

PRESENT TRUTH

I AM THE WAY. THE TRUTH. AND THE LIFE. LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS.

VOL. 19.

LONDON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 1903.

NO. 36.

HEAVENLY FIRE.

WHEN God, in answer to Elijah's prayer, sent fire from heaven, which "consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench," it was not the first time that such a thing had been seen. When the first offerings were laid on God's altar in the tabernacle, "there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat." Lev. ix. 24.

"OUR God is a consuming fire." Heb. xii. 29. For forty years He had gone with Israel through the wilderness in a pillar of fire. That glorious Presence had been a Guide and a Stronghold to Israel, but it had also flashed forth at times in swift and terrible judgment. At the rebellion of Korah and the princes, "there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense." Num. xvi. 35. "And when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and His anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp." Num. xi. 1.

The presence of the Lord in the pillar of fire was a wonderful privilege for Israel, but the privilege brought with it the responsibility of walking with God, and

by heavenly fire; but when, under the influence of strong drink, Nadab and Abihu disregarded God's commands, and used strange fire, it was sudden destruction for them. "There went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." Lev. x. 1, 2, 9. Again when Solomon dedicated the temple to God, the fire from heaven came down and consumed the sacrifice (2 Chron. vii. 1), as it had done when David consecrated the spot where the temple was built, the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 1 Chron. xxi. 26.



AGAIN in Elijah's day, after God had honoured His prophet, and declared Himself, by sending fire from heaven, it was a perilous thing to slight the revelation that had been given. When Ahab's captains came to seize God's servant with violence, to hand him over to the king, "there came down fire from heaven" again, and the captains and their soldiers were destroyed. 2 Kings i. Yet the fire of God had no peril for Elijah. It was in a chariot of fire, drawn by horses of fire, that Elijah ascended into heaven.

being separate from the unclean thing. It was a marvellous thing for the priests that they might minister in the presence of God, and offer sacrifices to be consumed

2 Kings ii. 11. He was prepared for the experience of which the prophet Isaiah speaks: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall

dwell with everlasting burnings?" And the answer shows that it is the man who has allowed God to consume his sins. It is "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly." Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15

THE Spirit of God is represented as fire. "There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God." Rev. iv. 5. The mighty river of life, proceeding from the throne, is "as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire," and in that devouring fire the righteous dwell, for the victors "stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Rev. xv. 2. Daniel says, "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him." Dan. vii. 10. That stream of fire comes from the throne now to cleanse from sin. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Matt. iii. 11 "The Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning." Isa. iv. 4.

WHEN the infant church of Christ had confessed its sins and received the righteousness of God, by faith in its risen Lord, being all together in one mind, the fire of God came upon them, not for destruction, but in cloven tongues resting upon them, to make of each one "a burning and a shining light." When we allow the "spirit of burning" to consume our iniquities, it will remain with us. The lamps of fire before the throne of God will be in us, our righteousness will be as brightness, and our salvation will go forth as a lamp that burneth. Isa. lxii. 1.

BUT for those who refuse to let the Spirit do its cleansing work, there remains the cleansing that will be effected in their destruction. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him." Ps. i. 3 "A fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about." Ps. xcvii. 3. "Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with His anger . . . His tongue as a devouring fire." "For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; He hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." Isa. xxx. 27-33. "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matt. iii. 12.

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel." 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

HIS WAY.

I KNOW not what the future holds,
Of joy or pain;
I know not what the end may bring,
Of loss or gain;
I leave the hidden things with God,
He knoweth best;
He gives the harvest golden grain,
The labourer rest.

But I would learn His will to-day,
As love would guide;
And follow where He leadeth me,
Whate'er betide;
Content to know that in His hand
My path shall be,
A journey to the heavenly home,
His face to see.

If tears must fall o'er pain and loss,
His rainbow light
Will gird them round, and make the gloom
With promise bright.
Each sorrow-crested wave that rolls
With foam of snow
Holds something in its hidden depth
That we might know,
Could we but see with angel eyes—
But sight is dim:
Enough to know that it is there:
We wait for Him.

We wait; sometime within His sight
That wave of pain
Will cast upon the crystal sea
Our loss, in gain.
And from the mists of life will smile,
In beauty fair,
The image that His hand has traced
Through hours of care.
So I would walk with Him to-day,
He knoweth best,
In joy or pain, the upward way
Still leads to rest.

—R. H.

ALPHA AND OMEGA.

I AM Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev. xxii. 13. Four times in the Revelation, Christ speaks of Himself in these words. It must be that they contain a lesson of deep importance for His church.

LIKE sheep among wolves, Christ was sending forth His disciples. When these words were written, the time was close at hand when learned philosophers, partly converted from heathenism, would join the church in large numbers and corrupt it with their worldly wisdom. At such a

time these words would be a bulwark to the believer, testing the teachings of philosophy, and making known whether they were of God, or of anti-Christ.

JESUS CHRIST comprises all truth, all wisdom, all power, for His disciples. Whatever is not of Him is not for them. He is the beginning and the end. There is no possibility of outgrowing Him, or His Word, and remaining Christian. Human wisdom is very anxious to advance, and in this anxiety, it is not always careful to make progress in the right direction. It sometimes departs from the beginning, but when it does this, it loses all hope of ever reaching the end, for He who is the end is also the beginning.

PAUL was very emphatic on this point in his epistles. "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." 2 Cor. xi. 3. The believer must continue steadfastly in the beginning. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him. . . . Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. . . . Ye are complete in Him." Col. ii. 6-10.

THE danger is very great still. In these last days when the end is at hand, Satan is doing his utmost to obscure the beginning, that men may not understand the end. This is why the Scriptures have been the object of his fierce attacks. On the other hand, God is calling the minds of men back to the beginning. He is calling for a return to the Sabbath of the Lord, which a church, spoiled through philosophy and vain deceit, thought to do away with and replace by a day of its own appointment. The true Sabbath takes us back to the beginning, and when we get to the beginning, we find there the ending of God's work, and the Sabbath, which means rest, given to man as a reminder that God's works were finished, that there remaineth a rest for the people of God. Read Gen. ii. 1-3; Heb. iv. 3, 4. Man cannot complete what God has begun. He finishes His own work, and our part is to rest "complete in Him."

THERE is great comfort in this truth to the believer. God has not given us a

partial or incomplete salvation. He has given us the end as well as the beginning. In Christ we have the final victory, just as surely as we have the first awakening of repentance. All that is required is that we abide in Him. "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Heb. iii. 14.

WHEN we were created in Christ Jesus, preparation was made for our entire future, from beginning to end. Good works were prepared for us to walk in. Eph. ii. 15. These were the life of Christ, who is the Way. If the good works that meet us seem too hard for us, we only need to inquire if they are a part of the life of Christ. If they are, we may walk in them confidently, for Christ is the end as well as the beginning, and we are partakers of Him as long as we hold the beginning steadfastly. "All things are yours; whether . . . the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come . . . and ye are Christ's." 1 Cor. iii. 21-23.

WE shall never rightly appreciate how much is given to us in the beginning until we get to the end. But we may be "confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. i. 6.

THE OBJECT OF THE CHURCH.

IN a book dealing with Africa and its Missions, Dr. James Stewart puts the question, "What does the Church exist for?"

Its own conservation, or a self-regarding religious culture, can hardly be the complete answer, or the chief object of its existence.

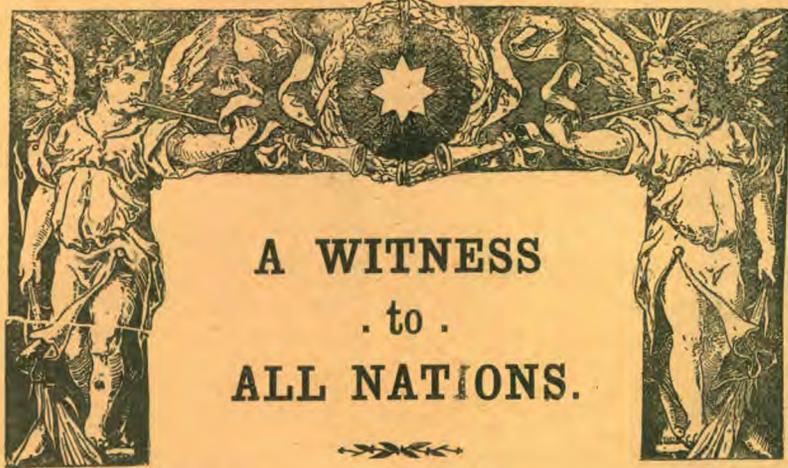
Jesus Christ, the Founder of Christianity and of the Church, when He was on earth, said little about such conservation. Yet His public life was hardly begun when He sent out twelve men, and later on seventy, with a certain message; and His last act consisted of directions to His Church to carry that message all over the world, and "make Christians of all nations."

Twenty centuries have passed away, and the work is still undone—in reality is now being begun.

In the early days of the church when it took up the work committed to it by Christ, it was a power in the earth, and its missionary work was that which most effectually conserved its own life. "Power from on high," the casting out of devils, the signs and wonders that should follow the believers, were all linked with the commission to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. It was while

they should be teaching all nations that the promise would be theirs, "Lo, I am with you alway" When the church takes up its work, it will know its wonderful

privileges. As long as it neglects the commission, so long it must be willing to incur the contempt of the world for its weakness and inefficiency.



THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL.

AND I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Rev. xiv. 6, 7.

IN these words a special, world-wide proclamation of the Gospel is brought to view. It is the same work of which Christ spoke when He said, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 14. This appears from the fact that the next event in the prophecy is the coming of Christ. "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." Rev. xiv. 14-16.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

THE Gospel as a witness is preached to all the earth, and accomplishes its work. It is appropriate that a "witness" should be borne when the hour of judgment is come. The character of this last proclamation of the everlasting Gospel is essentially in the nature of personal testimony. It is no professional preaching, but the telling of a living experience. It

arouses the wrath of the dragon, but it does its work. "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. xii. 17.

When Jesus Christ preached the Gospel, He did not speak as the scribes, quoting precedents and handing down echoes of the doctrines of the fathers. He drew His wisdom and understanding from God, the Fountain-Head, and lived by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. iv. 4. Thus the Word of God was His life, and He was the Word made flesh. John i. 14. The Gospel was Himself, and whether He was speaking or not, in every action of His life He was revealing the character of God, and thus declaring the glad tidings. It is "this Gospel," the Gospel as it was made known by Christ, which is to be preached in all the world for a witness before the end comes.

ANGEL WORKERS.

JOHN saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having this everlasting Gospel to proclaim to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. This shows that angelic power will be connected with the work, and that the preaching occupies a central place among the angels, receiving the attention and co-operation of every one of them; but it does not mean that men are excluded from the work. There are evil angels spoken of in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, and these are called the dragon. So far as human history knows, the powers there spoken of are composed entirely of men. The Scripture shows, however, that Satanic agencies were

directing and controlling in all that was done. So in the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, men seem to be doing the work, but John saw the part acted by the angels. It is encouraging to remember that those who work for God are not left to toil alone. Sometimes it seems so, and hearts grow faint at the opposition of the enemy; but angels of God are with His servants, and superhuman power is at their call. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Ps. xxxiv. 7. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14.

A PUR GOSPEL.

ALTHOUGH this call is the final one, the going out into the highways and hedges to compel men to come in, it is no more than the "everlasting Gospel." It has no new features; rather it goes back and revives the forgotten truths of the Gospel. It is the message that Christ and His apostles preached. It is not found somewhere outside of the Scriptures, but it does include every truth that is given in the Bible. Hence it will be a work of reform, a call to walk in the old paths, a restoration of the practice and teaching of the apostolic church.

The message is given with a loud voice, which shows that it will command attention everywhere, and its burden is, Fear God; give glory to Him; the hour of His judgment is come; worship the Creator. At first sight we might not see what justification there was for describing such a message as the everlasting Gospel, because Gospel means "glad tidings"; but the more we study it, and live it, the more gladness we shall find in it.

GOD OR MAN?

FEAR God, and give glory to Him. At the outset we are called upon to abandon the tendency of the age, which is to give glory to men, and forget God. Give glory where it belongs. How much glory is due to men? "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field; . . . the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever." Isa. xl. 6, 7. But what of the great nations of the earth? "All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing and vanity." Isa. xl. 17.

Suppose we agree to what the Lord says about our being less than nothing, and

give Him all the glory, how much better off are we? "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." Isa. xl. 31. So that it makes all the difference to us, whether we fear God and give glory to Him or not. If we take glory to ourselves when we are as frail and as helpless as the grass, we are deluding ourselves, and in the hour of need will find that we have trusted in a broken staff. If we put our trust in God, and give Him all the glory, we shall find that "the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him." Ps. ciii. 17.

WHAT GOD CLAIMS.

LET US see what God claims for Himself, that we may give Him the glory that is due unto His name. He claims to be the Creator. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob." Good. We will give Him the credit. He created us.

"And He that formed thee, O Israel." Is that so? God formed me? What for? "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" 1 Cor. iii. 16. How wonderful! But since I am going to give glory to God, I must allow that He speaks the truth, and give Him the credit for all He says He has done. So I know, then, that my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. That means that the Spirit of God dwells in me. That means a good deal for me, and I am glad of it.

What next? "Fear not; for I have redeemed thee." I wish I could be personally sure that that was true. But stop, that is doubting God,—not giving Him credit for speaking truth. God says He has redeemed me. So I am really redeemed. Praise the Lord!

CALLED BY NAME.

"I HAVE called thee by thy name." I am so glad to know that God calls me individually, not merely as one in the mass, but He calls me personally by my name. He has established a close relation between Himself and me, and we call each other by name. I am on the roll-call of heaven, the Lamb's book of life. My name is written there, and it will stay there as long as I go on giving glory to Him, for He says of the stars: "He calleth them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking." Isa. xl. 26, R.V.

"Thou art Mine." God says it, and I believe it, for I am honouring Him now and

believe His statements. I am not seeking glory for myself, for His is "the kingdom and the power and the glory," and I am His, and in Him I have it all. So that when I keep the glory from Him, I wither like the grass, but when I give all glory to Him, He crowns me with glory and honour.

A MEANS OF BLESSING.

SURELY, it is a blessed Gospel, glad tidings indeed, that calls me to fear God, and give glory to Him. What riches I find then in His Word! for all the statements I have taken for true are contained in one verse. Isa. xliii. 1. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine." Whatever else I find in the Bible I will take by faith, for I am going to honour God by believing Him and obeying Him.

From this we can see that those who obey the Word, "Fear God, and give glory to Him," will be believers in every word that God has spoken; they will not follow Him with a divided heart, but will have the fulness of His power, by faith, in their lives. They will be a Gospel church, full of the fruits of righteousness, and instead of being a reproach upon the name of the Lord, and an occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, they will be an honour to Him, because they will let His power alone be seen in their lives. He will be proud of them, and will send them to every nation and kindred and tongue and people as His ambassadors and witnesses.

"The hour of His judgment is come." This is a large subject, and will be taken up by itself next week.

CREATION IN THE GOSPEL.

"WORSHIP Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." These words take our minds back to the creation. They call us away from the theories of self-glorifying scientists to the Bible record of creation, and bid us worship the Creator. If we are going to have a part in the everlasting Gospel, we must give the honour and the glory to God, and so we inquire how God would have us worship Him as the Creator. We turn back to the record, and we read that as soon as the work of the Creator was finished, "He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had

rested from all His work which God created and made." Gen. ii. 2, 3.

THE STANDARD UPLIFTED.

ADAM and Eve were the only human beings alive. They were unfallen and they rested with God from all His works, worshipping and adoring Him who had made them and delighting in communion with Him. The seventh day was blessed and sanctified, or set apart, to be observed by all God's children for ever, in the worship of Him who made heaven and earth. The Sabbath was not for any particular portion of Adam's descendants. It was for all. "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark ii. 27. Those who did not desire to retain the knowledge of God might refuse to honour Him, by keeping holy the day He had set apart for worship, but the household of faith was to keep it for ever. "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." It was to be "a perpetual covenant." "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." Ex. xxxi. 13-17.

We find that in the new earth, where the righteous will dwell in the ages to come, the perpetual covenant of the Sabbath will be regarded. "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." Isa. lxvi. 23.

THE GOSPEL SABBATH.

GOD is now gathering out a people, to be prepared for the Lord's coming, to carry His Gospel throughout the earth, and be a glory to His name. His Word will be the standard for each one, and He is now revealing defects and errors wherever they exist in order that those who love and honour Him may forsake their own ways, and come "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. v. 13.

Many have seen that the seventh day, and not the first, is the Sabbath of the Lord, and that in keeping the Sunday they are not worshipping their Creator and Redeemer, but showing honour to men. Yet they hesitate to obey God because of the fear that they will lose situations or business or friends. They put these before

the Lord. But the call is to "Fear God, and give glory to Him." How can we say we are giving glory to God, as the Creator of the universe and the One who supplies the wants of every living thing, when we are afraid to obey His voice for fear we may lose our living? Whom are we giving glory to, then? Plainly to some man, either ourselves or our employers. If we will really give to God the glory due to Him, we shall know that He keeps us now and supplies our needs, and we will not be so faithless as to think that the man who does not fear God is more sure of a living than the man who obeys Him.

It is only when such a test comes to us that we realise how little we know of the true God, and how much He has been to us but an empty name. But now God calls to a higher experience, that His servants may be sealed with the seal of *the living God*. Rev. vii. 1-3.

CHRIST, "THE PRINCE OF LIFE."

"Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things."

THOU liv'st, my life to be,
O blessed Lord!
Live, then, Thy life in me,
Ever adored!
Thou may I have of Thee,
Through Thee and unto Thee,
Life more abundantly,
By Thine own Word.

"By Him all things consist."

Life's Principality,
Lord Jesus Christ,
Is Thine, because by Thee
All things consist.
All might and majesty,
In earth or sky or sea,
Must all ascribe to Thee
And none resist.

"And He is before all things."

And Thou *predest* all
Eternally;
So all things great or small,
Concerning me,
Follow Thy gracious will,
Thy purpose to fulfil—
My purpose only still
To follow Thee. —*The Christian.*

THE BARREN FIG-TREE.

JESUS had spent the entire night in prayer, and in the morning He came again to the temple. On the way He passed a fig-orchard. He was hungry, "and seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, He came, if haply He might find anything thereon; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet."

It was not the season for ripe figs, except in certain localities; and on the highlands about Jerusalem it might truly be said, "The time of figs was not yet." But in the orchard to which Jesus came,

one tree appeared to be in advance of all the others. It was already covered with leaves. It is the nature of the fig-tree that before the leaves open, the growing fruit appears. Therefore this tree in full leaf gave promise of well-developed fruit. But its appearance was deceptive. Upon searching its branches, from the lowest bow to the topmost twig, Jesus found "nothing but leaves." It was a mass of pretentious foliage, nothing more.

Christ uttered against it a withering curse. "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever," He said. The next morning, as the Saviour and His disciples were again on their way to the city, the blasted branches and drooping leaves attracted their attention. "Master," said Peter, "behold, the fig-tree which Thou cursedst is withered away."

Christ's act in cursing the fig-tree had astonished the disciples. It seemed to them unlike His ways and works. Often they had heard Him declare that He came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. They remembered His words, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke ix. 56. His wonderful works had been done to restore, never to destroy. The disciples had known Him only as the Restorer, the Healer. This act stood alone. What was its purpose? they questioned.

God "delighteth in mercy." "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Micah vii. 18; Ezek. xxxiii. 11. To Him the work of destruction and the denunciation of judgment is a "strange work." Isa. xxviii. 21. But it is in mercy and love that He lifts the veil from the future, and reveals to men the results of a course of sin.

The cursing of the fig-tree was an acted parable. That barren tree, flaunting its pretentious foliage in the very face of Christ, was a symbol of the Jewish nation. The Saviour desired to make plain to His disciples the cause and the certainty of Israel's doom. For this purpose He invested the tree with moral qualities, and made it the expositor of divine truth. The Jews stood forth distinct from all other nations, professing allegiance to God. They had been specially favoured by Him, and they laid claim to righteousness above every other people. But they were corrupted by the love of the world and the greed of gain. They boasted of their knowledge, but they were ignorant of the requirements of God, and were full of hypocrisy. Like the barren tree, they spread their pretentious branches aloft, luxuriant in appearance, and beautiful to the eye, but they yielded "nothing but leaves." The Jewish religion, with its magnificent temple, its sacred altars, its mitred priests and impressive ceremonies, was indeed fair in outward appearance, but humility, love, and benevolence were lacking.

† International Sunday-school Lesson for Sept. 13.

All the trees in the fig-orchard were destitute of fruit; but the leafless trees raised no expectation, and caused no disappointment. By these trees the Gentiles were represented. They were as destitute as were the Jews of godliness; but they had not professed to serve God. They made no boastful pretensions to goodness. They were blind to the works and ways of God. With them the time of figs was not yet. They were still waiting for a day which would bring them light and hope. The Jews, who had received greater blessings from God, were held accountable for their abuse of these gifts. The privileges of which they boasted, only increased their guilt.

Jesus had come to the fig-tree hungry, to find food. So He had come to Israel, hungering to find in them the fruits of righteousness. He had lavished on them His gifts, that they might bear fruit for the blessing of the world. Every opportunity and privilege had been granted them, and in return He sought their sympathy and co-operation in His work of grace. He longed to see in them self-sacrifice and compassion, zeal for God, and a deep yearning of soul for the salvation of their fellow men. Had they kept the law of God, they would have done the same unselfish work that Christ did. But love to God and man was eclipsed by pride and self-sufficiency. They brought ruin upon themselves by refusing to minister to others. The treasures of truth which God had committed to them, they did not give to the world. In the barren tree they might read both their sin and its punishment. Withered beneath the Saviour's curse, standing forth sere and blasted, dried up from the roots, the fig-tree showed what the Jewish people would be when the grace of God was removed from them. Refusing to impart blessing, they would no longer receive it. "O Israel," the Lord says, "thou hast destroyed thyself." Hosea xlii. 9

The warning is for all time. Christ's act in cursing the tree which His own power had created, stands as a warning to all churches and to all Christians. No one can live the law of God without ministering to others. But there are many who do not live out Christ's merciful, unselfish life. Some who think themselves excellent Christians do not understand what constitutes service for God. They plan and study to please themselves. They act only in reference to self. Time is of value to them only as they can gather for themselves. In all the affairs of life this is their object. Not for others but for themselves do they minister. God created them to live in a world where unselfish service must be performed. He designed them to help their fellow men in every possible way. But self is so large that they cannot see anything else. They are not in touch with humanity. Those who

thus live for self are like the fig-tree, which made every pretension, but was fruitless. They observe the forms of worship, but without repentance or faith. In profession they honour the law of God, but obedience is lacking. They say, but do not. In the sentence pronounced on the fig-tree Christ demonstrates how hateful in His eyes is this vain pretence. He declares that the open sinner is less guilty than is he who professes to serve God, but who bears no fruit to His glory.

The parable of the fig-tree spoken before Christ's visit to Jerusalem, had a direct connection with the lesson He taught in cursing the fruitless tree. For the barren tree of the parable the gardener pleaded, Let it alone this year, until I shall dig about it and dress it; and if it bear fruit, well; but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. Increased care was to be given the unfruitful tree. It was to have every advantage. But if it remained fruitless, nothing could save it from destruction. In the parable the result of the gardener's work was not foretold. It depended upon that people to whom Christ's words were spoken. They were represented by the fruitless tree, and it rested with them to decide their own destiny. Every advantage that Heaven could bestow was given them, but they did not profit by their increased blessings. By Christ's act in cursing the barren fig-tree, the result was shown. They had determined their own destruction.

For more than a thousand years the Jewish nation had abused God's mercy and invited His judgments. They had rejected His warnings and slain His prophets. For these sins the people of Christ's day made themselves responsible by following the same course. In the rejection of their present mercies and warnings lay the guilt of that generation. The fetters which the nation had for centuries been forging the people of Christ's day were fastening upon themselves.

In every age there is given to men their day of light and privilege, a probationary time in which they may become reconciled to God. But there is a limit to this grace. Mercy may plead for years and be slighted and rejected; but there comes a time when mercy makes her last plea. The heart becomes so hardened that it ceases to respond to the Spirit of God. Then the sweet, winning voice entreats the sinner no longer, and reproofs and warnings cease.

That day had come to Jerusalem. Jesus wept in anguish over the doomed city, but He could not deliver her. He had exhausted every resource. In rejecting the warnings of God's Spirit, Israel had rejected the only means of help. There was no other power by which they could be delivered.

The Jewish nation was a symbol of the people of all ages who scorn the pleadings of Infinite Love. The tears of Christ when

He wept over Jerusalem were for the sins of all time. In the judgments pronounced upon Israel, those who reject the reproofs and warnings of God's Holy Spirit may read their own condemnation.

In this generation there are many who are treading on the same ground as were the unbelieving Jews. They have witnessed the manifestation of the power of God; the Holy Spirit has spoken to their hearts; but they cling to their unbelief and resistance. God sends them warnings and reproof, but they are not willing to confess their errors, and they reject His message and His messenger. The very means He uses for their recovery becomes to them a stone of stumbling.

The prophets of God were hated by apostate Israel because through them their hidden sins were brought to light. Ahab regarded Elijah as his enemy because the prophet was faithful to rebuke the king's secret iniquities. So to-day the servant of Christ, the reprover of sin, meets with scorn and rebuffs. Bible truth, the religion of Christ, struggles against a strong current of moral impurity. Prejudice is even stronger in the hearts of men now than in Christ's day. Christ did not fulfil men's expectations; His life was a rebuke to their sins, and they rejected Him. So now the truth of God's Word does not harmonise with men's practices and their natural inclination, and thousands reject its light. Men prompted by Satan, cast doubt upon God's Word, and choose to exercise their independent judgment. They choose darkness rather than light, but they do it at the peril of their own souls. Those who cavilled at the words of Christ, found ever-increased cause for cavil, until they turned from the Truth and the Life. So it is now. God does not propose to remove every objection which the carnal heart may bring against His truth. To those who refuse the precious rays of light, which would illuminate the darkness, the mysteries of God's Word remain such for ever. From them the truth is hidden. They walk blindly, and know not the ruin before them.

Christ overlooked the world and all ages from the height of Olivet; and His words are applicable to every soul who slight the pleadings of divine mercy. Scornful of His love, He addresses you to-day. It is "thou, even thou," who shouldst know the things that belong to thy peace. Christ is shedding bitter tears for you, who have no tears to shed for yourself. Already that fatal hardness of heart which destroyed the Pharisees is manifest in you. And every evidence of the grace of God, every ray of divine light, is either melting and subduing the soul, or confirming it in hopeless impenitence.

Christ foresaw that Jerusalem would remain obdurate and impenitent; yet all the guilt, all the consequences of rejected mercy, lay at her own door. Thus it will

be with every soul who is following the same course. The Lord declares, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." "Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto My words, nor to My law, but rejected it." Hosea xiii. 9; Jer. vi. 19.

COMING AGAIN.

SHORTLY before His crucifixion, the Saviour gave His disciples this comforting assurance:—

Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John xiv. 1-3.

This word, "again," means, "once more." The Lord's promise had reference therefore to a definite, literal coming similar in some respects at least to His first coming, so that He would be recognised by them as the same Jesus who was soon to be taken away from them.

That this is the meaning of the promise is put beyond all question by the words of the two angels who appeared to the disciples as they stood gazing up into heaven after their departing Lord; for as they were thus earnestly looking up—

Two men [angels] stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. Acts i. 10, 11.

Observe the words of the angel, "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go." With this agree also other texts, as we shall see.

When He went away, "a cloud received Him out of their sight." Of His coming again it is written: "Behold, He cometh with clouds." Rev. i. 7. Again in Rev. xiv. 14, we read this prophetic description of His coming: "I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle."

In the text just quoted we are told that the cloud is white, and that the Son of man sits upon it or is borne along by it. Turning again to Acts i. 10, we find that the two angels which appeared to the disciples were "in white apparel." A multitude of white-robed angels would at a distance present the appearance of a white cloud. Moreover, in Matt. xxv. 31, we learn that when the Son of man comes in His glory, He is escorted by an immense multitude of angels, for "all the holy angels" are with Him. The conclusion is irresistible that the cloud so often spoken of in connection with our Lord's second

coming is not a symbol of mystery, but a literal cloud of holy angels.

However much men may despise the promise of our Lord's second coming—His coming again—however much they may deny that He is coming, yet the truth of the divine word remains unshaken. "Heaven and earth may pass away," said the Saviour, "but My words shall not pass away." He promised to come, and He "is not slack concerning His promise." 2 Peter iii. 9.

He will come personally,—come as He went away,—come the same compassionate Saviour He was while upon earth. He will come, not to die on a cross, but to reign on a throne, for "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. 32, 33. C. P. BOLLMAN.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

TAKE some time each day to commune with God; to meditate upon the things of God; upon what He has done for you; upon what He has promised that He would do. To do this satisfactorily, one must be familiar with God's revelation of Himself in the written Word and in the life of Christ. An hour of solitude is far from misspent time, if in it one has been holding converse with his Maker. Such solitude spent in earnest, sincere prayer will do more for us than any amount of theological training without it. In such solitude we are not solitary; we are in the audience-chamber of God. His ear is open to our pleadings, and the fountain of wisdom and consolation is open to our needs. It is our blessed privilege to enter that chamber when we will, and learn there the meaning of much that may be mysterious and uncertain to us now. We can make our times of solitude rich with blessings if we will.—*Signs of the Times.*

CONVINCING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THE celebrated Dr. Hopkins, the theologian, had tried long by learned arguments to lead his brother to Christ, but utterly in vain. On the last occasion on which they discussed it, he displayed so much temper that his brother smiled and told him that he did not inspire much faith in his own arguments. He was so humbled by his failure that it nearly broke his heart, and he went to his room to spend the night in agony and confession, wondering how the Lord could ever forgive him or use him again. Early the next morning he hastened to his brother's presence to beg his forgiveness for having so dishonoured his Master and betrayed His cause. The brother listened in astonishment and broke

down before his humbling attitude. "My brother," he said, "must have something that I am a stranger to. I could not thus humiliate myself before another for so slight a cause. I must look into this religion that gives him power to rise superior to his own strong nature." And so that breakdown and the restoration that followed it had the effect of leading to Christ the brother who could answer all arguments, but had nothing to say against the power of holiness and victory.—*Sel.*

REBEKAH'S HYMN.

WHEN Israel, of the Lord beloved,
Out from the land of bondage came,
Her father's God before her moved,
An awful Guide in smoke and flame.
By day along the astonished lands
The cloudy pillar gilded slow;
By night Arabia's crimsoned sands
Return'd the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
And trump and timbrel answered keen;
And Zion's daughters poured their lays,
With priest's and warrior's voice between.
No portents now our foes amaze;
Forsaken Israel wanders lone;
Our fathers would not know Thy ways,
And Thou hast left them to their own.

But present still, though now unseen!
When brightly shines the prosperous day,
Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy screen
To temper the deceitful ray.
And, oh, when stoops on Judah's path
In shade and storm the frequent night,
Be Thou, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censor round our altar beams,
And mute are timbrel, harp, and horn.
And Thou hast said: "The blood of goat,
The flesh of rams I will not prize;
A contrite heart, a humble thought,
Are Mine accepted sacrifice."

—Sir Walter Scott.

THE spirit of Simon Magus is not dead. There are still those who love power, who love pre-eminence. They do not want the gift of the Holy Spirit so much, if at all, for themselves, as in order that they may influence others. What a snare is the love of personal power and influence! We want the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. Self will shrivel and vanish before that power. "No flesh shall glory in His presence."—*J. J. Luce.*

THE religion of Christ can go through the den of lions; it will pass unharmed through the fire, but it cannot endure contamination with the world. When love for Christ is mixed with love for the world, it loses its power and becomes worthless.



CLOUDS.

God paints His bow on all the clouds He sends;
Though they be black, and oft surcharged with
death;

Yet frames He them in rainbow tints of love,
And circles all with His sweet promises.
And oft times God will fold back all the clouds,
That our weak faith may see His radiant face
Of matchless love, and full-orbed tenderness.
Then sendeth He a summer breeze of heaven,
Laden with hope and messages of grace,
To calm our hearts, and still them into peace—
Peace heralding that day when we shall be
At home with Him in His eternal rest.

—S. Trevor Francis.

OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.

IT is a sad thought that there must be at the present time thousands of men and women, outcasts of society, who but for the want of *one* wise and kindly office at some critical juncture of their lives might have been among its useful members.

Many a man has been lost to society from his inability to retrace his first false step, who, had the Christian principle been applied to him, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him *alone*," might to-day have been living in the honour and esteem of his fellows.

The following incident from the life of Isaac Hopper aptly illustrates this more excellent way:—

William Savery was a tanner by trade, and one night a quantity of hides were stolen from his tannery; he had reason to believe that the thief was a quarrelsome, drunken neighbour, whom I will call John Smith. The next week the following advertisement appeared in the county newspaper: "Whoever stole a lot of hides on the fifth of the present month is hereby informed that the owner has a sincere wish to be his friend. If poverty tempted him to this false step, the owner will keep the whole transaction secret, and will gladly put him in the way of obtaining money by means more likely to bring him peace of mind."

This singular advertisement attracted considerable attention; but the culprit alone knew whence the benevolent offer came. When he read it, his heart melted within him, and he was filled with contri-

tion for what he had done. A few nights afterward, as the tanner's family were about retiring to rest, they heard a timid knock; and when the door was opened, there stood John Smith, with a load of hides on his shoulder. Without looking up, he said, "I've brought these back, Mr. Savery. Where shall I put them?" "Wait till I can light a lantern, and I will go to the barn with thee," he replied; "then perhaps thou wilt come in and tell me how this happened: we will see what can be done for thee."

As soon as they were gone out, his wife prepared some hot coffee, and placed pies and meat on the table. When they returned from the barn, she said, "Neighbour Smith, I thought some hot supper would be good for thee." He turned his back toward her, and would not speak. After leaning against the fire-place in silence for a moment, he said, in a choked voice, "It is the first time I ever stole anything, and I have felt very bad about it. I don't know how it is. I am sure I didn't think that I should ever come to be what I am; but I took to drinking and then to quarrelling. Since I began to go down hill, everybody gives me a kick; you are the first man who has ever offered me a helping hand. My wife is sickly, and my children starving. You have sent them many a meal, God bless you! and yet I stole the hides from you, meaning to sell them the first chance I could get. But I tell you the truth when I say it is the first time I was ever a thief." "Let it be the last, my friend," replied William Savery; "the secret shall remain between ourselves. Thou art still young, and it is in thy power to make up for lost time. Promise me that thou wilt not drink any intoxicating liquor for a year, and I will employ thee to-morrow at good wages. Perhaps we may find some employment for thy family also. The little boy can, at least, pick up stones. But eat a bit now, and drink some hot coffee; perhaps it will keep thee from craving anything stronger for to-night. Doubtless thou wilt find it hard to abstain at first; but keep up a brave heart, for the sake of thy wife and children, and it will soon become easy. When thou hast need of coffee, tell Mary, and she will always give it to thee."

The poor fellow tried to eat and drink, but the food seemed to choke him. After an ineffectual effort to compose his excited

feelings, he bowed his head on the table and wept like a child. After awhile he ate and drank with good appetite, and his host parted with him for the night with this kindly exhortation: "Try to do well, John, and thou wilt always find a friend in me." He entered his employ the next day, and remained with him many years, a sober, honest, and faithful man. The secret of the theft was kept between them; but after John's death William Savery sometimes told the story to prove that evil might be overcome with good.—*Anon.*

DO YOU DESPISE THE DESPISED?

I MET a woman the other day who said that she did not see how a woman who had any refinement at all could be induced to do Gospel work for the intemperate. She knew that she could not do it, and she was thankful that there was a better class which she could work for.

A few days later she missed her little boy, and a neighbour said he saw him go into a public-house. Then she fairly ran there. But she went there for "her boy." That made quite a difference. When it is "our boy" or "our brother" going astray, it is easy enough to go after them. It is harder not to do it, but God is "our Father," and we are all ONE family.

My heart is made sad when I meet a mother who never had sympathy with rescue work for women until after her own daughter had gone astray; wrecks of humanity she would not stoop to speak to until she saw how empty her own home was, and what it meant to lose her own girl. Then she could sympathise with some other poor child who perhaps never had a mother's love and careful home training.

One woman said to me that she could not assist in the gaol service, for she could not endure the smell, but the day came when her own son wrote to her from a prison cell, and then she went to him.—*Mary F. Smith.*

THE WONDERS OF MODERN FARMING MACHINERY.

ALL the great crops are now planted, and all except cotton are gathered, by machinery. Let us follow a crop throughout a season's work and see the changes that have come in its treatment.

The ploughman no longer trudges slowly and wearily back and forth across his field. He rides a plough with a spring seat. There are special ploughs for every need—turf ploughs, stubble ploughs, subsoil ploughs, ploughs for heavy work, ploughs for light work, and combination ploughs turning three furrows at once. So simple are many of them that a boy can drive one.

A sixty horse-power traction engine, drawing twenty-one feet of disc ploughs,

will break the ground to a depth of ten inches at the rate of forty-five to sixty acres a day. With ploughs designed especially for this work, a strip twenty-eight feet wide can be broken. This means that a man and a pair of horses with a single plough would have to cross a field twenty-eight times to do the same work that a traction engine does by one trip of its ploughs. A farmer who uses a small traction engine and a gang of four fourteen-inch ploughs says that it costs him from two shillings to two-and-six per acre to break his ground.

The land made ready for the reception of the seed, machinery still does the work that muscle used to do. The grain is broadcasted or drilled in with mechanical evenness, and the machine automatically registers the acreage sown. In like manner his maize is drilled in, listed or planted in squares, his potatoes are planted, and even his cabbage, and his cauliflower, are set out by machinery, and the work is done better than it could possibly be by hand—this, besides the saving of time and toil. Even in the vegetable garden, seeders for all kinds of seeds are now extensively used. The machines are pushed in front of the operator, and they automatically drop and cover the seeds at the desired distances and depth, and at the same time mark off the next row.—*World's Work*.

WHAT YOU CAN DO.

"I THINK a Christian can go anywhere," said a young woman who was defending her continued attendance at some very doubtful places of amusement.

"Certainly she can," rejoined her friend; but I am reminded of a little incident that happened last summer when I went with a party of friends to explore a coal mine. One of the young women appeared dressed in a dainty white gown. When her friends remonstrated with her, she appealed to the old miner who was to act as guide to the party.

"Can't I wear a white dress down into the mine?" she asked, petulantly.

"Yes'm," returned the old man. "There's nothin' to keep you from wearin' a white frock down there, but there'll be considerable to keep you from wearin' one back."

There is nothing to prevent the Christian's wearing his white garments when he seeks the fellowship of that which is unclean, but there is a good deal to prevent him from wearing white garments afterward.—*Young Disciple*.

LOVE THE TRANSFORMER.

THE greatest of these is love." A worker in the Manchester slums tells the story of a whole family completely changed by the presence of a deformed

child. The father was a rough, working man, the boys were coarse and uncouth, and the mother, overworked and far from strong, had fallen into untidy habits. But there was born into that home a crippled child, and that deformed baby was the means of drawing out the sympathy, and love, and tenderness of the whole family. The man nursed and petted his child in the evenings; the boys made playthings for her, and showed their affection in all sorts of pleasant ways; the mother kept the window clean, that her child, pillowed on the table, might look out on the court. The visitor declared that she witnessed a complete transformation in the family,—an elevating and refining process went right through the whole household. Surely, love is the great transformer.—*S. S. Times*.

BABY ASLEEP.

BABY has gone to the land of dreams!
Hush, or you'll wake him! How still it seems!
Carefully shut the bedroom door,
Noiselessly tiptoe across the floor.
See how sweet he looks as he lies,
With fringed lids skutting the dark brown eyes;
One pink palm pressing the dimpled cheek,
And his red lips parted as if to speak.

Yonder, in the low rocking-chair,
Is a broken plaything—he left it there;
And there, in the corner beside the door,
Lies a motley heap of many more,—
Picture-book, marbles, string and ball,
Tailless monkey, and headless doll,
And new, bright pennies, his special joy,
By the father hoarded to please his boy.

There lie his shoes on the kitchen floor,
That all day long they have pattered o'er—
Battered and chubby, short and wide,
Worn at the toe and cracked at the side;
And there hangs the little dress he wore;
Scarlet flannel, and nothing more;
But there clings about it a nameless charm,
For the sleeves are creased by his dimpled arm.

Dear little feet that are now so still,
Will ye ever walk in the paths of ill?
Rosbud lips, will ye ever part,
Bringing pain to a mother's heart?
Keep, O Father, that baby brow
Ever as pure from stain as now;
Lead him through life by Thy guiding hand
Safely into the better land!

—*Nancy Priest Wakefield.*

BE COMRADES.

LET there be the closest possible comradeship between parents and children. Let it never, for an hour cease. Never give your young people any reason for seeking sympathy in confidants outside the home circle. Recall your own childhood and youth. Enter into the lives of your children heartily. The information they will surely seek somewhere let them have at home. Anticipate their natural

curiosity by discreet revelations from time to time. Teach them modesty and purity and how to avoid evil companions. If they have an especial bent in any direction, sympathise with it and encourage it. Nature is the best guide toward a successful career in life. Try to see things from their standpoint. The more you do this, the more will they learn to look at things from your own standpoint of greater knowledge and experience.

Hold their confidence as a priceless treasure to you and to them. Let nothing separate you from their loving trustfulness, let nothing mar the beauty of the closest possible intimacy.—*Christian Work*.

THE MASTER MUSICIAN.

MANY years ago in Germany, as a new organ was being placed in a large church, a bystander asked permission to play upon it. He was refused, but again he made his request. He finally obtained permission to stand inside of the church, and there again he asked to be allowed to play. The stranger after being refused so many times, at last was told that he must do so at his own risk. As soon as he had placed his hands upon the instrument there poured out upon the air such magnificent music that the question was immediately asked him if he understood music and how was it that he could bring forth such beautiful chords. He replied, "I made this organ; I know every piece of timber and every string in it. It responds to my touch because I am familiar with it."

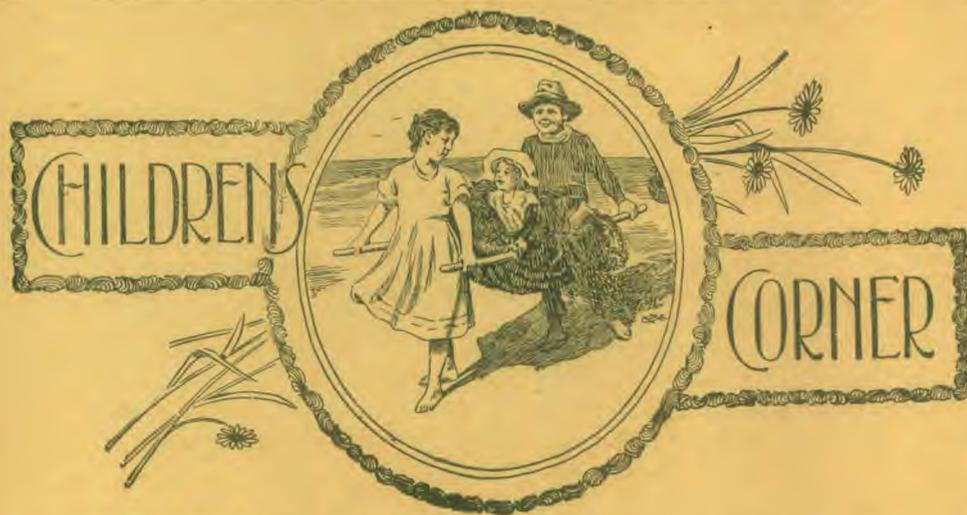
Perhaps for many a long year the stranger of Galilee has been standing at the door of your heart asking permission again and again to come in and make music flow from your life, for is it not an instrument of a thousand strings of His own making? He says in His Word that "He made thee and formed thee." Isa. xlv. 2, and again in Ps. cxxxix. you will find that there is nothing about you with which He is not familiar.

Will you not let your Maker place His hands upon you and bring from your life the music that only a Christian knows?—*Lifeboat*.

TEACH boys to do things about the house—sweep, dust, mend, cook, set table, make beds, and the like. Don't expect them to do this sort of work constantly, but let them know how. It is educational, to a certain degree. I have blessed my mother a thousand times for giving me this training. Especially if a boy shows a bent for mechanics, encourage him to do whatever tinkering is required about the house.—*Good Housekeeping*.

* * *

"THE first thing to do, if you have not done it, is to fall in love with your work."



THE CHILDREN'S OFFERING.

THE wise may bring their learning,
The rich may bring their wealth,
And some may bring their greatness,
And some bring strength and health.
We, too, would bring our treasures
To offer to the King;
We have no wealth of learning—
What shall we children bring?

We'll bring Him hearts that love Him,
We'll bring Him thankful praise,
And young souls meekly striving
To walk in holy ways.
And these shall be the treasures
We offer to the King;
And these are gifts that even
The poorest child may bring.

We'll bring the little duties
We have to do each day;
We'll try our best to please Him
At home, at school, at play,
And better are these treasures
To offer to our King
Than richest gifts without them;
Yet these a child may bring.

—Selected.

THE FIRST BOYS.

THERE was great joy in the home of Adam and Eve, when God gave them their first little son. Eve hoped he was the one who would fulfil the promise made to her that "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." So she called him Cain, for she said, "I have gotten a man child from the Lord."

A little while after another baby was born. He was called Abel. Just like every little boy who has been born since, Cain and Abel wanted to know all about the things they saw. And their parents taught them. They learned about the trees, the flowers, and the grass, the animals, the birds and insects, the sun, moon, and stars, and that everything had come from God's word.

Adam and Eve told them of the beautiful Eden home which God had given them, with the wonderful tree of life in it. And the boys grew sad as their parents told how they had lost it through listening to Satan and believing him, instead of believing God. But they were all glad that God had promised that one day, if they trusted Him, they should have their beautiful home back again, in the new earth where Satan can never come.

When they were old enough Cain and Abel began to work. It is a good thing to have work to do, for

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

Cain was a gardener, and Abel a shepherd. But Cain made one great mistake. When the sweet flowers, the juicy fruits, and the golden grain came, he felt that he had made them grow, and forgot the power of God. He was very pleased with himself, and did not thank God. Satan was busy with Cain. He knew it would be easy to make Cain disobey God if he could lead him to forget God. And that is just what happened.

God had taught them that when they



sinned, they should bring a lamb and offer it as a sacrifice to Him. This was to remind them that sin brings death, but that Jesus, the Lamb of God, saves from sin. One day Cain and Abel brought an offering to the Lord. Abel obeyed God and brought a lamb. But Cain brought some of the fruits of the ground. He did not feel he was a sinner needing to be forgiven. He thought his own works would save him.

"And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect."

When Cain saw that his offering was not accepted, he was angry, and he showed it in his face. He did not like to think that God was better pleased with Abel than with himself.

The Lord was sorry for Cain, and said to him, "Why are you angry? If you did well, you would be accepted too. Satan is trying to destroy you by leading you into sin, but I will give you power over him if you will trust in Me."

But Cain was too proud to say he was wrong. And one day when Abel and he were in the field talking together, and Abel was telling his brother of the love of God, "Cain rose up against his brother and slew him." Even then the Lord tried to save him. He came to Cain and said, "Where is Abel thy brother?" If only Cain had told the truth, God would have forgiven him. But he would not. He said, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?"

Then God told Cain that He had seen what he had done to his brother, and that the earth was cursed again for his sin. Because of it, the ground would not yield him fruit as it had done before. Cain was afraid to go home to his parents after this. He became a wanderer in the earth.

How sad that the little child who had been given to Adam and Eve by God should grow up to be a murderer instead of a joy and blessing in the home. Adam and Eve shed many tears when they saw how their own sin of disobedience was bearing such bitter fruit.

IN THE FOG.

JANIE and Graham had been begging to go alone for a drive in the dog-cart. They wanted to go along the seashore to a lonely place, out of sight of everybody, where they could play at being shipwrecked.

Mamma Duff was afraid something would happen to them, but Papa Duff said what was the use of having good, obedient children if you couldn't trust them to take care of themselves sometimes. Besides, papa had been to the place where they wanted to go, and he said nothing could happen there to them, more than getting a little wet and seaweedy. He didn't want his son and daughter to be afraid of things.

So Janie and Graham set off in the dog-cart. Something did happen, something which frightened them at first, but maybe afterward taught them not to get frightened so quickly.

After they left the hotel—very soon after—a fog crept up out of the sea, a fog so thick that the little shipwrecked pair could hardly see the dog-cart if they went a little way off from it; and it made them feel queer. Then, suddenly, Graham burst into tears, and exclaimed, "O sister, look! There's a big giant coming after us."

Janie looked up, and her little face got as white as the mist. For there, sure enough, it seemed to her, was a great white giant. He looked as tall as a tree, as big around as an elephant, and furry like a polar bear.

The children were too much scared to scream. On came the white giant, on and on, till he caught them in his arms—and lo, and behold—it was papa!

He had come out to guide them home through the fog, lest they should lose their way. On the way home he told Janie and Graham that half the things that people were afraid of looked bigger through their fears than they really were, just as he had looked bigger through the fog.—*Jewels.*

GRANDMOTHER'S MAXIMS.

I NEVER could tell what my grandmother meant,
Though she has the wisest of brains;
"I have noticed," she said, "in the course of my life,
That lazy folks take the most pains."

I hated to mend that short rip in the skirt
Of my dress, where the pookethole strains,
And grandmother saw it and laughed as she said,
"Yes, lazy folks take the most pains."

And that same little rip, when I went out to ride,
Was caught in my bicycle chain;
Oh! then I remembered what grandmother said,
"That lazy folks take the most pains."

For instead of an inch I must sew a yard,
And it's just as her maxim explains;
I shall always believe what my grandmother said,
"That lazy folks take the most pains,"

—*Little Men and Women.*

BAMBOO.

IN China and other countries, where bamboo grows to greatest size, houses are built of it. The walls are formed of poles stood in close rows or are plaited of thin strips of the wood.

Bamboo furniture is more widely used. Doubtless you have seen bamboo chairs and tables; and baby-carriages, bird-cages, baskets, canes, umbrella-handles, fish-rods, and many other things,—made of this same material.

You may have noticed that the stem of the bamboo is composed of hollow sections, closed at the joints. One section, opened at one end, serves as a bottle, or a bucket, or a cup.

In some places water-pipes are formed by joining together pieces of bamboo from which the joints have been cut. Large bamboo poles, or several small poles fastened together, are commonly used in China as masts of boats. Bows and arrows are made of bamboo. So are many farming tools, also household articles, including dishes. The outer portion of some kinds of this wood is so hard that knives are made of it. Pens also are made of it. This hard portion is sometimes used instead of whet-stones.

Bamboo-wood can be split very thin, and in this form it is used for weaving hats and

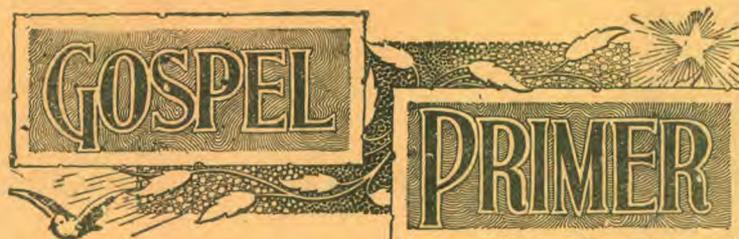
fans. When the thin strips are bleached or dyed, many kinds of fancy articles are made of them, even artificial flowers.

The soft, inner portion of the stems may be reduced to a pulp; and from this pulp paper is made. The young shoots of the bamboo resemble asparagus, and are prepared in the same way, and eaten. The seeds, also, are used as food, being pickled, preserved in sugar or honey, and cooked in diverse ways. The leaves are steeped for medicine, and a fluid found in the joints of the stems is also used as medicine.

Thus people wear bamboo, eat it, drink it, eat from it, drink from it, sleep on it, sit on it, live in it, write with it, write on it, shoot with it, fish with it, use it to keep

warm and to keep cool, work farms and keep house with it, walk with it, sail by means of it, cook in it, carry water in it, out with it, sharpen tools with it. Nor is this all its uses. After observing many purposes which it serves, we would almost wonder if there is any use that bamboo is not good for.—*Adelaide D. Wellman.*

"THE Father forgetteth none,
Though many His children be;
Not one can be overlooked;
Be sure that His smile is for thee.
The poorest is dear to Him,
He hears when the little ones call;
And at last, when the home is reached,
You will see there is room for all."



JACOB was the younger son of Isaac and Rebekah. His brother's name was Esau. Jacob was selfish and bought his brother's birthright for a little food. But Esau would not have sold it if he had prized God's gifts. Jacob wanted the blessing too, and got it by making his father think he was Esau. Esau was angry and wanted to kill Jacob. Rebekah sent him to his uncle's till Esau's anger was over. So Jacob went. It was a long journey. Night came and he was tired. He made a pillow of stones, and lay down to sleep. He dreamed that he saw a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. Angels were walking up and down on it. The Lord stood at the top and told Jacob that He would care for him wherever he went.

When Jacob awoke he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." He had forgotten that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." That is why he had done wrong. But God loved him and was teaching him how ready He is to forgive sin. For the ladder is Jesus who has opened up a way from earth to heaven that we may come boldly to His throne of grace for all the help we need.

That is why we say "for Jesus Christ's sake" when we pray. The angels are our helpers. We shall never do wrong if we remember that Jesus and His angels are always with us to keep us in the right way. Jacob called the name of that place "Bethel," which means "the house of God."



THE BUILDING OF THE "DAY-SPRING."

THE greatest things are often accomplished by the humblest and weakest instruments, but we do not always realise it.

Nearly fifty years ago a boy only fourteen years old, employed in the iron-mines of Nova Scotia, was seriously injured in an explosion of blasting powder. The little fellow was buried under a pile of rock and débris, from which he was rescued, with his legs broken, his body gashed and bleeding, and his sight apparently gone for life. Stretched blind and helpless on a bed in his humble home, what human being could seem less able than he to bring things to pass in the world without?

One day the village pastor, who was calling on the boy, read to him a letter recently received from a missionary in the South Sea Islands. It told of the great need for a missionary vessel which should sail between the port of Sydney, Australia, and the lonely outposts of the church in the great southern sea, to carry supplies to the missionaries and keep them and their converts in touch with the Christian world.

"Why don't they build such a ship?" asked the boy.

"Because there's no money," replied the clergyman. "It is needed very much, but the board of missions has hardly enough money to meet its ordinary expenses. There's nothing left to put into a ship."

For a few days the blind boy thought the matter over; then he told the minister he had thought of a plan to get the missionary ship.

"There are twenty thousand Sunday-school children in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island," he said. "If every child had a collecting card, and all worked together, I'm sure they could get enough for a ship, which they could send out as their gift to the missionaries."

The plan was referred to the board of missions, and with its approval put into operation. For a year the children worked. The sums they collected were small, but it all counted. The stream of money poured steadily into the treasury of the mission board, and in the end enough was secured to pay for the staunch brigantine *Dayspring*, which was built at New Glasgow, and for many years sailed the southern seas; the first and most famous of the "missionary ships."

What the mission board and the churches, with all their rich and influential

members, had not found it possible to do, the children of the Maritime Provinces, led by a blind and crippled mine boy, had done quietly and effectively.

It is a pleasant ending to the little story that by means of Van Graeff's wonderful operation, just beginning to be known, the lost sight of the little mine boy was almost miraculously restored. He had never expected to see the vessel, for the building of which the credit, under God, was his; but he was able to stand among the thousands of singing and cheering children when the last props were knocked from beneath the *Dayspring*, and to watch the beautiful ship glide gracefully into the sea, upon the waters of which it was to go on so many errands of mercy and helpfulness. —*Youth's Companion*.

SAYED FROM CANNIBALS.

WHEN Mr. Hudson Taylor, of the China Inland Mission, was going out to China for the first time he had an experience of the Lord's special providence, which he describes as follows:—

"Saturday night had brought us to a point some thirty miles off land; but during the Sunday morning service, which was held on deck, I could not fail to notice that the captain looked troubled, and frequently went over to the side of the ship. When the service was ended, I learnt from him the cause. A four-knot current was carrying us rapidly toward some sunken reefs, and we were already so near that it seemed improbable that we should get through the afternoon in safety. After dinner the long boat was put out, and all hands endeavoured, without success, to turn the ship's head from the shore. As we drifted nearer we could plainly see the natives rushing about the sands and lighting fires every here and there. The captain informed us that these people were cannibals, so that our position was not a little alarming.

"After standing together on the deck for some time in silence, the captain said to me, 'Well, we have done everything that can be done; we can only await the result.' A thought occurred to me, and I replied, 'No, there is one thing we have not done yet.' 'What is it?' he queried. 'Four of us on board are Christians,' I answered (the Swedish carpenter and our coloured steward, with the captain and myself); 'let us each retire to his own cabin, and in agreed prayer let us ask the Lord to give us immediately a breeze. He can as easily send it now as at sunset.'

"The captain agreed to this proposal. I went and spoke to the other two men, and after prayer with the carpenter we all four retired to wait upon God. I had a good but very brief season in prayer, and then felt so satisfied that our request was granted that I could not continue asking, and very

soon went up again on deck. The first officer, a godless man, was in charge. I went over and asked him to let down the clews or corners of the mainsail, which had been drawn up to lessen the useless flapping of the sail against the rigging. He answered, 'What would be the good of that?' I told him we had been asking a wind from God, that it was coming immediately, and we were so near the reef by this time there was not a minute to lose. With a look of incredulity and contempt he said with an oath that he would rather see a wind than hear of it! But while he was speaking I watched his eye, and followed it up to the royal, and there, sure enough, the corner of the sail was beginning to tremble in the coming breeze. 'Don't you see the wind is coming? Look at the royal!' I exclaimed. 'No, it is only a cat's-paw,' he rejoined. 'Cat's-paw or not,' I cried, 'pray let down the mainsail, and let us have the benefit!'

"This he was not slow to do. In another minute the heavy tread of the men on the deck brought up the captain from his cabin to see what was the matter; and sure enough the breeze had come. In a very few minutes we were ploughing our way at six or seven knots an hour through the water, and the multitude of naked savages whom we had seen on the beach had no wreckage that night. We were soon out of danger; and though the wind was sometimes unsteady, we did not altogether lose it until after passing the Pelew Islands."

AMONG the evidences that the day of the Lord is at hand, and that every nation, kindred, tongue, and people is to hear the Gospel before that day, is the publication and circulation, apparently under sanction of the papal authorities, of a translation of the Gospels and of the Acts. The translation is in the language perfectly familiar to the Italian people. Although there are many notes which bear the church's interpretation, still the people have the Scriptures, and they speak for themselves. The first edition is of one hundred thousand copies, and sells in paper covers for two pence, and in cloth for three pence.

* *

IN Africa, four hundred and thirty-eight languages and one hundred and fifty-three dialects are found; into only about seventy of these has any portion of the Bible been translated. Five hundred of them have not even been reduced to writing. The Sudan, with its sixty million people, is still without a single Protestant missionary who can speak the language, though three societies are now endeavouring to begin work there.

* *

THE Bible has been translated into the Thibetan language by a Moravian missionary.



THE medical officer for Essex reports that several cases of typhoid fever have been traced to polluted shell fish on mud flats round the coast.

AN eight months old child died suddenly in East London last week after eating some cheap coloured sweets. The mother noticed that the child's mouth seemed "full of dye."

THE Tax Commissioners at Hoboken, after being the guests of the North German-Lloyd Company at a banquet, found it in their hearts to reduce the assessment on the Company's piers from £520,000 to £320,000. The Mayor and Council are indignant. There is doubtless a deep philosophy in the common practice of inviting a man to have something to drink, when it is desired to get something out of him.

THE Irrigation Commission in India has issued its long-looked for report. This advises a very extensive scheme for watering the desert lands of India. If carried out, it will tend to greatly relieve the present condition, and go a long way to avert the famines which are so frequent in India. Six million acres are to be watered, and this will involve an outlay of £29,000,000.

ENGLAND is to take another step in advance in the construction of battleships. The Admiralty designer is drawing up plans for 18,000-ton ships which will be the largest afloat, the most heavily armed, will be provided with the most powerful engines, and will cost by far the largest amounts yet spent on men-of-war. Until other nations follow suit, these ships will be invulnerable, but as other nations certainly will follow suit, the only result will be to increase the expense to the country.

THE question of importing Chinese labour is still agitating the Transvaal. The mine owners are arranging to ship a batch of Chinese by the close of the year, taking their chance of a favourable decision when the Legislative Council meets in November. This resolve is expected to greatly increase the heat of the discussion. The Dutch and a large portion of the English are opposed to the idea of bringing in Chinese labour. The mining portion of the community are anxious to increase their working forces and extract all the gold as quickly as possible, regardless of how the interests of the remainder of the population will be affected by the addition of the Chinese element. One writer says:—

It means millions of pounds paid at once to the investors of Johannesburg, and two out of every three people are investors on the Rand. What matters if for the needs of the moment we mortgage the morrow, if to meet our obligations of to-day we draw a draft on posterity, which posterity shall honour in bitterness?

LIQUID air is at last on sale. Customers in Berlin can have it delivered to them at the price of three shillings per gallon.

THE Russian censors have suppressed one item of information, in connection with the great strike at Kieff, when the people were dispersed by the military, which shows that the revolutionary spirit is making converts even in the Russian army.

Upon the troops marching up the governor called out "Fire," whereupon one of the captains stepped before his company and forbade the soldiers to fire upon "their poor, starving brothers." The soldiers obeyed this counter-order, and the young officer made a flaming revolutionary speech to the men. Of course, he was immediately arrested and brought to St. Petersburg, where he was sentenced to death by a court-martial.

IT is declared that since the institution of inoculation for rabies in Italy, the deaths from hydrophobia have been more frequent than ever. A number of Italian doctors have come to the conclusion that the Pasteur system is a public danger, and they praise the muzzling order in England which has stamped out hydrophobia. The English method is undoubtedly the right one, to keep the disease outside and to deal with it in the dog rather than in the human body. The principle is worth extending, for it will be better to deal with causes of disease while they are in the drains, the water, the house, the clothing, and the food, and thus keep them outside.

A SELECT Committee on National Expenditure has just submitted its report. There is a large increase during the last ten years, as shown by the following figures:—

In 1893-4 the national expenditure was, by votes, £62,993,000, and from capital account, £2,496,000. In 1903-4 it was, exclusive of special South African expenditure and the votes for Somaliland and China, by votes £109,539,000, and from capital account £9,370,000. From 1892-3 to 1902-3 the cost of the Army has increased (exclusive of war charges) by £12,123,000, and of the Navy by £16,953,000.

There is no prospect that the ratio of increase will be any less during the next ten years.

A NEW YORK fireman is in hospital, dying at the age of twenty-one from the effects of cigarette smoking. He has made repeated attempts to commit suicide, and is now begging that he may be killed. He has been in the habit of smoking as many as 400 cigarettes a day, and began smoking when he was a boy. The physicians say there is no hope. There is a horrible fate before many of the boys who are now surrendering themselves to the fascination of the tobacco habit. For many years the evils of tobacco using have been pointed out, but smokers have replied that the practice did not harm them, and that there was no fear of injurious excess in their cases. But the injurious

effects are being seen in their children, who are surrendering themselves with a fatal and inherited facility to the craving for tobacco.

SOUTH Russian ports enjoy the not very honourable distinction of adulterating their grain exports with more foreign matter than any other shipping centres. A case has just been discovered at Taganrog, where a Jewish grain exporter sent out a cargo which consisted of sixteen per cent. sand, seven per cent. of husk refuse, and four per cent. of filth.

KING PETER of Servia has not been able to free himself from the military party which brought him to the throne, but seems to be making an effort to break its power. Three army colonels and two captains have been sentenced to death for participation in a plot against the king, which was fortunately discovered in time.

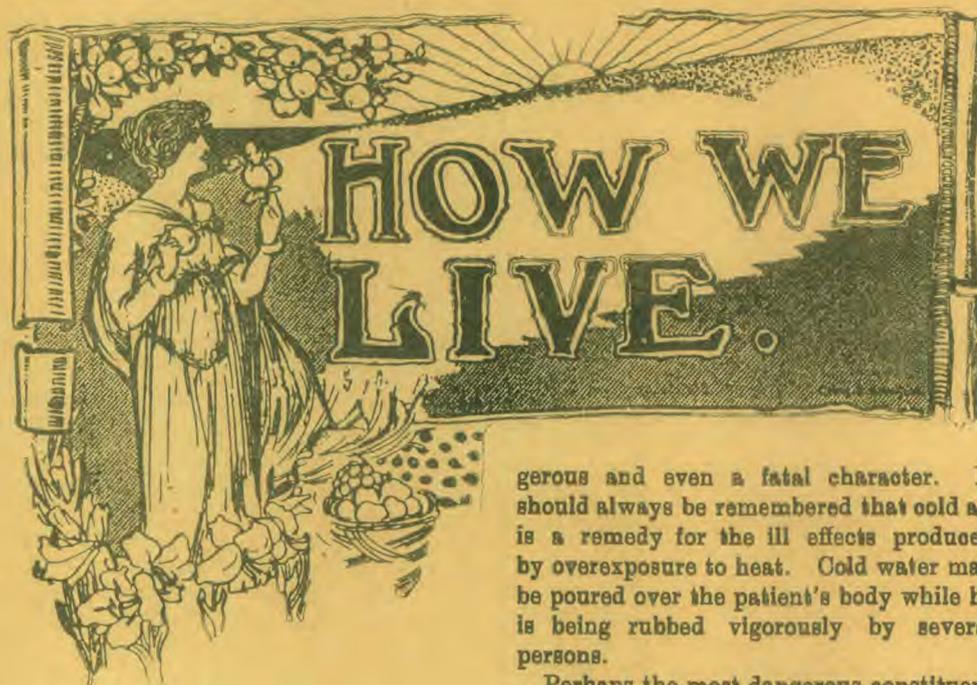
RADIUM and the X-rays are edged tools to play with. They sometimes inflict injuries which it is impossible to heal. It was hoped that they would be useful in the treatment of cancer, but one of Mr. Edison's assistants, who received severe burns while experimenting with the rays, has developed cancer in both arms, which necessitated amputation.

IT is hardly to be wondered at that the natives are not inclined to work in the mines on the Rand, when it is officially stated that the death-rate among the natives employed there is very high, forty-two per cent. being due to pulmonary disease. The dust in the atmosphere is very unhealthy, and the carelessness and ignorance of the natives contribute largely to the high death-rate.

ENGLAND is experiencing the worst harvest weather it has known for fifty years. Crops are being ruined in all directions, both root and cereal, and large quantities of hay have been lost. On the other hand, London doctors are saying that they have never had so little work before in summer time. The drains are well flushed with water, and milk and other foods have not been spoiled by hot weather.

At the sixth Zionist Congress held in Basel, Dr. Herzl announced that the British Government had offered to assist them in selecting a large tract of land in British East Africa, where the Jews might govern themselves under the protection of the English flag. The Zionists were resolved not to give up the idea of returning to Jerusalem, but the thought of a settlement under the British flag appealed to many, and it was agreed, by a large majority, to accept the offer. It is hoped that this will afford a refuge for Jews who are persecuted in other lands.

AN offertory box in a Devonshire church has been rifled. Owing to the key being lost it had not been opened for six years, and it is believed that there was a substantial sum inside. Seeing that a person who was in earnest could get at the money so quickly, it seems a pity that the trustees of the money should have been willing to let it lie idle so long for so little reason. There seems to be quite a parallel here with those persons who put off doing good with their means until they feel able to do a lot. They may pass by small opportunities for years, but often in such cases, their opportunities cease before they are ready to carry out their good intentions.



PURE AIR.

PURE air is the first of all our physical needs. Sedentary persons breathe much less air than is required for the maintenance of a healthful state of the body. Most civilised women are deprived by their dress of the power of breathing properly, and suffer in consequence from a meagre air supply. The lungs should be developed by vigorous exercise during childhood and youth, and should be maintained in an active condition by moderate exercise taken regularly through life. Exercises which hasten the rate of breathing a little are necessary for lung development. So-called "breathing exercises" are of comparatively little value. Vigorous walking and swimming are the best means for developing the lung capacity. The clothing must be loose enough to allow for full expansion of the waist in deep respiration.

The most important source of air contamination is to be found in the emanations from the lungs and skins of human beings. Man, like every other animal, poisons the atmosphere about him. Each breath renders three-quarters of a barrelful of air unfit for further use. Three thousand cubic feet of fresh air per hour should be supplied every grown person night and day. When the amount is less, the excretions accumulate to such a degree as to contaminate the air and render it unfit for respiration.

Cold air as well as foul is dangerous to life when the body is exposed after having been heated, and especially while in a state of perspiration and inactivity. Cold air is also a powerful tonic, and great benefit is derived from hardening the body by daily exercise in the open air, even in very cold weather.

Hot air is debilitating, lessening the vital resistance, and sometimes producing exhaustion and collapse of a most dan-

gerous and even a fatal character. It should always be remembered that cold air is a remedy for the ill effects produced by overexposure to heat. Cold water may be poured over the patient's body while he is being rubbed vigorously by several persons.

Perhaps the most dangerous constituent of air is dust, especially the street dust of cities, and house dust. Such dust always contains many germs which are capable of producing death if permitted to obtain a foothold in the body.

J. H. KELLOGG, M.D.

A CURE FOR SCALDS.

A BABY two years old put her fingers into her mother's teacup full of boiling hot tea, as we were being seated at the table at a friend's house. There was a plate of honey on the table. "Put honey on her fingers," I exclaimed, but no one heeded, thinking, no doubt, I did not realise what I was saying. Time was precious if the little fingers would be saved from blistering, so I caught up the plate and spread out the little hand into the strained honey, daubing the fingers as best I could, then wrapped my handkerchief hastily around them. The mother was half indignant, and the hostess looked as though unwarrantable liberties had been taken; but the next day there was no sign of a burn, except between two of the little fingers, where the honey had not reached, there were some water blisters. My mother always kept a jar of strained honey for such emergencies, and there is nothing better. Vaseline is also good.—*N. E. C. in Good Housekeeping.*

COOKING UTENSILS.

GALVANISED or tin saucepans should not be used for cooking articles containing acids, such as sour fruits, tomatoes, rhubarb, etc. Much of the cheap tinware of to-day contains more or less lead in its composition, besides that which is used in soldering the parts together. The action of acids upon this metal makes it dangerous to use for cooking certain foods. Copper

or brass cannot be recommended for use in cooking, from a health standpoint. Brass is a mixture of copper and zinc, and both of these metals are acted upon by certain foods to produce harmful results. In these days granite and enamelware are comparatively cheap, and durable if used with care, are easily kept clean, and should be used for nearly all cooking purposes.

MRS. ANNA L. COLCORD.

POTATOES.

A WELL-COOKED potato is readily digested and is a valuable food. Steaming, baking, or roasting are much better methods of cooking potatoes than boiling.

The salts are freely soluble in water, and when potatoes are boiled, there is nothing to prevent these from passing into the water, but when baked these valuable elements are retained. Roasting or baking also renders the starch easier of digestion. A mealy potato absorbs saliva readily, and is quickly digested. In fact, potato starch is digested in about one-third the time required for the digestion of oatmeal starch.

BAKED POTATOES.—Select large smooth potatoes, cleanse thoroughly, then dry with a cloth, and bake in a moderate oven until they yield to pressure. When done press each potato until it bursts slightly. This allows the escape of moisture and prevents the potato from becoming soggy. *Serve at once.*

POTATO EGG CAKES.—Mash thoroughly the left-over baked potatoes. To each pint of potato add the yolks of two eggs which have been boiled until mealy and rubbed through a fine wire sieve, also add one cup of rich milk and salt to taste. Mix well together, form into small cakes, brush them over with a little cream, and brown in the oven for ten or fifteen minutes on tins.

LAURETTA KRESS, M.D.

SACCHARINE, which is sometimes recommended as a substitute for cane sugar, especially in cases of diabetes, is not sugar at all. It is not a food, but a coal tar product, a drug. It is exceedingly sweet, between three and four hundred times sweeter than sugar. People who use saccharine find that after a time a sweetish taste appears in the mouth. The system tries to throw it off through the saliva.

It is a dangerous product to use, as a very small quantity of it produces severe disturbances of the stomach and intestines, and it is therefore not to be recommended. It is best to make use of the sugar provided in nature found in the fruits, the fig, raisins, etc.—*Good Health.*

FLIES should be excluded from the house as a matter of both health and comfort, says *The Lancet*. In rooms with windows only on one side a net over the window opening will absolutely keep flies out, although the meshes of the net may be an inch apart.—*Selected.*

Worth Reading.

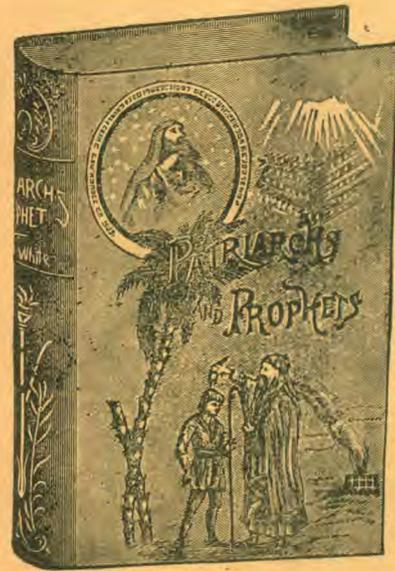
The great conflict between good and evil is the inspiring theme of these two books, which should be in every home.

Patriarchs and Prophets.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

Author of "Christ's Object Lessons," "Desire of Ages," "Christ our Saviour," and many other works.

THIS book treats upon subjects of Bible history—not in themselves new, but so presented here as to give them a new significance. Beginning with the rebellion in heaven, the author shows why sin was permitted, why Satan was not destroyed, and why man was tested; gives a thrilling description of man's fall; and rehearses the plan of redemption devised for his salvation. The life of each of the patriarchs, from Adam to King David, is carefully reviewed, and from each a lesson is drawn, pointing out the consequences of sin, and bringing most vividly to the mind, Satan's studied plan for the overthrow of the race. This volume traces the great conflict between good and evil from its inception down through the centuries to David's death, and shows God's wonderful love for mankind in His dealings with the "holy men of old." The themes as treated in this volume will stir the soul to its depths and awaken the liveliest emotions of the mind, yet it is all written in a plain, simple style. The book contains over 760 pages, it is printed on a fine quality of paper, while its pages are adorned with more than 50 engravings, about 30 of which are full-page, many of them designed and engraved especially for this work at great expense.



The Companion Vol. to "Patriarchs."

The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan.

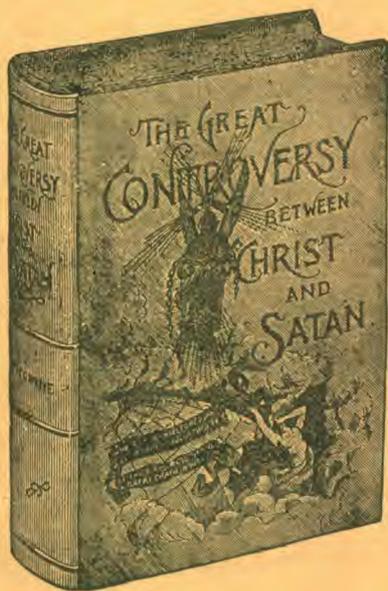
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THIS volume presents the most wonderful and intensely interesting history that has ever been written of the great conflict between Christianity and the powers of darkness, as illustrated in the lives of Christian martyrs and reformers on the one hand, and wicked men and persecuting powers on the other. Beginning with our Lord's great prophecy given while viewing Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, this unique work outlines the history of the church in the world, down to the time when "sin and sinners are no more; God's universe is clean; and the great controversy is for ever ended."

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451, Holloway Road, London, N.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 3, 1903.

Annual Subscription by Post, 6s. 6d.

Make all orders and cheques payable to the International Tract Society, Ltd., 451 Holloway Road, N.

A VERY sad incident is reported from America. The minister of a church was charged with "the excessive use of intoxicants," and when announcing his resignation from the pulpit, told his congregation that "he had learned to drink in their homes. The first time he ever tasted wine, he said, was at the home of a member of the congregation, who was now one of his accusers." No man, whatever his position, can afford to play with evil. Ministers, in themselves, are as weak as other men, and those who tempt them, never dreaming that they can come to any harm, may find too late that Satan has used them to destroy a soul. "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Matt. xviii. 7.

THERE is a vague belief abroad in "a good time coming," but it does not seem to get any nearer. General Garibaldi, son of the famous Italian patriot, says:—

I am a firm believer in the desire for "peace on earth," but I am also sincerely convinced that that happy state of affairs will become permanent on this globe only when the human race has disappeared from its surface.

SINCE the word of the Lord remains true that the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace (Ps. xxxvii. 11), it is clear that there will be members of the human race who will enjoy "peace on earth." It is evident, however, to General Garibaldi, and to all observers, that things are not tending that way at present. There will have to be an overturning first. In that day a large portion of the human race will have disappeared, for we read: "Evil doers shall be cut off." "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be." Ps. xxxvii. 9, 10. Then peace on earth will become permanent.

THE President of a Theological College writes in the *Independent* about "a young minister of the type that is wanted," who was successful in getting more young men

into his church within a few weeks than his predecessor had won in twenty years.

These young men were normal, healthy, vigorous, athletic fellows, fond of all outdoor sports and all phases of youthful social life. It is doubtful if any one of them had ever been in a prayer-meeting; certain that no one of them had ever "taken part" in a religious meeting of any kind. They are not perfect yet, and no one of them has been moved to testify to what has (or has not) taken place in his soul. Indeed, it is doubtful if they have gone to a dance the less or a prayer-meeting the more in consequence of having united with the church.

"THE type that is wanted" does not seem to be modelled on the apostles, who, if a man confessed his sins and believed in Jesus Christ with all his heart, baptized him into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, that he might reckon himself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time, it is not to be wondered at that a change is desired from the condition described by the President.

Morbid, narrow and inadequate tests and conceptions of what it means to be a Christian in thousands of our churches are keeping out youth and manliness, and letting only effeminacy and sentimentalism in.

THE lack consists evidently in a departure from Bible religion, and in losing the life and power of the Holy Spirit. This is why the young are not drawn to the churches, for Christ draws wherever He is uplifted on the cross. John xii. 32. The remedy will come in returning to the source of apostolic power, not in divesting the church of its sacred character, and reducing it to the level of a social organisation, which young men can join without any change of heart and life. It would be fatal to spiritual growth to give young men, or anyone else, the idea that all that Christ asks of them, and all that He died for, is that they should join a kind of social club.

ONE sad feature of the last days, according to the Apostle Paul, will be the selfish, unloving character of the closest earthly relations. There will be disobedience to parents, even among those who have a form of godliness, and this is easily explained by the statement that such men will be "without natural affection." 2 Tim. iii. 1-5. Both parents and children are to blame in this, for the Lord speaks of a special work to be done, before the second advent, in turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Mal. iv. 5, 6.

THE times are changed in this respect since the Lord said through Isaiah, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" The annual report of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children throws a ghastly light on present conceptions of maternal duty. No less than 2,883 parents and others were prosecuted, and that this was not mere officious meddling is shown by the fact that of this number, there were 2,800 convictions. But this is a small part of the work of the Society. In 34,946 cases it felt obliged to interfere in behalf of suffering children.

MEN hear that the Lord is coming in His glory to make an end of sin, and they say, "We do not believe that God will come and put a sudden stop to all the wonderful advancements that science and art are making in the world." But God is a Father, and no father's heart would weigh the wealth and progress of selfish men with such a mass of helpless, childish misery as is involved in these 34,946 cases. And everyone knows that the Society does not encounter all the cruelty and neglect that is making bitter the lives of little children. There is a cry going up to God's heart, and there is an answer coming soon. If the hearts of the fathers are not turned to the children, God will smite the earth with a curse. Matt. iv. 6.

THE drink is, in this case, as in others, a potent means of destroying natural affection.

Many children are the victims of drunken mothers. In the last year or two the Society has got 120 mothers placed in retreats. While there, every effort is made to appeal to the maternal instinct. One effective method is to show them photographs of their children, skeleton-like, unkempt and altogether miserable, when they were taken charge of by the Society, and as those children have been transformed under the influence of good feeding and tender care. When such mothers leave the retreats, the "children's men" keep an eye on them, and see that they return to the retreats if there is a relapse into the old habits.

Let everyone who loves the children do what they can to turn the parents from the use of alcohol.

BLESSED is the man who has the gift of making friends, for it is one of God's best gifts. It involves many things, but above all is the power of going out of one's self and seeing and appreciating whatever is noble and loving in another man.—Hughes.

THE man who lives only for himself hates nothing so much as being alone with himself.—Pascal.