

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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"HE whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." John iii. 34. This admits of no exception. Of course it primarily applies to Christ, but also to all whom He sends to teach. "As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you," are His words. This, then, is the test of a teacher sent from God. If He speaks only the words of God, he has Divine authority; if he speaks his own words, he is not from God.

EVERY religious teacher should remember these words. He has no right to speak from his own wisdom. Even of the Holy Spirit it is said, "He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak." The teacher therefore has nothing to do with opinions. He must not put forth his own opinions, even though he be asked for them. Even though he expressly declares that it is only his own opinion, somebody will take it as authority, and thus he leads men to trust in man, instead of in God. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." 1 Peter iv. 11.

ON the other hand, there is a responsibility resting on the hearers. "Take heed how ye hear," is the command of Christ. When any one receives God's message from one of His servants, he is to receive it as the word of God, and not of man. See 1 Thess.

ii. 13. "But how are we to know that it is the word of God?" By the word itself. You are to become acquainted with the voice of the Lord. Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of Mine." John x. 14. Do you ask how you are to get this acquaintance with Him? The answer is, Talk with Him. Meditate in His word, and ask and receive the promise of the Spirit.

THOSE who have learned God, and have submitted to the Spirit, are thus addressed: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." 1 John ii. 20, 27. This is in accordance with the promise of the new covenant, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know Me, from the least to the greatest."

THIS cannot possibly be intended as a depreciation of teachers, because God has set teachers in the church. See 1 Cor. xii. 28. But the teachers whom He sends are to speak His words, and therefore their teaching is not the teaching of man. Although men know the Lord, that does not signify that there is no possibility of their learning anything more. See Col. i. 9, 10. The teachers whom He sends speak His words to men, in order that those who do not know the Lord, may become acquainted with Him, and that those who do know Him, may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

IT is possible for a man to hear the words of God, and to receive them as the words of man. Then they do him no good, no matter how much he remembers. What is the evidence that one has received the word of the

Lord as the word of man?—Simply this, that he connects the light and knowledge which he has received, with the man who uttered the words. When a man says, "Brother So-and-So says," etc., that shows that God has not taught him the truth which he may have a feeble hold of. He has taken it as from man. But when the truth of God, uttered by man, comes to him as a revelation from God Himself, so that he forgets the agent, and feels that God has spoken to him directly, then he knows the truth. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," and let him who listens hear as if God did beseech him by the speaker.

BETTER THAN MIRACLES.

JESUS said to His disciples: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father." John xiv. 12.

IT is not to be wondered at that the question is often asked, What are these greater works? and why do we not see them performed by the followers of Christ? It is not possible for man to tell what the greater works are, for nobody can conceive of any greater works than Jesus did: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Matt. xi. 5.

THE statement that is sometimes made, that the promise of Jesus is fulfilled in the great numbers that have accepted the Gospel through the preaching of His followers, does not meet the case. While conversions are included in the promise, miracles of healing, and even of raising the dead, cannot be excluded; for they were all among the works which Christ did.

That promise has not yet been fulfilled, except for a brief period in the days of the apostles. But a fulfilment of it at one time does not exhaust it, because it is unlimited. "He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do."

PERHAPS we shall find the complete answer to the question why miracles are not now wrought, by considering a case of failure, in contrast with the spirit which Jesus manifested in performing His mighty works. When Philip was preaching in Samaria, he performed some wonderful miracles, and among those who believed in consequence was one Simon, who had bewitched the people with his sorcery, "giving out that himself was some great one." He "continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done." Finally Peter and John came, and laid their hands on the people, who received the Holy Ghost. This caused Simon to wonder the more, and he offered the apostles money, saying, "Give me this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right with God." See Acts viii. 6-21.

WHAT was the trouble with Simon? It was *self*. The fact that he was willing to give money, in order to get power to bestow the Holy Spirit, shows that he wanted to make money out of it. Pecuniary gain, and self-glorification were the motives that prompted his desire for the Holy Spirit's power. He doubtless was not fully conscious of all this, but persuaded himself that his object was to do good; "for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it." And Simon's heart was not right with God.

WE see from this that the power of the Holy Spirit cannot be used for selfish ends, and therefore it cannot be given where there is a possibility that the one to whom it is given will become exalted because of it, and take honour to himself. It is the Spirit and power of God, and if men should take any of the glory of the power to themselves, they would be putting themselves in the place of God; and then people would be led astray, because they would follow a sinful man, instead of God.

Now note a peculiarity of Jesus. "And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all, and charged them that they should not make Him known." Matt. xii. 16. So when He raised the ruler's daughter from the dead, "He charged them straitly that no man should know it." Mark v. 43. Also when He healed the man full of leprosy, "He charged him to tell no man." Luke iv. 14. And so we find that He did on other occasions. In no case do we find Him telling anybody to advertise Him through His miracles, except in the case of the demoniac of Gadara, and then He was about to leave the country because the people would not allow Him to stay.

How many religious teachers are there in these days, who would pursue a similar course under the same circumstances? In these days any event of importance is heralded far and wide. Sometimes minor matters are magnified into vast proportions, so as to have a good report. If by any means a miracle of healing should be performed, the probability is that the papers would fairly groan with accounts of it.

OF course in all this there would not be any conscious egotism, or desire to make self prominent. No doubt it would be expressly stated that the glory was all due to the Lord. The object would be to win converts to the faith. Nevertheless it would not be the way Jesus did; and as long as there is a spirit in men, different from the Spirit of Christ, they will not be able to do the things that He did. We may say that times have changed, but the fact remains that the truth of God has not changed, and the conditions on which the Spirit and power of God are given, have not changed.

LET it be remembered that Jesus never performed any miracles merely for show. Every one was for the purpose of relieving pressing need. He did them because with His sympathising nature, and the power that He had, they were the most natural things in the world for Him to do. In doing them His whole thought was for others, and not for Himself. "Said He, 'I seek not Mine own glory.'" John viii. 50.

NEITHER were Christ's miracles wrought for the purpose of winning converts, because there had to be belief before miracles could be performed. We read of His own country, that "He did not many mighty works there

because of their unbelief." Matt. xiii. 58. His words and His very presence were what won His real disciples. Remember that His most intimate disciples, those who followed Him the most steadfastly, and who continued His disciples after His ascension,—followed Him before they saw any miracles. When many professed believers on Him left Him the very next day after one of His most wonderful miracles, and He said to the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answered for the twelve, making no reference to His miracles, but saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." John vi. 66-69. It was His words that held them to Him. It was His words that charmed the soldiers who were sent to take Him. "Never man spake like this Man."

THIS is why Jesus did not want to have His miracles advertised. He did not want people to follow Him from selfish motives, nor out of mere curiosity. Of course they could not be concealed, yet they were wrought because of pure love for the needy, and not for the purpose of making converts. He wished, as He does still, people to follow Him because they love Him.

IN this we see that there is something far better than the power to work miracles. It is the meek and quiet spirit of Jesus. The ability to work miracles is inferior in importance to the power to bring to people the words of God. See 1 Cor. xii. 28. Jesus had "emptied Himself," and God worked through Him, so that when miracles were performed, the people "glorified God." So God can work now only through those who are wholly emptied of self, having the mind of Christ in them. Now, as in the days of Simon the sorcerer, those who desire the power to work miracles, will be the very ones who will not receive it.

WE see in Samson a specimen of the spirit that will be manifested by those through whom the Lord works mightily. "A young lion roared against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand; but he told not his father or his mother what he had done." Judges xiv. 6. So we have in the twenty-fifth of Matthew the difference between the false and the true followers of Jesus. The one

tell of the wonderful things that they have done, while the true followers are unconscious of the fact that they have done anything of value. And so we may conclude that when the disciples of Jesus do the "greater works" of which He spoke, they will not be conscious of the fact that they are doing anything extraordinary.

THEREFORE instead of wondering why miracles are not done, and vainly longing for the power to do them, the right thing to do is to hunger and thirst after righteousness; to seek to know the will of God, and to study His word until its Spirit permeates the soul. To have the power to speak a word in season to him that is weary, just as Jesus did, is the thing most to be desired. And that can be done only by those who speak the words of God as He did. Then when self is wholly gone, and the individual is completely surrendered to the Lord, and living by every word that proceeds out of His mouth, seeking not his own, but only the glory of God, and willing that God shall do whatsoever He wishes with him, no matter how humble the task, —then will the lowliest services of love be transformed by the power of God into the most wonderful works, and men will praise the Lord for His goodness.

CONTENDING WITH TRUTH.

WHEN the minions of Rome came one day to the home of the Reformer Wycliffe, who was then prostrated upon what was supposed to be his death-bed, and looked upon him with exultation over the prospect of his early decease, the old man raised himself upon his bed and confronting his enemies, exclaimed, "With whom do you think you are contending? with a poor, feeble, worn-out man, tottering upon the brink of the grave? No; but with truth; truth, which is mightier than you, and will one day vanquish you!"

In these words the Reformer stated a principle that has been lost sight of by the world at large, but is none the less true for failing to obtain popular recognition. Truth is mightier than all its foes. When men fight against Christianity, they are not contending with men, but with principles; and their efforts are entirely useless against those. They can imprison a man; they can burn him at the stake; but they cannot imprison or burn a principle of truth. The men who advocate them die, but the principles live on. The Reformers died; but the Reforma-

tion continued on, in spite of the utmost efforts of all its foes, and is moving majestically forward to-day, clothed in an ever-brightening panoply of truth, to a near and glorious triumph.

The reason is that it has in it the power of the word of God, which is the power of omnipotence. If we stand in the way of this truth, our efforts will avail nothing, and we ourselves shall be overwhelmed beneath it; but it comes to us not for this purpose, but that we may take refuge upon it. The word of God cannot be shaken. Jesus said, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock." Matt. vii. 24, 25.

Here is offered to every one a sure foundation. You may take your stand now upon the truth, upon the sayings of Jesus Christ, and know that you stand upon that which is immovable. This is the move which wisdom calls you to make. No matter what your circumstances may be, no matter what difficulties may rise up against you, they cannot shake you if your feet are planted upon the foundation of God's word. The truth will triumph, and those who rest upon it will triumph with it. Will you build upon the rock, or upon the sand?

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY BY LAW.

A FEW days since the writer was very much interested in reading the story of the experience of an agent of the Bible Society in South America. It told of narrow escapes from Roman Catholic mobs, and of the power of the preaching of the pure Gospel, to remove prejudice. In the last paragraph of the article there occurred this statement: "No less a personage than the public school teacher came to warn me that, not bonds and imprisonment (we have religious liberty by law), but death at the hands of a mob awaited me if I did not desist from entering Orobe Grande."

This started a train of thought. What is religious liberty? and is it something which can be secured to people by law? Is its existence doubtful if it be not upheld by law? and can oppressive laws deprive people of it? The answers to the last three questions depend upon the answer to the first.

According to the popular idea of religious liberty, the last three questions must be answered in the affirmative; but there is at least a strong probability that the popular idea of the matter is wrong. How can we find out the true definition?

A question concerning religious liberty is one that pertains to religion; and where should we go for information concerning religion, except to the Bible? There we learn that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James i. 27.

How can one keep himself "unspotted from the world"?—Again we read the answer, in the statement that the Lord Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." Gal. i. 4. Therefore true religion is the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are very many kinds of religion in the world, but only one true religion. That is not a form, but a life. It consists not in a creed and ceremonies, but in living faith in Christ. The word "religion" is not synonymous with "Christianity," but true religion is. It promises what no other religion does, and fulfils its promises. It alone gives salvation. Besides the name of Jesus, "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." There is not salvation in any other. Acts iv. 12. And this salvation is not merely something promised for the future, but is a present reality. It is deliverance "from this present evil world," and that means deliverance from the evil of this present world. See John xvii. 15.

The word "deliverance" means freedom. To deliver is to free. Therefore we find that the religion of Jesus Christ is a religion of freedom. Read the words of Christ, in the opening of His earthly ministry: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke iv. 18.

Read again what He said to the Jews who followed Him: "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John viii. 31, 32. Then when

the Jews demurred, saying that they were never in bondage, He continued, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." And so the Apostle Peter, speaking of false prophets that were to arise, teaching false religion, said: "While they promise them [that is, their followers] liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." 2 Peter ii. 19.

We have just read the scripture which says that the Spirit of the Lord anointed Jesus to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bound. Now read in 2 Cor. iii. 17: "Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." That means, as well, that where the Spirit of the Lord is not, there is not liberty. If it were otherwise, there would be no point in Christ's work. He came to grant liberty, for the reason that liberty could be obtained from no other source.

We have therefore the answer to our first question. Religious liberty is the possession of the Spirit of the Lord. The others are easily answered. Can religious liberty be secured by law?—Not unless the Holy Spirit can be secured by law. What saith the Scripture?—"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John iii. 8. The Spirit of God is subject to no man, nor to the will of any man. God is not a subject; He is the King of kings; and therefore His Spirit cannot be controlled by any human power. The Spirit can no more be affected by human laws than the north wind can by legal enactment be made to blow from the south. Therefore since religious liberty is obtained only through the Spirit, it is evident that religious liberty is something with which human laws have no more to do than with the blowing of the wind or the shining of the sun.

That which is ordinarily called religious liberty is not religious liberty in any sense of the term. Legal permission to worship in public without molestation, is of precisely the same nature as liberty to open a shop, or to carry on any business without interference. Liberty to think or to believe, is something with which laws can have nothing to do. The slave is as free to think as is his master. Prison bars cannot stop a man from thinking what he pleases, nor can they take

away a man's freedom to believe. Nay, more, they cannot take away a free man's freedom to speak what he will. The apostles spoke in spite of all the laws against them; and their words were with power because of the very liberty which they enjoyed through Christ, which could not be checked by bonds and imprisonment.

That man who depends upon civil law for liberty to believe, is not a free man, even though the law be the most liberal ever known. For the fact that he derives his freedom from the law, shows that if the law were adverse, he would at once lose his liberty; and that shows that his is not the liberty of Christ, for that comes from heaven.

It is evident therefore, that they who think to advance the cause of religious liberty by political action, are really working against it. The very existence of laws concerning religion is a badge of slavery. When men wish a law to "protect" them in the performance of religious duties, or what they conceive to be religious duties, they thereby show that they are slaves to fear. They want a law to help them to do what they have not the power or the courage to do without the support of "public sentiment." "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Tim. i. 7.

"The word of God is not bound," and therefore whosoever has it abiding in him has liberty. Let us "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," and not dishonour Him by intimating that He or His cause depends to any degree whatever on human laws.

CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT AND DESTITUTE CLERGY.

THE *Methodist Times* does not view with satisfaction the condition of things which prevails in those churches where ecclesiastical interests are presided over and controlled by the State. The *Times* says:—

We believe that many of the country clergy are so destitute that they are even depending upon charity. It is to be presumed that the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London and other great dignitaries, lay and clerical, of the established church are aware of these facts. They have long existed and are notorious. Is this the blessed result of the political union between the State and the Church? Is this the ideal community to which the nonconformist churches are invited? Is this the spectacle that is calculated to melt the hearts of infidels, and to commend Christianity to all men as the religion of honesty, disinterestedness, and unselfish devotion?

No; but this is the spectacle that is naturally to be expected wherever a

union of Church and State exists; for such a union substitutes politicalism—if we may be allowed the expression—for that spirituality which should be the controlling power of the church. It leaves open the avenues through which human pride and ambition enter into and debase the life that purports to exemplify Christianity. When the same spirit that controls in the State also rules in the church, it is nothing strange if we see some holders of ecclesiastical benefices living in ease and opulence, while others are dependent on charity, just as seen among office holders in the State. The remedy is a total dissolution of the unholy alliance by which the church is robbed of her spiritual life and power, and a return to Him who is the Fountain of all goodness and whose spirit is that of unselfish regard for the welfare of all men.

CHRISTIANITY AND EQUALITY.

THE equality of all men is a fundamental principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Not that all men are equal physically or intellectually or even morally; but they are equal in that they all stand on a common footing in their relation to their Creator. God is no respecter of persons. They are equal in that they all have the same rights; for rights are God-given. God gave His Son to die for all men, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. John iii. 16. All souls are of equal value in His sight. He paid the same price for one that He did for another.

But while God is no respecter of persons, we find that man, whom He has created, is a respecter of persons. The Majesty of heaven, the Creator and Upholder of all worlds, treats with equal regard the most humble and the most exalted of our race; but puny, finite man presumes to make a distinction among his fellows, and even those who profess to be His followers are often not behind the rest in ignoring the rights of those whom fortune has surrounded with the least favourable circumstances of birth, education, or nationality.

The Matabele savage, for example, although it is his fortune to be born into surroundings and circumstances which cause him to grow up an ignorant, uncivilised denizen of his native wilds, is none the less for that a member of the human family, and possessed of those rights which are inherent in every man by birth. In his relation to God, he stands upon the same footing

as that of his more fortunate fellows in civilised lands. God has no more respect to the person of one than of the other. He gave His Son to die for both alike. And the power of Divine grace will work the same transformation in both, and fit both alike for the inheritance of the children of faith. The body of the ignorant savage, no less than that of his enlightened, civilised brother, may become the temple of the Holy Spirit. Yet the latter presumes to deal with the former as if God had given him no rights whatever, and as if his standing in the sight of God was entirely different from his own. He invades his country, despoils him of his property, kills him if he tries to prevent it, and divides his territory and portions it out among the victors, with no more thought of its native possessors and their rights than as though they were but "the cattle upon a thousand hills." And he does all this in the name of justice; yes, even sometimes in the name of Christianity.

But the principle which actuates him in such work is the very opposite of Christianity. Christianity is unselfish. It makes a man the servant, not the master, of his fellows. It does not prompt a man, when he beholds some wrong, to commit a greater wrong in order to make it right; but it prompts him to go to the wrong doer, not with rifles and Maxim guns, but with the Spirit of Christ, and endeavour to reclaim him from the evil into which he has fallen. It does not palliate a wrong because it is done to one who happens to be uncivilised. It teaches the brotherhood of man, and that each man is his brother's keeper. It puts him under obligation to both Jew and Gentile, not to override and rob and slay the latter, but to bring to him the glad tidings of that gospel which is the power of God unto salvation.

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, and one of the most illustrious followers of Jesus Christ, has left on record for us his own view of himself by declaring himself to be "less than the least of all saints," and "nothing." Eph. iii. 8; 2 Cor. xii. 2. This is the view which every Christian will have of himself when he is living as near to his Lord as was the Apostle Paul. And this is the secret of the realisation of equality among men. This is the only way in which it can ever come. When each one sees himself to be the least of all, no one will put himself above any of his fellows, no matter what may be their race, colour, or the

misfortunes which have dragged them down.

Let it be understood, therefore, that nothing that is not done for the welfare of those who are its recipients, is prompted by the spirit of Christianity, or should have the sanction of Christian men and women.

WAR? OR MURDER?

A GENTLEMAN has written to the *Daily Chronicle* in regard to the slaughter of the Matabele, inquiring whether the English nation is at war with King Lobengula. As a matter of fact, the war is being carried on by the Chartered Company, which wants Matabeleland, and is employing British soldiers to effect the conquest. But the point which the *Chronicle's* correspondent makes is as follows:—

Either we are at war with him, or we are not at war with him. If we are at war with him, then we should declare war against him, and the forces of the Crown should carry on the war. If we are not at war with him, then those engaged in slaughtering his people are engaged in simple murder.

In the above we are able to see the flimsiness of the distinctions that people make in things that do not differ. Thus, the difference between war and murder lies entirely in a proclamation by the Government. If the Government makes the Company's fight its own, then the men engaged in the slaughter are doing a lawful act; but if not, then they are murderers! Isn't it wonderful what a change can be wrought in the moral character of a man's action, by a little piece of paper with a big seal on it?

The idea generally obtains that in an army a man entirely loses his individual responsibility, so that however unjust the war, or whatever atrocities are committed, the "Government" alone is responsible, and the men are individually guiltless. And then the "Government" is an impersonal character, so that no officer of State can be held responsible for murder, no matter how many people are slaughtered at his instigation.

Now all this will appear to be, as it indeed is, the veriest nonsense, when one stops to think. If one man sets upon another, and kills him for his money, he is a murderer. If three or four men are engaged in the work, they are all murderers. There is no question about that in anybody's mind. If those four men, or four times as many men, have drilled themselves so that they can act in concert, and have appointed a leader, and then attack a dozen or more men, and

kill them in order to possess their property, the slayers are still murderers. Suppose now that the men who desire the property of some other people, are so numerous that they are not obliged to act secretly; suppose that they are the majority of any nation, and that the chief men in the nation are the leaders in the affair, wherein does the latter case differ from the first? Manifestly in no particular whatever, save that in the latter instance there are more murderers and more accessories.

It may be said the soldiers do not declare war, and have no personal interest in the matter. That does not relieve them from responsibility. If a man were caught in the act of killing a fellow-man, could he save his neck from the gallows by pleading that somebody else had hired him to commit the deed? Certainly not; both he and the man who hired him, would be counted guilty of murder, and justly so.

The fact is no man in his senses is ever free from personal accountability for his acts. Others may share his guilt, but he cannot shift the responsibility of his acts upon some other person, or upon an impersonal "Government." That which would be murder in one case, cannot be made lawful by being dignified with the title "war."

"I DON'T BELIEVE."

SOME men are very much given to telling what they don't believe. Especially is this so with regard to the statements of Scripture. It is fashionable, even in church circles, to doubt some portions of the word of God, and this tendency of the age is constantly becoming more marked. Its effect upon youthful minds is most disastrous. Many a young man to-day is resting in spiritual apathy, refusing to identify himself with the followers of Christ, because of certain things pertaining to Christianity, or which he fancies pertain to it, which he does not understand, and does not believe to be true. When he thinks of Christianity it is only to think of these doubts. He views it only from a negative side. When these doubts are all cleared away, he will (as he thinks) embrace it. He is patiently waiting for them to be cleared up; but until they are gone he feels justified in remaining where he is.

A course so foolish as this would hardly be taken in anything outside of the realm of our obligations to God. The very worst foundation in the

world to stand on is that of doubt. There is no virtue in doubt; it imparts no wisdom, no strength. No man could accomplish anything in any line of physical or mental achievement, working on a basis of what he did not believe. No; it is *faith* that gives power; it is *belief* from which a man draws inspiration for the task before him. It is *conviction* that fills him with energy and nerves his hands for the successful prosecution of his work.

The men who have done the most in the world are those who have not been held back by doubt. Who ever undertook a great work that did not involve many difficulties the solution of which was not apparent? No man can see the end from the beginning; he cannot even see with certainty a single hour into the future. The pathway which leads out to the regions beyond, though plain enough where our feet are standing, becomes less and less distinct until, apparently, it is hedged up altogether; but no one turns back on that account. He knows there is an opening through which the path continues on, and that he will see it when he comes to it. He would characterise as extreme folly the idea of standing still and waiting till he could see the openings all the way, before he proceeded further.

And such it is; and no less so in spiritual things than in things that are temporal and earthly. The truth is, we are surrounded on every side by that which we cannot understand. Look which way we will, we have plenty of chance to doubt. There is no place where we can take our stand and say that everything around us is clear and plain. If we reject the word of God because there are things in it we cannot understand, we only involve ourselves in more doubt; for now we must explain to our satisfaction how many things that come under our notice can be, if the Bible be not true. The phenomena of Christianity—not so-called Christianity, but that which is based upon the Bible—its power, its effect upon the minds and hearts of men, must be explained; and the unbeliever finds himself more in the dark than ever. Accepting the Bible as true, the power which is in the word, and all that history, both sacred and secular, testifies of its power in healing the bodies and the souls of men, is easily comprehended; but discarding the sacred word, we only find ourselves compelled to account for all this upon some hypothesis, we know not what. But those who disbelieve the Scriptures

usually shut their eyes to the difficulties in which their unbelief involves them. In getting rid of the word they have released themselves from duties and responsibilities that were disagreeable to self, and this is generally the real thing for which they are seeking. It is much easier to doubt a disagreeable truth than one which involves no sacrifice on our own part.

Look not at your doubts, at what you do not believe, but at what you do believe. Your "don't believes" are of no value, either to yourself or anybody else. It is belief only that contains a positive force. If there is any part of God's word that you do believe, take your stand on that and conform your life to it, and seek to the Author of that for further knowledge. Search not for things to doubt, but for things to believe. Make an advance move; walk out in the light that you have, and you will find your pathway growing brighter and brighter, "unto the perfect day."

"HIGHER CRITICISM."

THE "Higher Criticism" is not by any means a new thing. From the most ancient times there have been men who were able to demonstrate to their own satisfaction the impossibility of the truthfulness of the word of God. Two instances occur to mind just now.

The first instance occurred in Samaria. The city was closely besieged, and the people were perishing by famine. Then Elisha the prophet said: "Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria." 2 Kings vii. 1.

But there was a certain "lord" in the city, who was something of a "higher critic;" and he said, "Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" He knew too much to believe so impossible a story, and he reaped the consequences of unbelief. The prophet said to him, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not eat thereof."

And so it was. That same day the Lord caused a panic to seize the besieging army, so that they all fled, leaving provision in abundance, so that provision the next day was as cheap as the prophet had said. The unbelieving lord had charge of the gate, so that he saw the plenty; but the people in their desperate rush for food trod

upon him, so that he died without getting any benefit from it. It is to be feared that many of the "higher critics" of these days will meet a similar fate. If they do not come down from their lofty position, they will derive no benefit from the life which God's word abundantly supplies, although they will certainly see it some day.

Another instance of the "higher criticism" occurred in the days of Christ. Certain Sadducees made great profession of believing the Bible, but they did not put any confidence in the Saviour's teaching concerning it. His words must be measured by their reason, the same as those of an ordinary man, and if they were not in harmony with their mind, they must be rejected. And so they brought the well-known question concerning the resurrection, which showed conclusively to their own minds, that Jesus was mistaken.

Notice the directness of Christ's reply, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Matt. xxii. 29. That was the trouble with the Samaritan lord. And that is the trouble with all who presume to criticise the whole or a part of the Bible. He who knows the Scriptures, will not sit in judgment on them. The ignorance of the Scriptures that is displayed by those who find so many errors in the Bible, is one of the most noticeable things in connection with the "higher criticism."

What is it to know the Scriptures? It does not necessarily consist in ability to quote portions of it, nor to read or even to repeat it in the original Hebrew and Greek. Many a man who can read the Bible with ease in the ancient languages, knows far less of the Scriptures than some poor man who can do no more than spell out the text in his own language. He who receives the Scriptures as the very word of God, is the one who knows the Scriptures. Such an one will not doubt and criticise that which he does not understand. To believe the word of God, is to know it. He who does not believe cannot possibly understand.

A COUNTER REFORMATION.

QUITE recently Archdeacon Sinclair, of London, made the following statement:—

The most serious fact which we have at present to face is indicated by the support given to the book of the President of the English Church Union and his friends, called "The Lord's Day and the Holy Eucharist." The book points out with great frankness the mistakes of the Reformers in our present prayer book, speaks with unreserved freedom of its shortcomings and blots,

proposes the omission of the Ten Commandments, advocates mediæval additions to our office to bring it into line with Sarum, pronounces fasting reception to be necessary, urges the practice of reservation, proposes the introduction of the Romish service of Benediction, wishes to alter our cathedral services so that there should be Mass every morning, longs that everybody should recognise that our chief religious duty is the oblation of the Lamb of God, insists on the restoration of the word Mass, and deplors the disastrous effects of the Reformation. We are reluctantly brought to the conclusion that the policy advocated in the book is really the policy of the Sacerdotal party, and that we are indeed in the presence of a strong, hopeful, and united phalanx, who desire to restore what was repudiated at the Reformation. The English Church Union has now 84,761 men in its ranks, of whom 4,200 are in Holy Orders, and twenty-nine are Bishops. We are compelled to suppose that as the policy of "The Lord's Day and the Holy Eucharist" is now supported by the great party organ, and is not disavowed by any of the members of the English Church Union, they are prepared to enlist in the same campaign of melancholy retrogressive change. We are in the midst of a real counter-Reformation.

It is very fitting that the Ten Commandments should be omitted by a party that is seeking to unite with Rome. It is encouraging to know that there are many who are opposed to retrogression; but the outlook would be more encouraging if they realised that the Reformation has never been completed, and is, in fact, but little more than begun.

THE LOUDEST NOISE EVER HEARD.

IN an American journal Sir Robert S. Ball thus describes an occurrence which was the occasion, as he affirms, of "the mightiest noise ever heard on this globe." No doubt it was the mightiest noise ever heard since the awful sounding of the trumpet from the smoking, quaking summit of Mt. Sinai, when once the camp of ancient Israel was pitched before it, and the more dreadful sound of the words of the Divine law as they came from the lips of the Lawgiver, "whose voice then shook the earth." Secular history, at least, gives us no record of anything in the annals of terrestrial disturbances of such appalling magnificence as this occurrence of which he writes, and which may well be regarded as a prelude to the convulsions of the day of God:—

No thunder from the skies was ever accompanied with a roar of such vehemence as that which issued from the throat of the great volcano in Krakatoa, an islet lying in the Straits of Sunda between Sumatra and Java, at ten o'clock on Monday morning, August 27, 1883. As that dreadful Sunday night wore on, the noises increased in intensity and frequency. The explosions succeeded each other so rapidly that a continuous roar seemed to issue from the island. The critical moment was now approaching, and the outbreak was preparing for a majestic culmination. The people of Batavia did not sleep that night. Their windows quivered with the thun-

ders from Krakatoa, which resounded like the discharge of artillery in their streets. Finally, at ten o'clock on Monday morning, a stupendous convulsion took place which far transcended any of the shocks which had preceded it. This supreme effort it was which raised the mightiest noise ever heard on this globe. Batavia is ninety-four miles distant from Krakatoa. At Carimon, Java, 355 miles away, reports were heard on that Sunday morning which led to the belief that there must be some vessel in the distance which was discharging its guns as signals of distress. The authorities sent out boats to make a search; they presently returned, as no ship could be found in want of succour. The reports were sounds which had come all the way from Krakatoa. At Macassar, in Celebes, loud explosions attracted the notice of everybody. Two steamers were hastily sent out to find what was the matter. The sounds had travelled from the Straits of Sunda, a distance of 969 miles. But mere hundreds of miles will not suffice to illustrate the extraordinary distance to which the greatest noise that ever was heard was able to penetrate. The figures have to be expressed in thousands. This seems almost incredible, but it is certainly true. In the Victoria Plains, in West Australia, the shepherds were startled by noises like heavy cannonading. It was some time afterward before they learned that their tranquillity had been disturbed by the grand events then proceeding at Krakatoa, 1,700 miles away.

UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPTURES.

The study of the Scriptures is a matter of vital importance to the welfare of every individual. In this day the Scriptures are little read and still less understood, even by the majority of those who profess Christianity. The result of this neglect will be seen, by many, only when it is too late to be remedied.

It is possible to read the Bible as if it were but the word of man. The language of the sacred volume contains very much that is instructive and entertaining from a merely literary standpoint. Its narratives are as fascinating as any to be found in history or fiction. But it is not this that gives the Bible its excellence; but the fact that all its narratives, its poetry, its figures of speech, its lofty diction, are the vehicles of Divine truth which is able to save the soul; that its words are living words, giving life and power to whomsoever will receive them into the heart. The Bible contains many stories, but it is not a story book; it contains much history, yet it is not a history; neither is it a text-book for the study of literature; it is more than all of these; it is the word of God speaking to us and showing us the truths which pertain to salvation. It is the living word sent down from heaven to re-create and give spiritual life to souls that are dead in trespasses and sins.

A person may be familiar with all the narratives of the sacred word; he may know the substance of what is

treated of in the various books, and be able to repeat much of its language *verbatim*, and yet not know the Bible. He may know that Jacob wrestled all night with an angel, and yet not know how to obtain the blessing of God. He may know that the Israelites came up to the land of Canaan and there halted and did not enter in for fear of its high-walled cities and giant inhabitants, and yet not know the power and necessity of faith. He may read all the inspired record of ancient wanderings and conquests and settlements of God's chosen people, the history of their days of prosperity and of adversity, and not know that "to obey is better than sacrifice," and that justice, mercy, and truth are the weightier matters of the law. Yet these are the truths which God designs to teach us in His word—not historical truths, but ever living and present truths; not truths to enlighten us concerning some events that happened in ancient times, but to show us the mercy, wisdom, and power of God in His present dealings with men.

History is valuable because history repeats itself. Men learn wisdom for the present from the mistakes of the past. But the Bible is valuable because human nature is the same, and the power and love and wisdom of God are the same, and His righteousness the same, through all ages of the world.

The Bible was given to men to be understood, and it can be understood. God made no mistake when He dictated His word to the holy men of old. He knew the capabilities of those to whom it was sent, and is sent to-day. The only difficulty in the way of its comprehension is the carnal heart. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. What is needed is spirituality. The spiritually minded man is a magnet to all spiritual truth. "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Having the Spirit, there is no impassible barrier in the way of the understanding of all that which God has spoken.

The inquiry of Philip to the eunuch is an important one for all. "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Acts viii. 30. The eunuch was reading a most important statement of truth, but he knew not what it signified till the Spirit of God, through Philip, enlightened his mind. And scripture is read to-day with little or no compre-

hension of its spiritual meaning. Truths of vital importance to the spiritual welfare are scanned by the eye, yet not perceived by the heart. They are truths that must be spiritually discerned, and no amount of human wisdom or intellectual keenness can grasp them without that power of discernment which the Spirit gives.

And why do we not have that power? The answer is, that self occupies the heart, instead of the Spirit of God. The two cannot dwell there together; self shuts out spiritual truths. We cannot see through self. It is perfectly opaque. No matter how plain the truth is, we cannot see it if self is in the way. And self is wise (in its own conceits). It wants a chance to display its own wisdom, and does not seek for that wisdom which is from above.

Spiritual knowledge is not head knowledge, but heart knowledge. It is a part of the life. It is the word of life hid in the believing heart. This is why spiritual truths must be spiritually discerned. They come into the heart only in the form of an experience; and the experience cannot come without the working of the Spirit. It cannot come without the entrance of the living word, which is received by faith. But faith and human wisdom are things altogether distinct from each other. Their testimonies are often contradictory one to the other, and in such a case the latter is always to be discarded. Human wisdom and reasoning have nothing to do with discerning spiritual truths.

Without the study of the word there can be no discernment of the real essential truths which pertain to the Christian life. Nor can we grasp them unless our study is in humility and with prayer for spiritual enlightenment. And this is a matter of vital importance, for salvation comes through the word. For the Word is God (see John i. 1), and salvation is "the end of your faith" (1 Pet. i. 9), and faith is belief of the Word. And Peter testifies also that the result of wresting the Scriptures is destruction. 2 Pet. iii. 16. It is not a question of taste or of inclination with us whether we shall study and understand God's word; it is a matter of life or death, of eternal gain or loss. God has sent us His word. To slight it is to slight Him. He has made all provision that we should understand it. If we do not, it will be only because of the presence of self, which might have been put out of the heart but was not, and remained to obscure the spiritual vision.

PERSONAL RELIGION.

THE Christian religion is a personal religion. It is a religion which deals with individuals. Though men are associated together in the church, this association does not change the nature of Christianity, or of their relation to God. The voice of God speaks not less personally to each component member of the church, and the "power of God unto salvation" is no less truly sent "to every one that believeth."

The idea that God deals with corporations, or with a church, or a denomination, as such, and not directly with the individuals who compose them, is a most mischievous one, and has been productive of very great harm. It has caused individuals to look to their church, or their denomination, rather than to the one true Source of spiritual life. Men have been led to think of Christianity as a matter of church relationship, rather than of connection with the living Vine; to look at God through an opaque theological body which eclipses the light of heaven, rather than "with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," to become thereby "changed into the same image from glory to glory." 2 Cor. iii. 18. They have come to think of the power and glory of God as coming to them diffused through the atmosphere of the church, rather than as coming into their souls direct from the eternal throne.

This is not the object of the church; this is not the purpose for which God has established it on the earth. The church exists for the purpose of spreading abroad the knowledge of the power of God unto salvation, of manifesting to the world the body of Christ, through whom He works as its spiritual Head; not of manifesting to the world its own power, and regulating the supply of the grace of God. Although connection with the church is proper and a source of great benefit to the individual when the church is not in a fallen state, his relation to God and to the Gospel is the same as though he were living alone upon an island in the midst of the sea. He has no freer access to the grace of God in the one case than in the other; the "power of God unto salvation" would have to be sought by the same means in the one case as in the other.

It is very natural for an individual to associate and compare himself with others, and to look for some advantage to himself through the mere fact

of his connection with the world around him; but that which holds true in temporal things must not be carelessly accepted as true in things spiritual. Spiritual blessings are not gained in that way. There is no spiritual advantage to be gained in looking to others. Perhaps you are as good as they are, and satisfy your conscience with the reflection that you will fare as well as they in the day of final reckoning; but that will never save you from perdition. It matters not how others stand, your own standing is independent of all others. If another stands he cannot hold you up; and if he falls, his fall does not affect the footing on which you stand. "To his own master he standeth or falleth." We follow Christ as individuals, not as companies; and when we begin to say, like Peter, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" His answer is, "What is that to thee? follow *thou Me*."

Christ did not die to save a world. He did not die to save a church, or a denomination. But He did die to save *you*. And your relation to Him through His work of salvation is the same as if there were no other person in the world besides yourself, or as if you alone of all earth's inhabitants were destined to obtain salvation. And therefore His pardon and love are for *you*; His power is for *you*; His wisdom is for *you*; His deliverance from sin is for *you*; the Christian experience, with all that it contains, as revealed in the word of God, is for *you*, irrespective of every other person, church, or organisation in the world. And you will get them by your own individual seeking.

Notice how this idea of the personality of the Christian life is set forth in the one hundred and sixteenth psalm. By giving emphasis to the personal pronouns as they occur, the force of the psalmist's testimony will be more clearly seen:—

"I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and He helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For

Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. . . . What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows now unto the Lord in the presence of all His people. . . . O Lord, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid; Thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows now unto the Lord in the presence of all His people; in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord."

This is a true Christian experience. It mattered not to the psalmist at such a time what the church in general was doing or receiving, or how the Lord was dealing with this one or that one around him; he rejoiced because God had heard *his* voice and *his* supplications. The pains of hell had gotten hold upon *him*, and he needed a personal deliverance, and this was what he had found. He had been in bondage, but now could say, "Thou hast loosed *my* bonds." It is not enough for the soul bound with the chains of sin and Satan to sit in contemplation of the goodness and mercy of God, and realise that He has loosed the bonds of others. That would only make his own bondage the more grievous. Nothing but a personal experience in "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" can bring heavenly joy and comfort to any of the fallen children of men.

Can you join with the psalmist in these utterances of gladness and praise to God? Has God heard *your* voice and your supplications? Has He loosed *your* bonds? If not, then no matter what He may be doing for the church with which you are connected, you are living altogether outside of the blessed privileges that God offers to you through the Gospel. Seek Him for yourself; believe Him for yourself; and He will clothe you with His salvation.

MEEKNESS.

MEEKNESS does not by any means imply weakness or instability of character; in fact it is only the strong who are truly meek. Meekness is defined to be "forbearance"; but it requires more strength to be forbearing under injuries than it does to defend ourselves. Meekness is defined to be gentleness and softness of disposition, but

it is this gentleness of God which makes truly great. Ps. xviii. 35. Meekness, according to Ps. xxv. 9, is teachableness, but it does not mean a disposition which can be taught by any impostor; it is that which learns of God, always open to receive instruction from the source of light, never rebelling against it, but rejecting, through the intuition of the Spirit of God, whatever is contrary to His will. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way."—*Selected.*

A MORNING PRAYER.

Suggested by the text for the day, Aug. 29, 1893.
"The Lord is thy keeper." Ps. cxxi.

Yes, mould and fashion me
According to Thy will,
Dear Lord; that I throughout this day,
May glorify Thee still.

These hands, these lips, these feet,
Let them but move for Thee,
That those around who watch my life
May own Christ's life in me.

Suggest, direct, control
My every thought, all day;
So passive would I lie, that Thou
May'st have Thine own sweet way.

For mighty foes are near,
Within and all around,
But Thou art mightier far than they!
I'm but the battle ground.

My precious, precious Lord,
Unworthy though I be,
Still keep and use me as Thou wilt,
And get the victory.

FRANCES S. HAZELL.

London.

OVERCOME AS CHRIST OVERCAME.

SINCE the fall of our first parents, obedience has not been deemed an absolute necessity. Men have followed the imagination of their own hearts, which the Lord has said is "evil, and that continually." The Lord Jesus declares, "I have kept My Father's commandments." 'How?—as a man. "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God." To the accusations of the Jews He stood forth in His pure, virtuous, holy character, and challenged them to point out a defect in His life. He said, "Who of you convinceth Me of sin?" The world's Redeemer came not only to be a sacrifice for sin, but to be an example to man in all things. He was a teacher, such an educator as the world never saw or heard before. He spake as one having authority, and yet He invites the confidence of all. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

The only-begotten Son of the infinite God has, by His words and in His practical example, left us a plain pattern which we are to copy. By His words He has educated us to obey God, and by His own practice He has showed us how we can obey God. This is the very work He wants every man to do, to obey God intelligently,

and by precept and example teach others what they must do in order to be obedient children of God. Jesus has helped the whole world to an intelligent knowledge of His divine mission and work. He came to represent the character of the Father to our world; and as we study the life, the words, and works of Christ, we are helped in every way in the education of obedience to God; and as we copy the example He has given us, we are living epistles known and read of all men. We are the living human agencies to represent to the world the character of Christ. Not only did Christ show us how we may become obedient children, but He showed us in His own life and character just how to do those things which are right and acceptable with God, so there is no reason why we should not do those things which are pleasing in His sight.

We are ever to be thankful that Jesus has proved to us by actual life that man can keep the commandments of God, contradicting Satan's falsehood that man cannot keep them. The great Teacher came to our world to stand at the head of humanity, to thus elevate and sanctify humanity by His holy obedience to all the requirements of God, showing it is possible to obey all the commandments of God. He has demonstrated that a lifelong obedience is possible. Thus He gives men to the world, as the Father gave the Son, to exemplify in their life the life of Christ.

Christ redeemed Adam's disgraceful failure and fall, and was conqueror, thus testifying to all the unfallen worlds and to fallen humanity that through the divine power granted to him of Heaven man can keep the commandments of God. Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself for us, endured temptation for us, overcame in our behalf, to show us how we may overcome; by the closest ties He bound up His interest with humanity, and gave positive assurance that we shall not be tempted above that we are able; for with the temptation He will make a way of escape.

The Holy Spirit was promised to be with those who were wrestling for victory, demonstrating the power of God, by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength, and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit is to be our Helper. Of what avail would it have been to us that the only-begotten Son of God had humbled Himself, endured the temptations of the wily foe, and wrestled with him during His entire life on earth, and died, the just for the unjust, that humanity might not perish, if the Spirit had not been given as a constant working, regenerating agent to make effectual in our cases what had been wrought by the world's Redeemer?

The Holy Spirit implanted in the disciples, enabled them to stand firmly

against idolatry, and to exalt the Lord alone. The Holy Spirit guided the pens of the sacred historians, that the record of the precious words and works of Christ might be presented to the world. The Holy Spirit is constantly at work seeking to draw the attention of men to the great Sacrifice made upon the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God to man, and to open to the convicted soul the precious promises in the Scriptures. It is the Holy Spirit that brings to the darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. It is the Holy Spirit that makes men's hearts burn within them with an awakened intelligence of the truths of eternity. It is the Holy Spirit that presents before the mind the moral standard of righteousness, and convinces of sin. It is the Holy Spirit that produces godly sorrow which worketh repentance that needeth not to be repented of, and inspires faith in Him who alone can save from all sin. It is the Holy Spirit that works to transform character by withdrawing the affections of men from those things which are temporal and perishable, and fixing them upon the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance which is imperishable. The Holy Spirit recreates, refines, and sanctifies the human agents, that they may become members of the royal family, children of the Heavenly King.

Jesus says: "Follow Me." "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Consider it not a hard duty. The commandments of God are His expressed character flowing out of a heart of love in thoughtful plans that man may be preserved from every evil. They are not to exercise an arbitrary authority over man, but the Lord would have men act as His obedient children, members of His own family. Obedience is the outgrowth and fruit of oneness with Christ and the Father. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

When we unmistakably hear His voice and obey, every murmuring thought will be repressed; and we will leave all consequences with Him who gave the commandment. If, as we see the footprints of Jesus, we step in them and follow Him, we shall have love and power.

The question is often asked, "What difference does it make which day we keep for the Sabbath?" But it does make a difference; for the same principle is involved as was involved in Adam's case. He was put to the same test. For he was to prove by obedi-

ence his loyalty to God, or by disobedience to forfeit the right to the tree of life. Satan presented this same specious question. What difference does it make whether you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or of any other tree of the garden? Adam's sin consisted in doing the thing the Lord had forbidden him to do, and this opened the flood-gates of woe on our world. We should carefully meditate upon the life of Christ, and desire to understand the reason why He came at all. We should search the Scriptures as Christ has enjoined upon us to do, that we may know those things that are testified of Him. By searching we may find the virtues of obedience in contrast with the sinfulness of disobedience. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The Lord Jesus has bridged the gulf that sin has made. He has connected earth with heaven, and finite man with the infinite God. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, as our example, could only keep the commandments of God in the same way that humanity can keep them. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The glory mentioned is character, and by faith we become changed from character to character. "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK.

A RELIGIOUS life is more than a mere profession of faith, or an initiation into some church or religious society, however orthodox it may be. It strikes its roots into hidden depths, and unless there be something about it unseen by men and known only to God, it is far from being what it should be. It is not enough for persons to purchase a new Bible, learn a few Scripture texts, and talk and chatter, and think they are doing Christian work.

He who really lives the Christian life and works the work of God, has a deeper hold upon eternal things. Those whose ideas touch only the surface, are like the morning cloud and the early dew that passeth away. They have never known true soul hunger and thirst, nor have they tasted the living

bread and the living water. They know nothing of godly sorrow nor yet of godly joy. They have never felt the blackness of the horrible pit, nor do they know the gladness of singing the new song. They have never felt the anguish of crucifixion with Christ, nor the birth pangs of the better life. They have never rid themselves of their conceited emptiness, nor come to God and His word that they might be filled. Having never known their own weakness and insufficiency, they have failed to gain the everlasting strength of God.

Our Lord, who loves us, seeks to win us from such shallow emptiness of spirit, and to bring us to be partakers of His own glorious life, and enable us to comprehend with all saints the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God, which passeth knowledge.—*Christian Worker*.

IN SIX HUNDREDWEIGHT OF CHAINS.

A FEW weeks ago a Mohammedan fakir came to Bombay, who had voluntarily loaded himself with twenty-four maunds (six hundredweight) of chains. We visited him at that convenient, free rest-house for native travellers, the Falkland Road Dharamsala. He was reclining on his mat and hard pillow, and was dependent upon an attendant for food. The bulk and weight of the chains welded around his neck, arms, and legs, rendered walking impossible. It was said that when he travelled by train (he came from North India), he was charged partly as a passenger and partly as freight. He desired to go as a pilgrim to Mecca, and an ordinary ticket by steamship was purchased for him, but when he arrived at the ship, the astonished officer declined his company.

Some large iron pegs and a heavy iron mallet were attached to his chains. These were used in fixing him firmly down, at his desire, in any particular spot.

This iron bondage was no new one. For twenty-four years he had submitted to it. What caused him voluntarily to endure a burden of chains which, if inflicted by any official authority as a punishment, would bring down upon the government that permitted it the execration of mankind?—He said it was his inclination to evil. As a young man he was very wicked, and he caused chains to be fastened upon him to keep him from sin. As time went on he added more chains, until the present weight was reached.

The man's face was not a dishonest one. The manner of his conversation was also open. There is no reason to doubt that for twenty-four years he had been engaged in a desperate struggle with sinful inclinations. But his admission that as time passed by he added more chains, was a confession of defeat.

This Mohammedan fakir in his ignorance had been dealing with the effect instead of the cause. Better than chaining the limbs is to seek a change of heart. The psalmist understood this when he cried, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Create? Yes; that is the word; and no hand but God's can do it. The same truth appears in the words of Jesus Christ to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—*Bombay Guardian*.

[The chains upon the limbs of the fakir, which were increased as he grew older, were significant of the chains of sin which bound him. The strength of an evil habit increases with age, instead of diminishing, thus showing that there is no inherent goodness in men, which will ultimately overpower and destroy the evil. The increase of the weight of the chains is in keeping with the fact that the strongest human efforts to overcome sin, only serve to increase it. Every form of religion, except the pure religion of Jesus Christ, only increases the bondage of men; but Christ removes the heavy chains, and lets the oppressed go free.—ED. P. T.]

THE POLITICAL VALUE OF RELIGION.

JUDGE HAGANS, of the Supreme Court of Cincinnati, in delivering his opinion in the case of *Minor and others vs. The Board of Education of Cincinnati and others*, said: "In a word, it is the *political value* of religion, morality, and knowledge which the State proposes to secure for its varied purposes, and that only." This utterance was preceded by an extended quotation from an article by Dr. Seelye, which appeared in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. XIII, No. 52. In this article Dr. Seelye says that "the State has its own end," and that it "uses religion as a means to this end; but religion itself is never an end with the State. Everything relating to the moral and religious life of its subjects is of interest to the State only so far as the State can use it to its own ends." Again he says: "With the State religion is a means." He says again: "There are temporal and earthly interests for the individual, and it is to subserve these that there is a State, a community, among men. These interests are undoubtedly more perfectly secured through the agency of some religion, and hence the proper and necessary connection of religion with the State. But in this connection religion is ever the servant; never the sovereign. It is to be used to secure some end"—namely, some temporal end, that comes within the province of the State. On this ground we un-

derstand Dr. Seelye to hold to a legitimate "connection of the State with religion, and the duty of the State to maintain its religion," while he disclaims any right on its part to resort to persecution.

The substance of this theory, as adopted by Judge Hagans and more fully explained by Dr. Seelye, seems to be this: The State may and should incorporate religion into its own being as a part of its public law; not as an end, or on account of what religion is in itself, considered as a spiritual system, but solely on account of what the State can do with it as the means of promoting the civilisation, improvement, and good earthly order of the body politic. The State can make use of it as a "servant," and, hence, in this character should maintain it. Its "political value" brings it within the purview of civil government.

This theory is as old as the efforts of human thought to vindicate the establishment and maintenance of religion by the civil power. There is nothing in it which limits it to Christianity in either the Catholic or the Protestant form, and it has not been so limited. It applies to any religious system, whether Pagan or Christian, true or false. Any such system, which in the judgment of the State, can be made useful for the attainment of its temporal ends may, as the means thereof, be legalised, adopted, and supported by the State. Almost any religion is, in its social effects, better than blank atheism; and, hence, it might be used by the State as a means, rather than have a nation of pure atheists, especially as no religion has ever been so bad as not to contain at least some rays of truth. Of course it would be better for the State to adopt the true system; but, in its absence, it will be better to put its stamp on any system, and use it for State purposes, rather than be wholly without religion.

Now, in order to give this theory the benefit of the most favourable application, let us understand the term religion to mean Christianity. The case will then stand thus: The State may and should establish a connection between itself and Christianity; not because Christianity is true, not because it is a Divine system in its authority, not on account of its relation to the spiritual duties and immortal interests of men, but solely on the ground of its *temporal* utility. Being an existing system known to the people, it is good for this purpose—just as revenue laws, currency laws, laws of debt and credit, patent laws, commercial laws, police regulations, courts of justice, State prisons and indeed all the ordinary appliances of civil government, are good to secure the material and social prosperity of the people. The State may, hence, maintain and use it as one of the wheels in its com-

plex machinery, on the same principle that it maintains and uses other wheels to run its own system. Not what Christianity is, but what the State can get out of it for temporal purposes, is the single thing to be considered.

It is hardly necessary to say that Christ and His apostles did not preach the Gospel upon any such theory. They made no mention of it as the "servant" of the State. They presented it as God's supernatural interposition for the salvation of individual sinners. What the State should gain or lose by it was not their question. Salvation, and not State utility, was their grand idea. They did not concern themselves with the relations of the Gospel to Cæsar; but rather with its relations to God and sinners against His law. They preached repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and warned men to flee from the wrath to come. There is a vast distance between the conception of Christianity as preached by its Author and His apostles and the conception of it as a piece of State machinery, sanctioned and sustained by the State on account of its "political value" or as the means of attaining a purely temporal end.—*Samuel T. Spear, D.D.*

TO KNOW GOD IS TO LOVE HIM.

"ACQUAINT now thyself with Him, and be at peace." Job xxii. 21. To be acquainted with God is to be at peace with Him; and it is equally true that to be acquainted with God is to love Him; for God is lovable, and to love a thing that is lovable needs only an acquaintance with it. Therefore, he who does not love God does not know Him. And he does not love Him *because* he does not know Him. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." 1 John iv. 8. Undoubtedly the reason so many people love God so little is because they have such a slight acquaintance with Him. "Acquaint now thyself with Him."

MY OPAL.

AN opal of many tints is lying on my table. It filled me with pleasure when first I found it, and it has been a day's delight ever since. Hold it in whatever position I may, it always presents a fresh aspect of beauty. Looking down into its ruby and emerald fires, I discover depths and avenues of light unseen before. Christ is my perfect opal. His beauty enraptured my soul when first I found Him, and He has been a continuous and increasing revelation of grace and glory until now. Viewing Him in the varied aspect of His titles, words, and work, whether through tears of sorrow or of gladness, I always see deeper into the fathomless fire of eternal love and loveliness. What will my vision be when my eye is clear and my soul is pure?—*Sel.*



THE HOME.

THE SWEETEST LIVES.

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

Thy love shall chant its own beatitudes
After its own life working. A child's kiss
Set on thy sighing lips shall make thee glad;
A poor man served by thee shall make thee
rich;
A rich man helped by thee shall make thee strong;
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense,
Of service which thou renderest.

—Mrs. Browning.

A WONDERFUL SHOEMAKER.

SOME years ago there lived in one of the cities of Scotland a man, whose name we will not give. The writer visited him, and the memory of an evening spent in his home has proved a lifelong inspiration.

He had three rooms—his shop and two bedrooms. On one side of the shop were a work-bench, a stool, a cask of water in which leather was softening, and a heap of unmended shoes—the unmistakable signs of a hard-working shoemaker; but on the walls and in the middle of the floor were cabinets filled with rare fossils. Corals in different stages of formation and of great variety were there. The collector stood with his back to the bench as he pointed to them with pride.

His dress was that of an artisan poor and illiterate; his face might have belonged to the most devout saint. Our astonishment was roused by the contrast between the evidences of daily toil and the meagre surroundings of the man and his great scientific attainments. The collection he exhibited would have conferred lustre upon any famous cabinet. It has since been acquired by a university.

But this was not all. In his leisure moments, in the darkness of night, he had discovered a new process of photo-engraving. Some of the best pamphlets on corals ever issued had been published by him, and illustrated to a microscopic fineness seldom or never before attained. He showed letters from Darwin and Huxley, and was an honorary member of many of the scientific societies of Europe. His eyes filled with tears as he showed us

the results of almost superhuman perseverance.

Nor was this all. For years, with the help of his only child,—a daughter,—he had guarded his wife, who was a hopeless maniac. It was necessary that one or the other of them should watch the poor woman constantly. She could not be left alone, even for an instant, for she hated his specimens, the only solace of his dark life, and threw them out of the window whenever she could lay hands on them. Only long-suffering gentleness and the most marvellous tenderness could control her in her destructive moods.

“Why have you not sent her to an asylum?” we asked, involuntarily.

The scientist and shoemaker looked up with horrified eyes, as if he had been struck.

“Send her? Send my wife to an asylum? Would you?”

It was all he said, and it was enough. As he spoke, the door opened, and the poor woman, a piteous and repellent sight, tried to enter the shop. Her daughter was murmuring soothing words to her. Not a cloud passed over the face of the husband. He rushed toward her, and as if she had been the sanest and sweetest lady in the land, offered her his arm, and escorted her to her own room.

Soft words and harsh replies coming through the closed door, told us that the wife was pacified with difficulty. We listened with bowed head and humbled heart.

What a life of sacrifice and unselfish tenderness! What tragedy within these four walls! Nobility of nature and of character such as this is so rare that one is almost as much perplexed as awed by it.

What was the secret of this wonderful moral power?

There were few books in the room, except those on corals; but upon the work-bench lay a little volume, leather-covered, evidently rebound by the cobbler himself. It was worn by use. Taking it up, we found that it was the New Testament.

With a rush of feeling we laid it down. The spirit he manifested was exemplified here. Only the Man of Sorrows could have taught this poor burden-bearer so to bear, and so to glorify, the most terrible of domestic afflictions. The energy by which, against odds that would have discouraged most men, the student had conquered an intricate science, was meagre compared to the resolution displayed by the husband in the Christian endurance of his exhausting lot.—*Youth's Companion*.

MISTAKES.

EVERYBODY is making mistakes. Everybody is finding out afterwards that he has made a mistake. But there can be no greater mistake than stopping to worry over a mistake al-

ready made. “Forgetting those things which are behind” includes the forgetting to worry over the irremediable past. “Reaching forth unto those things which are before” is the “one thing” for every child of God to do in spite of the many mistakes which all insist he has certainly made.—*Morning Star*.

KEEPING THE HOUSE IN ORDER.

MRS. FAIRCHILD was sick, and as there was no help in the kitchen, there was nothing for Mr. Fairchild to do when he came home at night but turn in for an evening of housework.

There was always an accumulation of dishes to wash, rooms to sweep, and shelves to arrange, to say nothing of meals that must be either bought or cooked.

He did not mind the work for a few nights, it seemed only a relief from his office work; but what puzzled and annoyed him was that nothing stayed in order. There were just the same dishes to wash and just the same rooms to sweep night after night; there was no change, no variety, in the work. After a week of it he became heartily tired of housework, but he had to keep at it just the same.

In time Mrs. Fairchild's health returned, and household matters ran again in the smooth, comfortable way as of old, with this difference, that Mrs. Fairchild noticed that her husband never asked her when she was going to do this or why she had not done that.

She was surprised to find that he was even wearing some of his clothes unmended.

She chided him gently for not having told her of his wants, and he replied:—

“Why, dear, I never realised how hard your work, even your sewing, was until you were sick and I had it to do. I tried to mend the lining of my coat one day; it took me an hour to do it, and I was actually tired when it was done. I never realised,” he added, “what heroines good wives and mothers are to do the drudgery of housekeeping uncomplainingly and unflinchingly for months and years together, with often never a word of appreciation from those for whom they work.”

Dear, tired housewife, don't get discouraged because the house will not stay in order. It is a mountainous task to keep a house in order; don't try too hard; be particular indeed about actual cleanliness, but tolerate a little disorder rather than worry your life out overdoing what will never stay done.

Said an old housekeeper, who had learned to select what she could let go: “If it were not for the delusion women have that sometime everything would be done, they would not have the heart to keep on. This delusion is a mirage that keeps them always working.”

A housekeeper's work can never be finished. She is always working at

it. Let her realise that there is no nobler work, no work that has a wider or more far-reaching influence, humble as it may seem.—*Selected.*

DUTIES IN THE HOME.

THE brevity of life ought to exercise some influence upon our duties in the home. All too soon the tenderest ties are severed, and the supreme joy of life withers like the summer flowers. It may be early, it may be late; but all too quickly we lose those who are indispensable to our happiness.

In Carlyle's "Reminiscences" you remember how he breaks out again and again into painful self-reproach at the remembrance of past thoughtlessness and want of delicate tenderness toward his wife. He did not mean to wound her; he was not by nature hard or cruel but he was forgetful and thoughtless. No doubt, much of the moaning, when it was too late, was morbid and exaggerated; but it is not without its practical lesson. "God reward thee, dear one! now that I cannot even own my debt! Oh, why do we delay so much till death makes it impossible? Fools! Fools! we forget that it has an end." "Blind and deaf that we are! Oh, think, if thou yet love anybody living, wait not till death sweep down the paltry little dust clouds and idle dissonances of the moment, and all be at last so mournfully clear and beautiful when it is too late!"

Let us take that sad lesson to heart; for it is one we all need. We have the power, if only we will use it, to make the home the centre of every radiant influence, and home life the leaven that is to sweeten the social lump. We can fill our homes with the warmth and sunshine of a strong and healthy affection, and make the years that are left to us and to our dear ones radiant.—*Christian World Pulpit.*

THE FIRST UMBRELLA IN LONDON.

IN a recent issue of Cassell's *Greater London*, there is the following notice of the man who first used an umbrella in London: Jonas Hanway, who was buried at Hanwell, was the son of a storekeeper in the dockyard at Portsmouth, was brought up to a mercantile career, and made a fortune by trading in Russia. That fortune he spent in works of public utility and benevolence. He improved the highways of the metropolis; he organised a volunteer body of marines; he founded the Marine Society (which is still one of the largest and most important of London charities); he largely remodelled the Foundling Hospital; he was one of the founders of the Magdalen; like Howard, he explored the fever-dens of the poorer classes of London, and forced on the parochial authorities a system of registration, in order to protect infant life;

he got an Act passed for the protection of climbing boys employed by chimney-sweeps; and, strange to say, was rewarded by the Government for his philanthropic efforts by being made a member of the Victualling Board.

"His moral courage," writes Dr Smiles, "was of the first order. It may be regarded as a trival matter to mention that he was the first who ventured to walk the streets of London with an umbrella over his head. But let any modern London merchant venture to walk along Cornhill in a peaked Chinese hat, and he will find that it takes some moral courage to persevere in it. After carrying an umbrella for some thirty years, Mr. Hanway saw the article at length come into general use."

LIGHT IN THE SICK-ROOM.

SIR B. W. RICHARDSON says that a custom still prevails, despite all our sanitary teachings, that the occupants of a sick-room in the private house should be kept at all times in a darkened room. Not one time in ten do we enter a sick-room in the daytime to find it blessed with the light of the sun. Almost invariably, before we can get a look at the face of the patient, we are obliged to request that the blinds be drawn up, in order that the rays of a much greater healer than the most able physician can ever hope to be, may be admitted. Too often the compliance with this request reveals a condition of the room which, in the state of darkness, is almost inevitably one of disorder everywhere; foods, medicines, furniture, bedding, misplaced; dust, stray leavings in all directions.

In brief, there is nothing so bad as a dark sick-room. It is as if the attendants were expecting the death of the patient. And if the reason for it is asked, the answer is as inconsistent as the act. The reason usually offered is that the patient cannot bear the light; as though the light could not be cut off from the patient by a curtain or screen, and as though to darken one part of the room it were necessary to darken the whole of it. The real reason is an old superstitious one, which once prevailed so intensely that the sick, suffering from the most terrible disease—smallpox, for instance—were shut up in darkness, their beds surrounded with red curtains during the whole of their illness. The red curtains are now pretty nearly given up, but the darkness is still credited with some mysterious curative virtue. A more injurious practice really could not be maintained than that of darkness in a sick-room. It is not only that dirt and disorder are results of darkness—a great remedy is lost. Sunlight is the remedy lost, and the loss is momentous. Sunlight diffused through a room warms and clarifies the air; it has a direct influence on the minute organic poisons

—a distinctive influence which is most precious—and it has a cheerful effect on the mind. The sick should never be gloomy, and in the presence of the light the shadows of gloom fly away. Happily, the hospital ward, notwithstanding its many defects—and it has many—is so far favoured that it is blessed with the light of the sun whenever the sun shines. In private practice the same remedy ought to be extended to the patients of the household, and the first words of the physician or surgeon on entering the dark sick-room should be the dying words of Goethe: "More light! more light!"—*The Druggists and Chemists' Gazette.*

A FIFTEEN-MINUTE REST.

"Do you remember old Dr. L?" asked a woman of society the other day. "He believed in what is now called 'rest cure,' years and years ago. I remember very well a formula he gave me when I was first married, which was practically the same thing that every one advocates nowadays. 'Whenever a woman feels tired,' he used to say, 'or discouraged or depressed, or out of sorts generally, she should lie down and be absolutely quiet for fifteen minutes. The eyes should be closed and the mind should be made a blank, as far as possible. No pillow should be used, her head reclining on a level with her shoulders. She should not even think of the time, but have some one call her at the expiration of the time. 'This treatment,' he used to say, 'repeated twice a day, has a wonderful effect on nervous women.'"—*Selected.*

OCCUPATION FOR CHILDREN.

IT is a wise mother who can find occupation for her children, that will afford education for them as well as amusement; and yet these little homemakers of the next generation are more eager to "help mother" at seven than they are at seventeen.

Any woman who has done her cooking with "a troublesome comfort" in a high chair at her elbow, will testify to the satisfaction with which the chubby hands will cut out cakes from a piece of dough, and the triumph with which they will point out their own when taken from the oven.

Patience, mothers! If you give those little hands to understand that their help is more bother than assistance, they will not be as ready to proffer their aid with the cakes by and by, when their help is needed.

If we impress upon our children from infancy the idea that each one of them, even the toddler at our knee, has some part to perform in the routine of work, that he is as necessary to the well-being of the household as are father and mother, he will grow up with a sense of responsibility which will bind

him closer to the home. It may be easier now to hang up little Robbie's coat for him, and hunt up his mittens, than it is to keep a cheerful, patient oversight of the child while teaching him to do it for himself; but will it be easier by and by when Robert is twenty?

We have seen a young girl's gown, the work of painstaking, loving mother hands, with the clinging folds and carefully laid plaits gray with the siftings of dust and lint, and as we noted its crumpled, untidy appearance, we felt that nothing can measure the responsibilities that wait upon those who are entrusted with the care of children.—*Good Housekeeping.*

COFFEE FOR INEBRIATES.

THE establishment of coffee houses in place of saloons, is by some regarded as one of the most important means of antagonising inebriety. We have always been opposed to the plan of curing one evil by the substitution of another; for although the coffee drunkard may be somewhat less of a menace to the public peace, and less of a nuisance to his family, he is nevertheless a sinner against nature, and in a way to become an opium slave or a victim to some other form of narcotism.

Recent observations by Czarkowski, according to Wratch, show that drunkards, of all classes, are the least able to bear the use of coffee. As is well known, coffee contains the active principle of caffeine, a vegetable alkaloid possessing very marked properties as a cerebral excitant. The authority referred to takes very strong ground upon the subject, declaring that in persons addicted to the use of alcohol, caffeine is strictly contra-indicated. He observed that as a result of the use of caffeine in medicinal doses, violent cerebral agitation appeared, giving place to the reverse condition, one of extreme sadness as soon as the caffeine was withdrawn. In one case, there was not only extreme cerebral agitation, but also fright, followed by a loss of consciousness which lasted several hours. In still another case, a most violent delirium, in which the patient manifested decidedly destructive tendencies, was induced by caffeine.—*Good Health.*

ANCIENT LONDON.

ALMOST immediately after the Conquest the building taste of the Norman exhibited itself; St. Paul's Cathedral was rebuilt, and many new ecclesiastical foundations came into being. The number of monasteries built in the reign of Henry I. was so great that almost all the labourers of the country are said to have become bricklayers and carpenters. The distinctive feature of Plantagenet London was the coming of the friars in the thirteenth century, and it is not easy to understand how

room could be found within the City walls for the extensive buildings of the Black, the White, and the Grey Friars. During the Tudor period the monasteries which had taken such firm root in the land were suppressed, and many troubles followed therefrom. One effect was to leave large portions of the city almost in ruins. Gradually this evil was overcome, and hospitals took the place of monasteries and friaries. How wild the surrounding country was may be guessed from a proclamation of Henry VIII., the object of which was "to preserve the partridges, pheasants, and herons from his place at Westminster to St. Giles's in the Fields, from thence to Islington, Hampstead, and Hornsey Park." The settled character of Elizabeth's reign caused a change in this respect. Suburbs extended on all sides, and citizens built themselves residences in Middlesex, Essex, and Surrey. But Elizabeth found it necessary to issue a proclamation in 1580 forbidding any one to build upon ground which had never been built upon before within the memory of man: the extension of London being deemed to be full of evil, as spreading the plague, causing a scarcity of victuals, etc.—*Cassell's Storehouse of General Information.*

"WHISKY is never good to ward off anything. Good food is the best means with which to ward off disease. To dose with whisky is like adding shavings to the fire."—*G. F. Shradly, M.D.*

"WISDOM is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding." Prov. iv. 7.

Interesting Items.

- A political crisis is reported from Servia.
- Deaths from diphtheria are largely on the increase in the metropolis.
- The manufacture of silk from wood is said to have become a practical success in France.
- The German emperor has opened the Reichstag in person, making a speech from his throne.
- The *Hancock*, a new torpedo boat built by the Yarrow Company, has, without being pressed, attained a speed of thirty miles per hour.
- A Dundee whaler brings information of the loss of an Arctic exploring party, which was under the leadership of two Swedish scientists.
- An Anarchist outrage is reported from Marseilles, an attempt having been made to blow up the residence of the commander of the Fifteenth Army Corps.
- By the terms of the Convention just signed between England and the Transvaal, Swaziland has been ceded to the Boer Government under conditions safeguarding the rights of natives and white residents.
- The water supply of London is said to be running short of the demand. All the water companies of London, with one or two exceptions, are at the present date exceeding their Parliamentary limit of supply.
- The foreign trade of China now amounts to a total of some £52,000,000, being the equivalent of about 235,000,000 Haikwan taels. This was composed for last year of imports, £27,000,000, and exports, £25,000,000.

—Fighting has been renewed between the Riff Arabs and the Melilla garrison. The Spanish Government continues to push forward war preparations.

—The penny-in-the slot machines, it is declared, were used in Egyptian temples more than 2,000 years ago. By placing a piece of money in the slot, the worshippers received some consecrated water through a valve.

—Tahiti alone is capable of yearly producing 50,000 tons of sugar for export. The land, which practically in all parts of the plains is adapted for cane-growing, can be obtained at a very low figure.

—For the fourth time influenza threatens to become epidemic. It is raging in Birmingham, Blackburn, in the Bourne district, and in Essex. It is said to be associated with a condition of the throat which has a tendency to become diphtheric.

—Fifty-two miners have been entombed in a coal pit near Coatbridge, by the explosion of a paraffin lamp in the engine room of the colliery, which set fire to the framework. The ventilating fans were stopped, and it is feared the men have been suffocated.

—Mr. Rees and his wife, the only missionaries left in Matabeleland, have been treated kindly by Lobengula, and forwarded by him to Tati under an escort of Lobengula's people. Yet it is claimed, by way of palliation for the murder of the Matabele, that Lobengula is so hostile to the missionaries that they cannot live in his territory.

—Despatches from the Congo Free State announce that Captain Ponthier, after capturing Kirundu, an Arab stronghold, continued the pursuit of the retreating Arabs, and finally crushed them completely. Among the prisoners captured was Said ben Abadi, by whose orders Emin Pasha was beheaded. He was condemned to death, and shot.

—Martial law has been proclaimed at Rio de Janeiro by President Peixoto, extending to the 30th inst. Admiral de Mello having issued a warning of his intention to again bombard the city of Rio, the commander of the British squadron has protested that forty-eight hours should be allowed for foreigners to retire. Two insurgent magazines have been blown up.

—Another bomb explosion is reported from a town in Barcelona, a gate of the *gendarmerie* barracks having been blown to pieces. No one, however, was injured. A decree has been published suspending the usual constitutional guarantees in the Spanish province of Catalonia, in consequence of the Barcelona outrage. Anarchists will now be tried summarily. The issue of the decree is generally approved.

—A Social Democratic journalist has been sentenced at Dortmund to a year's imprisonment for having declared in a newspaper article that Prince Bismarck had falsified the famous Ems dispatch. The counsel for the defence asked that the Prince himself might be called, but this was refused; and the Public Prosecutor stated that while it was true that Prince Bismarck had altered the telegram in order to provoke a declaration of war, it was not on that account permissible to call a diplomatist a forger.

—Professor Garner, who went out to South-west Africa fourteen months ago to study the language of the monkey, considers he has succeeded in establishing what he went out to ascertain, viz., that the monkeys had a language which could, with study, be learned by man. The professor has brought home with him two examples of the Kulu Kamba chimpanzee, which it is said can communicate to the professor their wants and feelings. The professor reached about 250 miles inland from the coast. He stayed in his steel cage 101 days, and while there had many opportunities of observing the wild animals in their native haunts.

—A German newspaper published in Odessa announces that the Russian Minister of the Interior has forbidden the assembling of Stundists for the purposes of worship, on the ground that their meetings are injurious to the well-being of the people. An instance of the minute care taken to have the "Orthodox" Church held in the highest regard is seen in a new law against "negligent" treatment of the "icons" or holy pictures of the church, by persons engaged in their sale. They are not to be placed on the ground, or to be sold from carts, and when sold in shops they are not to rest on the ground. Should their sale be carried on in fairs, special places in the booths must be assigned them.

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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 23, 1893.

FOR TERMS, SEE FIRST PAGE.

THE Apostle James tells us, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." James iv. 3. Here is stated a cardinal principle to be borne in mind by all in asking the blessing of God. "The only way to keep the blessing of God, is to give it away."

ON the 11th inst. the new steamer *John Williams*, which was built for the London Missionary Society's use, was launched at Glasgow. The ship is 180 feet in length at the water line, is 700 tons burden, is fitted with electric light, and cabins specially built for a tropical climate, and cost £17,000. It is the fourth *John Williams*, and the fourteenth ship that has been set apart for the South Sea Mission.

AS THE result of the conference between the miners and the coal owners, suggested by Mr. Gladstone, and presided over by Lord Roseberry, the coal dispute was settled, and work began on Monday last, at the old rate of wages. This is a victory for the miners, since the strike was against a reduction. Work will continue at the old rates until February, when a conciliation board to be appointed at once will deal with the question. The strike had continued sixteen weeks, and had caused intense suffering.

A VICAR is one who takes the place of another, acting as substitute for him. A substitute implies the absence of the one for whom the substitute acts. If therefore it could be proved that the Pope of Rome is the vicar of Christ, that would only demonstrate that Christ had abandoned His people. For any people to claim that they have the vicar of Christ, is to disclaim the presence of Christ with them. But there is no necessity for a vicar of Christ, because we have His sure promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

THE Apostle Paul, answering for himself before Festus, when he had been accused by the Jews, said, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nei-

ther against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended anything at all." He could not have spoken thus if he had by example or precept taught disregard of the seventh-day Sabbath, or regard for Sunday as a sabbath day. His practice and teaching in this respect is thus shown to have been wholly in harmony with that of the men of God who lived back in what is known as the "Jewish age."

IT is stated that a new "incense society" has been quietly organised by some of the Church of England clergy, and that in a few hundreds of churches incense will be introduced at Christmas. The *Christian Commonwealth* states also that curates of some churches where confession cannot be practised, go secretly to confess to Romish priests, and that one of these curates advises souls in anxiety to do the same. One thing is certain, and that is that in the Church of England there is a strong current tending Romeward.

WE hear much about "the credulity of ignorance." That is bad indeed, as any mere credulity is. But the credulity of ignorance is not to be compared with the credulity of learning. When men have so much learning that they cannot believe the Bible, their credulity is amazing. As the natural consequence of rejecting the truth, they unhesitatingly accept the most patent falsehoods, and the greatest absurdities. It is when men profess themselves to be wise, that they become fools. Rom. i. 22. True wisdom comes from God, the Author of the Bible, and humility and an acknowledgment of our dependence upon Him is necessary in order to obtain it.

ACCORDING to the *Christian World*, "the most exciting topic" for consideration at the Manx Nonconformist Council, which has just met at Douglas, was "the question of the Manx magistracy, and the practical exclusion of nonconformists from the Bench. Rev. Thomas Rippon moved that a deputation be appointed to wait on the Lieutenant-Governor, and urge him to create additional magistrates to remedy the grievance complained of. At present, out of forty magistrates, thirty-eight are Churchmen." The resolution was unanimously carried. In order to get the full force of this situation, we must try to imagine the apostles holding a council and issuing a protest because they were not given

a place upon the Roman Magisterial Bench. When one wished Christ to act as a judge in a dispute, He replied, "Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" It should be enough for the servant to be as his Lord.

A WRITER in the *Guardian*, describing the religious (?) influences of public school life, says:—

I have in my mind one excellent young man of twenty-five, prepared for confirmation by a late respected head master and Prebendary of St. Paul's, who candidly admitted to me that all that confirmation had meant to him ten years ago was the possession of a new pair of gloves for the occasion! And I have known others, educated and confirmed not a hundred miles from Bristol, who had not even learned the commonest proprieties of worship, such as that kneeling, not *squatting* or *crouching*, is the proper attitude of prayer. Another tells me that all he can remember of the preparation for confirmation is that three times a week the candidates met in the school chapel, and nervously read aloud a chapter from the Gospels, a few verses each in turn; and that shortly before the day appointed, the head master (who now adorns a deanery) sent for each boy privately, and asked him what his besetting sin was, to which he invariably replied, "laziness," and was gently exhorted to greater industry.

It is this sort of education that so many people think is going to save the country from everlasting ruin. Strange that all Christians cannot see that nothing can be more damaging to the cause of true religion than the caricature of it that is provided by the State.

IT is commonly supposed that the Christian life is all hardship, and that the easy way is the way of sin. Like most popular suppositions, this is a mistake. The Bible assures us that "The way of transgressors is hard." Prov. xiii. 15. True, it often seems most pleasant, but that is because of the hallucination that Satan is able to produce. He intoxicates the senses, so that the dangers of the way seem to be comforts. On the other hand, Jesus says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. Matt. xi. 28-30.

RELIGIOUS MEETINGS.

THE Seventh-day Adventists of North London meet in Duncombe Hall, Duncombe Road, Hornsey Rise, every Sabbath at 11 A.M. This service is preceded by Sabbath-school.

Services are also held on Sundays at the same place, as follows: Bible study at 3 P.M., and preaching at 7 P.M. Hymn books and Bibles are provided for visitors, and all are welcome.