probably never been a time when the people of Christian lands have been more completely under the rule of appetite. The gospel is preached everywhere. The present is said to be an age of wonderful light and gospel liberty; but unfortunately, the gospel as too often preached in our time hardly touches the appetites and passions of men. And why should it, when so many of the teachers of religion do not feel called upon to renounce wine and tobacco or to restrain appetite?

Many temperance men, with the waning cause of temperance as it relates to intoxicating drinks on their hands, are feeling that but little can be done in reforming drunkards, or in restraining young men from becoming such, while they indulge in the use of tobacco. The only way to cure men of the love of whisky is to restore the appetite to its natural state. And this can never be done while the common and free use of tobacco, tea, and coffee is continued. The only way to make real temperance men is to teach the people to abandon all unnatural habits, and to use only those things which God designed for the use of man, and these in their natural state, as far as possible.—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene.*

CHARACTER.

INSTEAD of saying that a man is the creature of circumstances, it would be nearer the mark to say that man is the architect of circumstances. Our strength is measured by our plastic power. From the same materials one man builds palaces, another hovels; one warehouses, another villas. Bricks and mortar are mortar and bricks until the architect can make them something else. Thus it is that in the same family in the same circumstances, one man rears a stately edifice, whilst his brother vacillating and incompetent, lives for ever amid ruins. The block of granite which was an obstacle in the pathway of the weak becomes a stepping-stone in the pathway of the strong.—*Carlyle.*



THE HOME.

LITTLE TEACHERS.

Little bird upon the tree,
What is it you say to me?
"Let your lot be what it may,
Keep a cheerful heart, I say."

Little flower, so bright and fair,
Breathe your lesson on the air:
"Be your influence, day by day,
Shed like fragrance round, I say."

Little fly, with silver wing,
Say, what lesson do you bring?
"Soon your life will pass away,
Therefore use it well, I say."

Little sunbeam, shining bright,
Teach me something by your light;
"Be you genial, blithe, and gay,
Gladdening all around, I say."

All things that on earth I see
Seem to have a voice for me;
Ceaselessly, by night and day,
"Learn the truth we teach," they say.

—Selected.

PRAYING CHILDREN.

I REMEMBER a man who enlisted in the war, and left a wife and two children, and the wife was not in good health. One cold day in November, in the first year of the war, the news came that he was shot in battle, and the mother was in great sorrow. Soon after, the landlord came round for his rent, and she told him her trouble, and said she would not be able to pay the rent so regularly as before, as she had only her needle by which she could obtain a livelihood; sewing machines were just coming in then, but as she could not buy one, she had a very poor chance. The man was a heartless wretch, and he said that if she did not pay the rent regularly he would turn her out. After he went away the mother began to weep. Her little child, not quite five, came up to her and said:

"Mamma, is not God very rich?"

"Yes, my child."

"Can't God take care of us?"

"Yes."

"Then what makes you cry? Mayn't I go and ask Him?"

The mother said she might, if she liked. The little child knelt at her cradle-bed, where the mother taught her to pray; and the mother told me the child never looked so sweet. She stood weeping over her misfortunes, and the little child knelt down and said, "O Lord, you have given and have taken away my dear father, and

the landlord says he will turn us out of doors, and my mamma has no money; won't you please lend us a little house to live in?"

And then she came out to her mother, and said, "Mamma, don't weep. Jesus will take care of us. I know He will, for I have asked Him."

It is upwards of twenty years ago, and that mother has never paid any rent from that day to this. A beautiful cottage was provided for her and her two children, and she has lived there without paying any rent. When the fire swept over Chicago and burnt up her house, a second little home was put up for her, and there she is.

Another incident connected with the same family. They heard I was going to the army a few weeks after they were provided for, and the mother came to me with her two little children, and they brought down all the money they had, some pennies which they had been putting away in a little bank, or at least the elder one, and it was like the widow's mite. I thought at first I could not take the money; but then I thought it is God who has prompted them to give it. They wanted me to take it down into the army and buy a Bible, and give it to a soldier; and to tell the soldier who got it that the children who gave it were going to pray for him as they used to pray for their father. They wanted some soldier to pray for—God bless such children! I bought two Bibles, and one night I was preaching, and had a lot of men hearing me, and I told them this story, and holding one of the Bibles, I said, "If there is a man here who has the courage, the moral courage, who is not a Christian, to rise and take this Bible, and have the prayers of these two fatherless children to follow him through the war, let him step forward."

To my surprise sixteen men sprang to their feet, moved forward, and knelt around me, and it seemed as if heaven and earth came together. The prayers of those little children had followed the Bibles. I am so thankful that we have a God who hears and answers prayer. —D. L. Moody.

A YOUNG SWISS HERO.

A FEW years ago the traveller through Switzerland might have seen a charming little village, now, alas! no longer in existence. A fire broke out one day, and in a few hours the quaint little frame houses were entirely destroyed. The poor peasants ran about wringing their hands and weeping over their lost homes and the bones of the burned cattle.

One poor man was in greater trouble than his neighbours even. True, his home and cows were gone, but so, also, was his son, a bright boy of six or seven years. He wept and refused to hear any words of comfort. He spent

the night wandering sorrowfully among the ruins, while his acquaintances had taken refuge in the neighbouring villages.

Just as daylight came, however, he heard a well-known sound, and, looking up, he saw his favourite cow leading the herd, and coming directly after them was his bright-eyed little boy,

"Oh, my son! my son!" he cried, "are you really alive?"

"Why, yes, father. When I saw the fire, I ran to get our cows away to the pasture lands."

"You are a hero, my boy," the father exclaimed.

But the boy said: "Oh, no! A hero is one who does some wonderful deed. I led the cows away because they were in danger, and I knew it was the right thing to do."

"Ah!" cried the father, "he who does the right thing at the right time is a hero."—*The Mid-Continent.*

THE TRADES OF ANIMALS.

BEEES are geometricians. Their cells are so constructed as, with the least quantity of material, to have the largest-sized spaces and least possible loss of interstice. So also is the antlion. His funnel-shaped trap is exactly correct in its conformation, as if it had been made by the most skilful artist of our species, with the aid of the best instruments. The mole is a meteorologist. The bird called the nine-killer is an arithmetician; so also is the crow, the wild turkey, and some other birds. The torpedo, the ray, and the electric eel, are electricians. The nautilus is a navigator. He raises and lowers his sail, casts and weighs anchor, and performs other nautical evolutions. Whole tribes of birds are musicians. The beaver is an architect, builder, and woodcutter—he cuts down trees and erects houses and dams. The marmot is a civil engineer; he not only builds houses, but constructs aqueducts, and drains to keep them dry.

The white ants maintain a regular army of soldiers. The East India ants are horticulturists; they make mushrooms, upon which they feed their young. Wasps are paper manufacturers. Caterpillars are silk spinners. The bird *Ploceus texor* is a weaver; he weaves a web to make his nest. The Primia is a tailor; he sows the leaves together to make his nest. The squirrel is a ferryman; with a chip or piece of bark for a boat, and his tail for a sail, he crosses a stream. Dogs, wolves, jackals, and many others, are hunters. The black bear and heron are fishermen. The ants have regular day labourers. The monkey is a rope-dancer.—*The News.*

"THE price of wisdom is above rubies."

MABEL'S VICTORY.

THE leaves on the trees were turning red and gold. The air was a little cool, but the sun shone brightly, and the birds were singing in the branches overhead. It seemed just the day for a frolic.

Mabel Clark and her two favourite friends, Kate and Fannie, were on their way home from school. They were planning for a good play on the green.

Kate and Fannie ran home to get permission to be out for an hour, and Mabel hastened in through the long garden, for the same purpose.

Before she was half way up the garden walk she saw her mother standing at the door with her hat and gloves on, and before she could even put her request she heard mother saying: "I am so glad; my dear, that you have come home, I have just learned that poor Mrs. Brown is very ill, and I want to go and take her some fruit, and this bunch of flowers, and see what I can do to make her comfortable; baby has just gone to sleep, and if you will watch him till I come back I shall be so glad."

A great many things passed through Mabel's mind while her mother was speaking; at first she wanted to say, "O mamma, I want to play;" then she felt like crying, and then she remembered her morning text, which said, "Do all things without murmuring and disputing."

She remembered, too, how she had

prayed God to help her to do what the verse said, and again she raised her heart to God in a silent little prayer; she only said, "Dear Jesus, help me," but Jesus is very near, and ready to help whenever we ask Him, so by the time her mother stopped speaking, she was ready to answer quite cheerfully, "Yes, mother, I will take the best of care of baby."

She did not say one word about her

Mabel went into the house; the window was open and she could hear a dear little bird chirping just outside. There was a large bouquet of chrysanthemums in the window. Mabel laid her cheek against a large white one for a moment; she said, "Jesus speaks to me through His flowers, as well as through His word."

She hung her hat and little shawl on its accustomed peg, then peeped into

the cradle to see that baby was all right; she next brought her own little baby, her dolly, and its pretty cradle, and placed them on the window seat.

Very soon she was perched up beside them with her sewing, just as you see her in the picture. She was making a new white pinafore for Miss Dolly, and this would be just the time to finish it.

Pussy seemed to understand the matter, for she came and rubbed against Mabel, and purred as if to say, "I have come to keep you company;" and then she went and lay down at a little distance on the floor. Mabel spent a very happy time. She took the stitches with great care. She thought a great deal, too, of how



own plans, but put up a pair of smiling lips for mother's kiss, and then stood and watched her pass beyond the garden gate.

Just then Kate and Fannie came running in full of glee; Mabel told them she was going to take care of dear little Arthur, and so could not come out to play. They were very sorry, but soon ran away to their games.

Jesus had helped her to do as her mother wished without murmuring. He must have been *very near* to hear her prayer so quickly, even when she did not say it out loud. And if He could *hear* so quickly, surely He could *see* her too. And then she remembered another verse that says, "Thou God seest me," and she felt more than ever that she wanted to take the stitches

very carefully, not only so dolly would look nice, but because she wanted to please the dear Lord who could see all that she did.

How quickly the time passed away, she had just finished the little pinafore and was tying the sash behind, when she heard the door open, and in walked mother.

It was not till after tea, when all was nice and quiet, that Mabel had a chance for a long talk with her mother. She told her mamma all about the plan that she and her little friends had made on the way home from school, of the struggle between her wish to please herself and her wish to please her mother. She spoke, too, of how her morning text had come to her mind just then, and seemed to her like the voice of Jesus speaking to her, and of the little prayer, and the help that came so quickly, in answer to it.

Mrs. Clark was so glad and happy for the victory that her little daughter had gained through faith in Jesus.

She suggested that Mabel should take for her verse the next day the text, "Lo, I am with you always."

Mabel felt sure that it would help her to know that Jesus was with her all the time, and as her mother tucked her into bed that night and gave her a good night kiss, she felt that this had been the happiest day of her life.

AUNT JENNIE.

AN INCREASING APPETITE.

It has been well said that there is one business in which the demand does not create the supply, but the supply the demand. That business is the business of selling and buying liquor.

The present year has been one of "hard times." Our people have bought fewer clothes, fewer hats, fewer boots and shoes, fewer books, fewer houses and lots than usual, on this account. But it does not appear that they have bought less beer on account of the stringency in the money market. On the contrary, they have bought more.

Statistics show that the beer business is increasing in this country at such a rate that the consumption is doubled every eight years. The increase of the supply increases the demand.

In 1875, something more than eight million barrels of beer were consumed in the United States. This seemed an appalling amount. But last year the people drank more than thirty-one million barrels; and in this year of "hard times" the consumption is nearly thirty-four million barrels.

At the present rate of increase, the consumption of beer will, in eight years more, be a barrel per capita per year for the whole United States. That is to say, an average of a barrel of beer for every man, woman and child in the country will be consumed in a year's time.

What a fearful waste this increasing appetite for a mischievous drink represents! Unchecked by hard times, it is itself one of the potent causes of hard times.—*Youth's Companion*.

A SENSIBLE DRIVER.

ONE evening in New York the driver of a street car, with a heavy load of passengers, stopped his horses just before reaching Grand Street, hitched the lines tight, ran over to a fruit stand and bought a couple of rosy apples. Returning to his horses, he gave each of them an apple, which the animals munched with great apparent relish. Then jumping on the platform he shook the lines loose, and the horses started off in a way that made the standing passengers grip the strans.

To a passenger on the front platform the driver said that as a matter of fact and not sentiment one apple was worth more than all the whips in New York in getting satisfactory work from the horses. "I never use a whip on any horse," he said. "I drive six horses a day, and give each one an apple, and they seem to look forward to the treat. The scheme cures balky and obstinate horses, and livens up lazy or tired horses wonderfully." The way the horses covered the ground and did their work generallo seemed to bear out his theory. They soon made up for the time lost by the stop, and kept on like a fresh team.—*New York Sun*.

Interesting Items.

—The health of Pope Leo is said to be causing anxiety at the Vatican.

—Serious Socialist riots have been reported from Vienna, collisions having occurred between the Socialists and the police, in which many were injured.

—The *Lucania* has accomplished the voyage from Queenstown to New York in 5 days 12 hours and 47 minutes, beating the *Campania's* outward voyage by 36 minutes.

—According to a telegram received at Lisbon from Buenos Ayres, a Brazilian insurgent warship has sunk a government transport, causing the loss of some 1,100 lives.

—Vesuvius is at present in a state of activity, and streams of lava are distinctly visible at night. The Prince of Naples has left for the mountain, to obtain a better view of the grand spectacle.

—Nov. 7, elections were held in several states of the American republic, including New York, New Jersey, Iowa, Ohio, and Kansas. In all of the latter the Republican party secured a sweeping victory.

—A vessel flying the American flag has been fired on at a Honduras port, owing to the refusal of the captain to deliver up General Bonilla, who led the recent revolt in Honduras, and who was a passenger on board.

—At Delphi a slab of marble has been discovered bearing a hymn to Apollo, with musical characters engraved over each syllable. This is the only record yet found that music was used by the ancient Greeks centuries before Christ.

—A band of rebel Arnauts from Macedonia is said to have attacked and captured the town of Prizrend, the Turkish garrison retreating into the citadel. The Arnauts looted shops and houses, and have demanded the evacuation of the citadel.

—The pension list of the United States is made up of 966,012 names, and it records an annual disbursement of £31,348,093, exclusive of expenses.

—Mortality in London from diphtheria and scarlet fever is on the increase, the patients in the hospitals suffering from the latter being close upon 3,000, and there are 111 cases of small-pox under treatment on the hospital ships lying in the Thames.

—The position of affairs in connection with the coal lock-out remains unchanged. Meetings of the men have been held in various districts, and resolutions passed condemnatory of the owners' proposals. Great distress continues to prevail, especially in Lancashire.

—Only 1,600,000 of the half-dollar souvenir coins given by Congress to the World's Fair have been sold, and 2,000,000 have been returned to the Treasury with the request that they be withheld from circulation, as the Fair Directory hope to realise a premium upon the 1,400,000 that are still in their hands.

—A Cabinet crisis has occurred in Greece owing to the defeat of the Ministerial candidate for the Vice-Presidency of the Chamber. The Premier at once waited upon the king, and tendered the resignation of the Cabinet. This has since been accepted, and M. Tricoupis has been charged to form a Ministry.

—Cargoes of mummies are being shipped from Egypt and Palestine to New York to be used as fertiliser. The embalming represents the theoretical phase of the ancient Egyptian faith, and the use now made of the bodies, the practical phase of that faith, which it remained for the nineteenth century to discover.

—The *Chronicle's* correspondent telegraphs that the Emperor Francis Joseph has given his assent to the introduction into the Diet of a Bill establishing obligatory civil marriage. Strenuous efforts have been made by the clerical party to induce the Emperor to withhold his sanction. The Cabinet crisis in Austria still continues.

—During a performance in a Barcelona theatre two bombs were thrown from the gallery into the midst of the stalls in the arena. Only one exploded, but fifteen persons were killed on the spot, many being injured. It has since been discovered that there were two more unexploded bombs in the theatre. The supposed author of the crime has been arrested.

—A correspondent of the Paris *Temps* states that the Dahomeyan envoys will inform the French Government that King Behanzin is anxious to conclude a treaty of peace on the basis of recognising French rights over Kotonu and Port Novo, and agreeing to the presence of French troops in certain specified places, while the King pledges himself to abolish human sacrifices and predatory raids.

—Continued skirmishes are reported as taking place between the Moors and Spaniards at Melilla. The Sultan of Morocco, however, on learning of the attacks of the Riffs Arabs upon Melilla, at once addressed a Note to the Spanish Minister at Tangier expressing his regret, and announcing his intention of dispatching a force to Melilla to chastise the Riffs, and offering Spain every satisfaction for the aggression.

—There has been further fighting with the Matabele on the part of the chartered Company's columns. Dr. Jameson reports defeating a Matabele force numbering 7,000, of whom 1,000 were killed and wounded. The Matabele, he says, burnt Buluwayo on the approach of the British. Dr. Jameson has sent an ultimatum from Buluwayo to Lobengula asking him to come in on a guarantee of good treatment, in order to prevent further loss of life.

—A vessel loaded with dynamite and petroleum exploded Nov 3, in the harbour of Santander, Spain, wrecking surrounding ships and the greater portion of the town, and setting the latter on fire. The quay, upon which a large crowd had gathered to watch the fire, was wrecked, and its occupants thrown into the water, with fearful loss of life,—the estimate varying from 300 to 1,000. It is stated that the town has been virtually abandoned by its inhabitants, who are mostly encamped in adjoining hamlets. All business is at a standstill, the civil and military authorities alone remaining to prevent the town being pillaged. Owing to the horrifying spectacle presented by the bodies when recovered from the harbour, the work is only carried on at night.

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The Present Truth.

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

LONDON, NOVEMBER 16, 1893.

FOR TERMS, SEE FIRST PAGE.

"AND when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren," etc. Acts xv. 7. No dispute was ever worthy of being recorded in the Bible. But when the Holy Spirit was given an opportunity of speaking, "Peter rose up," and what he said was recorded and has come down to us. A dispute never settled anything, either in the Church or out of it.

WE have just received the tenth annual report of the "London Tram-Car and Omnibus Scripture text Mission." The aim of this mission is to place Scripture texts in conspicuous positions in every tramcar and omnibus in London. It is a laudable aim, for no one can tell how much some tempted or discouraged soul may be helped in an emergency by having his eyes light on some word from the Lord. There is power in the word, and these texts cannot fail to do some good when left to tell their own story. Unfortunately lack of funds has limited the work, so that only about one-seventh of the cars and omnibuses have a text in them. Anyone wishing to assist, or to receive further information, should send to L. Newbery, Esq., or Mrs E. S. Woods, 1, King Edward St, London, E.C.

HERE is an item which shows the perfection of Church and State union in Russia:—

Owing to the spread of dissent in the Russian Army, M. Pobiedonostzeff has raised the question as to whether it is advisable to allow Nonconformists to attain even non-commissioned rank, as in the opinion of the Holy Synod such persons may have a pernicious moral and religious influence on the rank and file, and especially on recruits. In consequence of this inquiry the Minister of War has informed the Procurator of the Holy Synod that soldiers belonging to dissenting sects will not, in any case, be promoted.

There was a time when Christians would lay down their lives rather than bear arms to take the lives of their fellow-men. Perhaps that time has not yet passed; but the evil genius of Constantine effected such a change that professed Christians were willing to serve in his army, and now we see that his policy has borne such fruit in Russia that a man must have a certifi-

cate of "orthodoxy" before he can be allowed to engage in the work of killing people! That is true national religion.

No opportunity is neglected by Roman Catholics to impress upon the minds of people the idea that the Pope of Rome is the only one who can solve all the difficult problems of the day, and maintain peace on earth. By and by the majority of people will believe it, and will render allegiance to the Papacy, as is predicted in the prophecy. The days of "speaking great things and blasphemies" are not yet past, as will be seen by the following extract from a report in the *Catholic Times*, of a lecture by a Catholic priest:—

It is because of the overthrow of the Catholic Church in this country that we have workhouses, and all those people who are unemployed or who dare not work. The State, no doubt, can do much for the amelioration of the people, but if we are to find a remedy we must go to the root of things. There is no power, my dear friends, that can control the intellect and the heart of man but that of Leo XIII., who has sent forth that glorious Encyclical on Labour.

The "man of sin" still sits in the temple of God, "setting himself forth as God."

THE secret of the slaughter of the Matabele by the troops in the employ of the chartered company of South Africa, is let out in the following extract from a report from the seat of the massacres:—

The shrewd Colonists who form the bulk of our fighting force are delighted with Matabeleland. The country has quite justified its reputation. It is full of reefs rich in gold, and the pasture is described as splendid. Consequently our men have gone to stay—that, at any rate, is the opinion of the men who have sent the news and of every Colonist here.

The march of "Christian civilisation" is a very unfortunate thing for savages who chance to have valuable land.

LAST week we noticed the Federation of churches in Hampshire. The following from the *Christian World* shows that religious combination for political purposes is the order of the day:—

"Organise, organise!" is the note of modern Nonconformity. While Anglicans are discussing impossible schemes of union, the Free Churches are themselves actually uniting. The Baptists and Congregationalists of Yorkshire have just given another illustration of this by forming "A Civil Rights Joint Committee," and they commend their example to their brethren in all the other English counties. In a circular which they have just issued they express their conviction that "some method ought to be adopted by which the influence of Nonconformity might be brought to bear directly on public questions." They say that the annual assemblies are too overcrowded with necessary business to have time for the adequate discussion of political questions. The Yorkshire

Joint Committee consists of twenty representative men, including several M. P.s. If similar united Vigilance Committees are formed throughout the country, the rural despotism of squire and parson will find its operations followed up in a way extremely uncomfortable to those whilom potentates, while distinctly helpful to the cause of civil and religious liberty.

There is the gravest danger in such combinations,—danger no less to the bodies forming the combination than to people in general. To the bodies themselves there is the loss of spiritual power, and to the people at large there is the pressure of religious despotism. The preaching of the pure Gospel alone, is the only legitimate way in which Christians can bring their influence to bear on public questions. As to the possibility of helping the cause of religious liberty by any sort of political action, we shall, the Lord willing, have something to say next week.

ALTHOUGH the Czar takes pains to guard his soldiers from the contaminating influence of those who worship God after the way which he calls heresy, it appears that something more than laws and regulations is needed to bind his subjects to him. The Toulon correspondent of the *Times* says that as soon as the Russian sailors were allowed to go ashore, on the occasion of the French reception of the Russian fleet, both officers and men made their way to the booksellers' shops, to lay in a stock of literature prohibited in Russia, such as Russian translations of treatises on democracy, socialism, etc, which the enterprising French bookseller, with rare knowledge of human nature, had specially procured from Geneva.

SOME beer given by a landowner to the soldiers during the recent Berkshire manoeuvres was issued during one march to the extent of one pint per man. In reference to this Sir Evelyn Wood says: "The medical officers advise me, and I am satisfied, that although the stimulant of the beer produced an apparent beneficial effect for about an hour, it was manifest, later, that the men would have marched better without it."

That is always the effect of a mere stimulant. If the beer had been food, the men would have marched even better an hour after taking it than at the first. The incident shows that beer, instead of giving strength, actually diminishes it. And so we must consider the enormous amount of beer consumed as just so great a waste of strength. If it were merely a question of money wasted, it would be bad enough, but when the money is spent for that which not only is not bread, but diminishes the strength, the evil is beyond computation.