

# THE Present Truth

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

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## The Present Truth.

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A CHRISTIAN is a follower of Christ, and since Christ is not divided, but is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," there can be only one standard of Christianity, and that is the life of Christ. "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" the Saviour asks. The beloved disciple says: "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." John ii. 6. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to humble thyself to walk with thy God?" Micah vi. 8, margin. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. xi. 29.

MEEKNESS, then, is an essential quality of a Christian. Hear what Jesus says: "I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." Again: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Matt. v. 39, 44, 45.

AGAIN the Master said: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your

trespasses." "Then came Peter to Him and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven." Matt. xviii. 21, 22. He said also, "If he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Luke xvii. 4.

ALL this was practically illustrated in the life of our Lord. He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. He, "When He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1 Peter ii. 23. "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth." His only words concerning those who were torturing Him were, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

SUCH love and forbearance as this are not natural to man, yet they are possible. All this Christ did as a man, but not with the strength of man. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." As God was in Christ, so may Christ dwell in our hearts by faith, that we also may "be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph. iii. 17-19. This cannot be done for a people as a whole, but only as individuals. It is not accomplished by any formal statement of belief, to which all give assent, or subscribe their names, but by Christ's dwelling in each man's heart, through his personal faith. Each one must be able to say for himself, I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians ii. 20.

THEN how would it be possible for an entire nation to become Christian? Only by every person's becoming converted, and a follower of Christ. But in that case the nation would cease to occupy a place among the Governments of earth. How so? Because no Government on earth could follow the instructions of Christ, and remain in existence. Just imagine a Government acting according to the injunction, "Love your enemies"; or "Resist not evil." Its place would be known no more, and it would be absorbed by others. Earthly Governments can be maintained only by force, and violence is foreign to the character of Christ. So it is utterly impossible that there should be such a thing on this earth as a Christian Government. This does not mean that civil government should be abolished; on the contrary, it is imperatively demanded in the present condition of things; since there are so many who will not behave without the use of force. In the world to come, when the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, civil government will come to an end; for God's Government is a moral Government. Then the peace and love of God will reign in every heart.

### ABOLISHING WAR.

SPEAKING of the proposed treaty of arbitration between England and the United States, a writer to the *Echo* says that "it will bring eternal peace between ourselves and our American brethren." "Once this great example has been set, the idea will spread throughout all civilised States, and men will comprehend that it can be realised. There is little hope of their agreeing to disarmament, so long as nations think their existence threatened; but when they have once pledged themselves for ever to refer their disputes to arbitration, they will feel able

to dispense with the monstrous armies which threaten to bring about universal ruin."

The history and experience of the world does not warrant any such high hopes. Innumerable treaties have been made between nations, and as many have been broken. "When they have once pledged themselves for ever to refer their disputes to arbitration," they will refrain from war until they feel that their rights are not sufficiently regarded, and no longer. The source of wars is in the human heart, and so long as that remains unchanged, there will be no peace. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your members?" James iii. 1. "There is no peace saith my God, to the wicked." Isa. lvii. [21]. The peace of God in the hearts of all men is the only thing that will end wars; and that cannot be effected by arbitration treaties.

#### HOW TO GET KNOWLEDGE.

"WISDOM crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets; she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates; in the city she uttereth her words, saying, how long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My words unto you." Prov. i. 20-23.

This is the language of the Lord Jesus Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. ii. 3. This means that there is nothing of any kind whatever that is worthy to be called wisdom, which is not to be found in Christ. Read 1 Cor. i. 22-24: "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." That is, the wisdom which the Greeks sought after, is contained only in Christ. Because they sought it in themselves, and not in Christ, the wisdom which they had became foolishness. Out of Christ it is impossible to find true wisdom.

True wisdom consists in knowing God. "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judg-

ment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jer. ix. 23, 24. To know God is the sum of all scientific knowledge; for Christ, who is the only manifestation of God, is the Source of all creation. "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things." Rom. xi. 33, 36. Christ is the beginning, the head, or source, of the creation of God. Rev. iii. 14. He is "the firstborn of every creature." Col. i. 15. "For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Col. i. 16, 17. Therefore the study of natural science must begin and end with the study of God in Christ.

But Christ is the righteousness of God. Righteousness is the character of God. Therefore no one can know God without knowing His righteousness; and so the study of true science reveals the righteousness of God. And this is wisdom, for "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Prov. i. 7. The knowledge of the righteousness of God is connected with the knowledge of the works of God that we see with our eyes: for the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and the power of God is seen in the things that are made. Rom. i. 16, 20. Therefore when the Bible speaks of wisdom and knowledge, it means not only the wisdom and knowledge which would be counted as such by men, but also all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

All this is summed up in the words of Moses to the children of Israel: "Behold I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." Deut. iv. 5, 6. They who keep the commandments of God, not in form merely, but in fact, will have wisdom which will excite the wonder of people who do not recognise the source of knowledge.

And now that we have seen what

wisdom is, let us note the words with which this article begins, to see how it may be obtained. The Lord says, "Turn you at My reproof; behold I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My words unto you." That is, those who listen to and heed the reproofs of the Lord, will know His words, which are wisdom. "For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 6.

The reproofs of the Lord are by the Spirit of the Lord, and are given, not for the purpose of taunting us with our failures, nor for the purpose of causing us to cringe in terror before Him, but that we may turn from our sins to righteousness. Before He went away, Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter, and the first thing that He was to do was to convince the world of sin. This He does by revealing the righteousness of God. These reproofs come in various ways, according to the sin and the peculiarity of the person. They are not simply of a general nature, but they come home to the individual, pointing out specific acts of wrong, and saying "Thou art the man."

It is naturally a severe trial to any one to receive a sharp reproof, because it cuts directly across self. But no matter how cutting it may be, and even though the Lord has allowed the knowledge of our failing to come to us through an unfriendly source, it is the part of wisdom to heed it. To heed it means to forsake the evil, and that can be done only through Christ; for it is the blood of Christ alone that cleanses from all sin. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7. The promise is that those who turn at the reproof of wisdom shall have the words of wisdom made known unto them.

Not only will such an one have the words of the Lord,—the words of wisdom,—told to him, but he will have them made known to him. In this is found the secret of the failure of so many to understand the Bible. They are cherishing some sin, or they are unwilling to keep all the commandments of God, and consequently they cannot know the meaning of the words of wisdom. Self stands in the way. Christ said that if any man had a mind to do the Father's will, he should know of the doctrine. John vii. 17. "The meek will He guide in judgment; and

the meek will He teach His way." Ps. xxv. 9.

Surely the result is worth all that it costs, even though the lesson be a trying one. The pain comes only in the letting go of self. When one has once yielded fully to the Lord, the reproofs of the Lord are pleasant. When self is dead, it cannot be hurt by them. Then instead of mourning over the reproof, because of wounded pride, or even in despondency, he will delight himself in the increased knowledge of God. Try it, all you who wish that you might understand the Bible. Let your doubts go to the winds. Let your own foolish wisdom, which would lead you to hesitate to receive the word of God, if it is contrary to your preconceived opinion, give place to the meekness of wisdom. In short, let your own opinions go entirely, and do not try to draw conclusions according to your own wisdom, but let God teach you at every step of the way. When you cannot see how a certain statement harmonises with another, do not get impatient, and begin to doubt, but wait in faith, and God will explain it to you. Do not be afraid of waiting awhile. It may be that the Lord has some other lesson for you to learn before you can understand this one. But while you are waiting, wait only on the Lord, and His words will explain themselves. "Consider what I say; for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things." 2 Tim. ii. 7.

#### THE REIGN OF PEACE.

THE greatest and most common mistake among men is to judge God by themselves. The Lord's reproach to man is, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Ps. l. 21. But the facts in the case are stated in these words: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. lv. 8, 9.

That is the reason that men have such erroneous ideas about the Government of God. They judge God's method of governing by what they know of human governments, and therefore we hear such expressions as these: "If God rules this world, why does He not put a stop to all the poverty and misery?" Or, "Why doesn't He make everybody good? if He rules, and is omnipotent, why does He allow anybody to be lost?" Or, allowing

that He does reign, they conclude that He is neither good nor merciful, because He allows sin and misery to exist. Thus many infidels rail against the Lord, and many poor, overworked men and women echo the sentiment, because they do not know the Lord, but form their opinions of Him by themselves.

The fact is that if God were to do what these people say He ought to do, they themselves would add hate to their indifference to Him. Men shout for liberty, and execrate tyrants, and then murmur against God because He is not a tyrant. They refuse to serve Him, because He does not deprive them of their liberty, and make them not only slaves, but mere machines.

God is a "God of peace." Heb. xiii. 20. His reign is a reign of peace. The Apostle Paul says: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Col. iii. 15. He rules by peace. This is different from anything known among men, and we shall see the significance of it presently. Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, is the "Prince of peace;" and "of the increase of His Government and peace there shall be no end." Isa. ix. 6, 7. His Gospel is "the Gospel of peace." Eph. vi. 15.

God's thoughts concerning man are "thoughts of peace, and not of evil." Jer. xxix. 11. All His ways are peace. When He speaks, He speaks peace. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people and to His saints." Ps. lxxxv. 8. Of the work of the Father and the Son upon the throne, the prophet says: "Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; even He shall build the temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory, and He shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech. vi. 12, 13.

Thus we see that the God of peace, and the Prince of peace, who "is our peace," are sitting upon the throne together, and their counsels together are counsels of peace. Their thoughts toward men are thoughts of peace, and they speak peace. The word of the ruler is law, and therefore the law of God is a law of peace. Everything in connection with His Government is peace.

The peace of God is an active quality. It is peace that rules. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. iv. 6, 7. It is impossible to describe peace that passes all understanding, and the only way that men can know it is to receive it at the hands of the Lord, for He says: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." John xiv. 27. And yet, although we are not able to fathom its depths, we may know the nature of it from the word of God.

#### PEACE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

PEACE comes with righteousness. In the throne of God "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." We have seen that the law of God is a law of peace, and so the psalmist declares, "Great peace have they which love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them," or cause them to stumble. Ps. cxix. 165. And again, we read the words of the Lord, "O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isa. xlvi. 18. Peace and righteousness, therefore are synonymous. This is further shown in the statement, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Isa. lvii. 21. "Being justified [made righteous] by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. v. 1. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." Isa. xxxii. 17.

Peace is the opposite not only of open war, but also of enmity, for war is the result of enmity in the heart. Now Christ is our peace, because He has abolished the enmity in Himself. Eph. ii. 14, 15. He has "made peace through the blood of His cross." Col. i. 20. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Rom. v. 8-10.

"It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11), because the blood is the life. There-

fore we are reconciled to God by the life of Christ, which He gives to us in His death. When we read that Christ has made peace through the blood of His cross, we understand that He makes peace by the life which He poured out on the cross. And so when He says, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you," we know that it is the same as if He said, "My life I give unto you." His life is peace and righteousness. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." Rom. viii. 6.

#### THE FREEDOM OF PEACE.

CHRIST gave Himself for the world; He is able and willing to save the whole world, and will give His life to all who will have it; but He will not force His presence upon any. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Rev. iii. 20. He will not force the will. His rule is a rule of perfect liberty. The wonderful and glorious liberty of the sons of God is beyond all human expression. The liberty of the kingdom of God is the perfection of liberty. Every man is to be absolutely free. And in order that every man may be absolutely free in His kingdom, God gives to every person on this present earth perfect liberty to choose what he will have. The right and liberty to choose life, which God extends to all, implies the liberty to reject it. "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Deut. xxx. 19. "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17. So not only in the world to come, but also in this life, God gives to every person exactly whatever he wishes to have. Those who desire life will have it abundantly, and of the wicked the Lord says: "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of My counsel; they despised all My reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices." Prov. i. 29-31.

It will be seen that there is nothing like force in the Government of God; nothing like compulsion. If there were, His reign would not be a reign of peace. It is altogether different from any earthly Government that exists, or that ever did exist. Christ explained this matter when two of His disciples

were seeking for themselves places of power in His kingdom. Said He: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. xx. 25-28.

Mark that statement beginning, "even as the Son of man came." That shows us that serving is the rule in the kingdom of God, because Christ Himself sets the example. His Government is in every respect different from earthly governments. They exist by force and authority; His exists by love and peace. Not only when on earth in the form of a servant did Christ serve, but He says that when the saints are all gathered with Him in glory, He Himself will come forth and serve them. Luke, xii. 37. In coming to this earth He took upon Him the *form* of a servant; but the mind to serve was in Him before He came. And so it will be in the glory of His kingdom. But there will be no danger that Christ's position will not be properly respected in that innumerable throng, all of whom are bent on serving others. Greatness there will be measured by the amount of service rendered, and in that He will ever be infinitely above the whole human race.

#### PEACE IS REST.

SINCE the world began there has never been a time when there was perfect peace. Neither has there ever been a single nation in which at any time there has been peace. There have been times when no war was in progress, but the so-called peace that existed was made and preserved by force. Just as the "peace of Europe" is maintained now by huge armies. But it is not peace. Peace is rest; but in all earthly governments there is a state of constant unrest. There is no real peace unless there is peace in the heart, and peace can be in the heart only by the presence of Jesus there. "He is our peace."

The peace of God's Government is not maintained by standing armies, nor by compelling people to submit to His laws, but by the infusing of His own life in the hearts of those who will receive Him. And now we can see why God does not arbitrarily in-

terfere to put a stop to sin and its consequent misery. To do so would be to deny Himself, and to subvert His own Government; for His Government is peace, and peace cannot be forced any more than love can be. God is not only the King, but He is the Father of His people, and that means that His subjects are to associate with Him as with a father, on terms of intimacy. They are not to cower and cringe before Him as before a tyrant; not to fawn and flatter to obtain His favour, but to be as free as He Himself is. They are to have the liberty of His Spirit. While gladly acknowledging His infinite greatness, His people are to feel in His presence the freedom of equals. This is the mystery of God. The absolute perfection of liberty can be found only in Him.

In the beginning God filled all things by His presence. Then sin came in, and there was rebellion against His gentle sway. But He did not change. His rule now is the same that it was in the beginning, and the same that it will be in the earth made new. It is ever a reign of peace. So now He is seeking to bring men back to His mild rule, in the same way that He will rule when all acknowledge Him. He stretches out His hands to all. He reveals His love and tenderness, and begs and entreats all to be at peace with Him; but He compels none against their will, for He has set that for ever free. Those who obstinately and persistently refuse Him, and choose their own way, are left to their own way, which is death (Prov. xvi. 25), because it is separate from the life of God.

It would not do to close without calling attention to the contrast between the way in which God works to extend His Government among men, and the way in which men seek to do the same thing. Religious laws made by men have only the power of physical force, while God's law has the power of His own life of peace. It will be seen that when men make laws professedly for the purpose of extending Christianity, they are working against God, instead of for Him. So for human governments to enact and enforce religious laws, is to oppose and exalt themselves against God. Civil laws concerning religion, therefore, even though they expressly state that they are to upbuild the religion of Christ, are only the work of antichrist. They upbuild the religion of physical force, while His religion is that of spiritual peace. They misrepresent

God, and cause Him to be hated, or at the least dreaded. But when God is represented as He is, men love Him. Therefore let all His servants say, Acquaint thyself with Him, and be at peace; so shall good come to thee.

### ONE BOOK.

A GREAT many people who would be shocked at the suggestion that they are infidels, imagine that faith is entirely consistent with a disbelief of many of the records of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament. They think that they believe the Gospel, yet they make no scruple of pulling the Old Testament record of that Gospel to pieces. There are many portions of the Bible that they are very doubtful about; and as for the story of Jonah, and the account of the flood, they can scarcely have patience with anyone who professes to believe them. The Bible account of the creation of the earth, they regard as at the best only a beautiful fable.

Can one believe the Gospel, and disbelieve the Old Testament? Let us see. The Apostle Peter speaks about the salvation of our souls, and says, "Of which salvation the prophets inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them which have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." 1 Peter i. 10-12.

Read the above text carefully, and you will see that it states that the prophets of old ministered the very same things that are announced by those who preach the Gospel. Then the prophets must have written the Gospel. When Peter was preaching Christ in the house of Cornelius, he said, "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Acts x. 43. And the Apostle Paul said, "Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that Christ must suffer, and how that He first by the resurrection of the dead should

proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles." Acts xxii. 22, 23, R.V. Therefore whoever says that the Old Testament does not contain the Gospel, says that the Apostle Paul did not preach the Gospel.

Suppose the position be taken that the story of the creation, and of the fall of man, is only a fable. If that were so, then there would be no Gospel at all. For if there were no fall of man, there need be no redemption. So that if the account of the fall were imaginary, then we have the entire Gospel built on a fable, which would make it also a fable. And besides, if the story of creation and the fall of man be a fable, how can we know that the whole Bible is not the same? We must either accept the whole Bible, or reject it all. We cannot pull it into pieces.

Take the account of the prophet Jonah. Many people would feel almost insulted if it were intimated that they were so simple as to believe it. They say that it never really happened: that the great fish never swallowed Jonah, and that it would have been impossible for him to live three days in its belly. But Christ said, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matt. xii. 40. Now if Jonah was never in the whale's belly, and could not have been, then we have the Saviour likening His death and resurrection to an impossibility. Therefore to deny the story of Jonah, is to deny the foundation of the Gospel.

It will not do in this case to say as so many of the "higher critics" do, that the Saviour spoke of the things that were currently reported among the Jews, as illustrations, taking the people on their own grounds, without stopping to explain that those things were really fables. If the story were not true, the Lord knew it; yet He said that just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale so He should be in the heart of the earth. If the story of Jonah were not true, then we have Christ saying that He would not be in the heart of the earth at all. Is it not better to believe a thing that we cannot understand, than to throw away the entire Gospel? Who dare say that it is of no importance whether or not we believe all the records of the Old Testament?

The saddest part of this matter is that the people have not been led into

this loose way of regarding the Bible by professed infidels, but by professed ministers of the Gospel. It is they who are responsible for the current of unbelief that is carrying so many away. Indeed, one can scarcely pick up a religious journal without seeing more or less about the controversy that is now going on over the Bible. There is a controversy, for there are many ministers who stand for the truth of the Bible; yet there are so many ministers of high standing and influence, who seem to be actuated by intense fear that the people will really believe too much of the Bible, that it is necessary to raise a voice of warning. We need not pass sentence of condemnation upon those ministers, but simply warn the people to beware of them as false teachers.

### LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD.

WE have just seen a sermon on the flood, which instead of seeking to strengthen the faith of the weak, is almost wholly devoted to an attempt to prove that there never was any such thing. Here are some of the statements. We give them because doubts in regard to the flood are becoming quite common. The preacher says: "No student of science is able to believe that any such flood as that recorded in the early chapters of Genesis ever took place in the history of the human race." "We are not to take the account of the deluge for history infallibly inspired and rigidly accurate in all its details." That view he tells us, "is no longer held by persons of ordinary education." How easy it is to brush aside a proposition with the statement that no one of ordinary education believes it. A false fear of being called ignorant is at the bottom of a large part of the infidelity of these days.

But what about the flood? May we throw it aside as a myth, and still hold fast our faith in the Gospel, and in the Bible in general? Let us see. Christ used the flood and its time as an illustration of the last days. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all." Luke xvii. 26, 27. In the book of Hebrews we are informed who the "all" were who were destroyed by the flood. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with

fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. xi. 7. It was the world that was condemned by the preaching of Noah, because they did not believe it; and it was the world that was destroyed by the flood. Christ in person, and also through His chosen apostle, bears witness to this.

Again, the flood is put in the same list as the creation of the world, and the general judgment. The Apostle Peter says that they who scoff at the promise of the coming of the Lord, are willingly ignorant of the fact that "by the word of the Lord the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter iii. 5-7. Whoever discounts the story of the flood, thereby discounts the story of creation, and also the promise of the coming of the Lord to judge the world. The same word that brought the flood upon the earth, created the earth, and will make it new again. The Scriptures, from Moses onward, testify of Christ, and they cannot be rejected without rejecting Christ.

Still further, if the story of the flood is a myth, then there is no comfort in the Gospel. It is upon that fact, and the things connected with it, that the Lord gives us assurance that He will not forget us. Speaking to Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of us all, which is now desolate, mourning the absence of her children, God says, "For this is as the waters of Noah unto Me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." Isa. liv. 9. Her joy and glory will be the restoration of her children, by the salvation of the righteous; therefore the assurance that God will save His people is no greater than the assurance that there was a flood in the days of Noah. "As I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee." But if there were no flood, then the Lord did not swear that the waters of the flood should no more go over the earth; and so in that

case we have no assurance that He will remember to save His people.

Again, we read the words of inspiration through the Apostle Peter: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; . . . the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter ii. 4-9. If the Lord did that, He knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations; but if He did not do that, what then? the only conclusion is that He does not know how to deliver the godly out of temptations. And so those who deny the story of the flood throw away all the consolations of the Gospel.

More might be said in the same line, but this is sufficient to show that no one can lightly deny any part of the Sacred Record. It all stands or falls together. No, that is not correct: it all *stands* together; it does not fall, notwithstanding the assaults of men. "For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. cxix. 89. "Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." Verse 160. We have written this to call attention to what is involved in setting aside any portion of the Bible, and to enable the reader more clearly to see that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. It is all profitable, and all necessary.

#### MORE THAN QUEER.

THE following paragraph is clipped from the *South Wales Echo*:—

Our English Sunday is perhaps the queerest anomaly that ever existed in a queer world. Statistics show that not more than 30 per cent. of the population, on the most liberal computation, attend church or chapel on a Sunday, but, so far, the minority have been strong enough to tell the majority that if they do not attend to religious duties on that day they shall not do anything else. The favourite argument on the one side is that if people do not go to church they ought to do so. But the fact remains that 70 persons out of every 100 don't, and surely the needs of the 70 deserve some consideration. There is no more painful sight in a large town on a Sunday than to see the thousands wandering aimlessly about, employed in the mere task of killing time, ac-

complishing a sort of moral self-effacement, engaged in the salutary but wearisome pastime of "taking a walk."

The mother who would lay an absolute prohibition on her children, that they should do no work, nor even engage in wholesome sport, but should enjoin on them a condition of absolute idleness, would be not only queer, but decidedly foolish. But no mother would be so foolish. Without any training in the science of government, her knowledge of children would teach her that nothing is more conducive to mischief than idleness. And that is true not only of children, but of adults as well.

Now when we remember that only a small portion of the people of any country make even a profession of religion, and that the majority have no real reverence for Sunday, more than any other day, it will not be difficult to see that for the government to prohibit labour on Sunday is to put temptation in the way of the people, and to use its authority to drive them into mischief.

It may be objected that the same charge lies against the Lord, since in the fourth commandment He says: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt do no work," etc. But the charge does not lie against the Lord, for the following reasons:—

1. The keeping of the true Sabbath does not consist in absolute idleness. Christ's example shows that. He healed the sick on the Sabbath day, defending Himself against the charge of Sabbath-breaking by saying, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Matt. xii. 12. That was not a new version of the law of the Sabbath, but a statement to the effect that the law of the Sabbath sanctions works of love and mercy on that day. Christ declared that He Himself kept the commandments. Therefore the fourth commandment itself must give warrant for labour of the class that Christ did on the Sabbath.

Turning to the commandment we see that it is *our* work that is forbidden on the Sabbath. But Christ came not to do His own work, but the will of the Father. So it is lawful, according to the commandment, to do work on the Sabbath day, which is in no sense for ourselves, and by which we are to derive no personal benefit whatever, but which is done solely and purely for the love of God.

As stated before, the Sabbath does not consist primarily in physical rest. That is, the true Sabbath. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." It is His rest. But since God is Spirit (John iv. 24, R.V.), His rest is spiritual rest; therefore to keep His Sabbath is to yield to the influence of the Spirit, and to enjoy the rest from sin that it gives. The body may be active; but the principle that only God's work, and not that which is for our own personal gain, must be done, will, if conscientiously followed, guard against all violation of the Sabbath.

2. God does not force anybody to keep the Sabbath, even in this higher sense. He is love; His law is a law of love; and the keeping of the Sabbath is a purely voluntary matter, growing out of love to God. He who does not keep the Sabbath willingly and gladly, does not keep it at all. The true worshippers worship God in spirit and in truth, and the Father seeketh only such to worship Him. John iv. 23, 24.

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. xiv. 23. Whatsoever is forced is not of faith, and therefore the service that is forced is sin. So if God should force man to keep the Sabbath, or to appear to keep it, by abstaining from labour, He would be forcing them to sin, instead of serve Him. But "let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." James i. 13.

God has no delight in the formal, outward observance even of the things which He has commanded. Through the prophet Amos He said to those who were worshipping Him in appearance, but not with the heart, "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies, yea, though ye offer Me your burnt offerings and meat offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from Me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment fall down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." Amos v. 21-24, R.V.

And later Christ said to the punctilious Jews: "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, this people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. xv. 7-9. Since

God looks with such abhorrence on the mere outward observance even of things commanded, with what pain and loathing must He regard compulsory observance of that which He has not commanded?

#### AN UNFORESEEN OUTCOME.

ONE of the London dailies lately contained the following from a Cardiff correspondent, which opens up a phase of the Sunday legislation question, that is not given much attention:—

"Each Sunday there is now to be witnessed in this town an extraordinary spectacle. Large numbers of men congregate in an open space near a populous suburb, and subscribe money for the purpose of buying beer, which is obtained in casks from the nearest wholesale stores. This is then shared and drunk openly, a recent decision by the stipendiary magistrate having legalised their action, on the ground that they constitute a crude but genuine club. On the 7th there were some 150 men engaged in this Sunday drinking. On Sunday last the number had risen to 500, with some 2,000 spectators, and next Sunday considerable development of the movement is expected. This is surely an unforeseen and curious outcome of the Sunday Closing Act."

THAT is similar to what occurred in Chicago, where the gates of the Exposition were closed on Sunday, and consequently thousands of people who were denied admittance, spent the day, and their money, in the numerous side shows, beer halls, etc. But the advocates of Sunday legislation will say that such cases as that at Cardiff can be easily remedied by a law suppressing clubs, or at least prohibiting the drinking of liquor in them. Suppose that that is done, and the people then buy liquor on Saturday and drink it in their own private houses on Sunday, one man inviting a dozen of his neighbours to visit him on that day, and share his hospitality. What is to be done? If the course already begun be carried out, the next step will be to prohibit Sunday drinking in private houses, and then all privacy will be at an end, since the police will have power to search any house in which they may expect that people are drinking; and, indeed, they will have to keep informed of the practices of the inhabitants of every house. This will be another difficulty, but it need not be unforeseen by any who will give a little study to the nature of religious legislation. It will readily be seen that civil liberty cannot be enjoyed when religious liberty is interfered with.

It does not require argument, but only that the attention of the thoughtful should be directed a little way ahead, to enable them to see that all the wickedness of the Inquisition is

logically in Sunday legislation, or any other religious legislation. The only reason why we do not see the Inquisition established in every Government where there is Sunday legislation, is because that legislation is so nearly a dead letter. It needs, however, only a revival of misdirected religious zeal to set the Inquisition in full operation.

OBSERVE that in this question of Sunday drinking the right of the State to prohibit the sale or manufacture of intoxicating liquor is not involved. The total prohibition of the liquor traffic, on the ground that alcohol is a poison, and the free use of it dangerous to life and property, is quite another matter. The only question here involved is the right of the State to prohibit the use of liquor on Sunday, not out of regard for the lives and property of the people, but out of regard for the day. It is a question of whether or not religion is a matter between the individual and God; of whether the Government has the right to be conscience for all citizens, and to compel all to act in harmony with the convictions of a few. This is the most important question now before the people, not only of England but of the world, and it will soon come to the front in a way that will demand a decision by every individual.

NOTICE also how religious legislation not only establishes the Inquisition, but also establishes a false standard of morality. The standard of morality must necessarily be a false one, since it is a human standard, and the ways of man are as much lower than the ways of God as the earth is lower than heaven; as much lower as man is inferior to God. The whole tendency of Sunday closing, as applied to the liquor question, is to teach that it is worse to drink liquor on Sunday than to drink it on any other day. Now no sane man can suppose that alcoholic liquor is any more poisonous on Sunday than it is on Monday or Tuesday. Therefore when its use is freely allowed on six days in the week, but prohibited on Sunday, the natural conclusion is that there is nothing wrong in the use of liquor, but that there is some peculiar sacredness to Sunday. And here again we have a false standard, since Sunday observance has no Divine sanction, God having never imparted the least sacredness to the day.

ANOTHER point should always be borne in mind in the discussion of

Sunday legislation. It is this: That in protesting against such legislation, no thought is had of hindering anyone from resting on that day. Although Sunday is not the Sabbath, and has no trace of sacredness nor of Divine sanction, every man has the right to observe it as strictly as he pleases, and no man or combination of men has the right to forbid him so to do. This does not mean that it is right to keep Sunday, but simply that God has given to every man the right and privilege to choose his own course, and to receive the due reward or punishment at the Judgment. Jesus said: "If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world," John xii. 47. The simple proposition is that no civil Government has the right to go beyond Christ, and do what He does not do. Judgment belongs to Him, but He judges no man till His coming. The State therefore is to let this whole matter alone, and leave people as free as God has given them the right to be. The further the State goes in this matter of religious legislation, with the idea that it is responsible for the morals of men, the more unforeseen difficulties will it encounter.

#### MERCY, NOT MERIT.

THOSE who carry the vessel of hope to the puddle of their own merit, will never draw the water of comfort from the fountain of God's mercy. Ah, how would natural men sing if they could but soar to heaven upon the pinions of their own merit! The sunbeams of justice will soon melt such weak and waxen wings.

He that has no better righteousness, than what is of his own providing, shall meet with no higher happiness than what is of his own deserving. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." If such people rest not from duty then they rest in duty. They are determined to sail in their own bottom, though they sink in the ocean. I would that all such did but know that though good works are not destroyed by Christ, yet they must be denied for Christ.

When a glass reflects the brightness of the sun, there is but an acknowledgment of what was, not an addition of what was not. A curious picture praises a beautiful face: not by communicating what it wants, but by presenting what it enjoys. As God has none the less, for the mercy He gives so He has none the more, for the duty

He receives. Man is such a debtor to God, that he can never pay his due to God; yea, the more we pay Him, the more we owe Him for our payments.

It is Christ only, who is the righteousness of God to man, and man to God. We are so far from paying the utmost farthing, that at the utmost we have not a farthing to pay. That man will be a miserable spectacle of vanity, who stands upon the lame feet of his own ability.—*Rev. Wm. Secker.*

#### THE KING WILL COME AGAIN.

THRO' this dreary land of sorrow,  
Thro' this weary night of pain,  
Faith beholds a bright to-morrow,  
When the Lord will come again.  
Then how easy is the burden,  
Tho' the cross is on us pressed,  
For we know that in due season  
He will give His loved ones rest.  
Then Peace and Love shall reign  
When the King has come again.

With the promised land before us,  
Let us bravely march along;  
Tho' the storm-clouds hover o'er us  
We will sing our joyful song,  
That the weary ones may hear us  
And join in the happy strain,  
And Sin's captives break their fetters  
For the King will come again.  
Then Peace and Love shall reign  
When our King has come again.

And the burden of our sorrow,  
Shall be lifted at His voice,  
And the fainting soul uprising  
At His coming shall rejoice;  
Then eyes once dimmed with weeping  
Shall brightly shine again,  
With a new and holy rapture  
When the King has come again,  
Then Peace and Love shall reign  
When our King has come again.  
H. S. RITCHIE.

#### THE GREAT SACRIFICE.

LOOK upon the scene in lonely Gethsemane. Angels witness with amazement the despairing agony of the Son of God, and nature groans in sympathy with her bleeding, dying Author. The earth trembles. The sun refuses to behold the scene. The heavens gather blackness. The angelic host hide their faces from the awful sight. The separation that sin makes between God and man was fully realised by the innocent, suffering Man of Calvary. He was oppressed by the powers of darkness. Satan declared that Christ was in his hands, and that he was superior in strength to the Son of God, that God had disowned His Son. If Christ was indeed in favour with God, why need He die? Could not God save Him from death?

Such were the temptations that Satan pressed upon the Son of God, while legions of evil angels were all about Him, and the holy angels were not permitted to break their ranks, and engage in conflict with the reviling foe. Christ could not see through the portals of the tomb. Bright hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a triumphant conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of His sacrifice. All He could realise during this time of amazing darkness

was the heinousness of sin that was laid upon Him, and the horror of its penalty, death. He feared that sin was so offensive in the sight of His Father that their separation was eternal. The temptation that His own Father had forever left Him, caused that fearful cry from the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

But when, in His expiring agonies, despair pressed upon the soul of the Redeemer, He relied upon the evidences that had hitherto been given Him of His Father's acceptance, and as He yielded up His precious life, by faith alone he rested in Him whom it had been His joy to obey. Though all was enshrouded in gloom, yet amid the awful darkness, which was felt even by sympathizing nature, the Redeemer drained the mysterious cup to the dregs. Though He realises but dimly that He shall triumph over death, He cries with a loud voice, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." He is acquainted with the character of His Father; He understands His justice, His mercy, and His great love; in submission He commends Himself to God. Amid the convulsions of nature, the amazed spectators hear the dying words of the Man of Calvary, "It is finished!"

The heaving earth, the rent rocks, and the terrific darkness, proclaimed that it was the Son of God who died. There was a mighty earthquake. The veil of the temple was rent in twain. Terror seized the executioner and spectators. As Christ commended His spirit into the hands of the Father, the mocking and jeering of the chief priests and elders was hushed. The astonished throng began to withdraw, and in terror grope their way to the city. They smote upon their breasts as they went, and speaking scarcely above a whisper, said among themselves, It is an innocent man that has suffered. What if indeed He were the Son of God?

Jesus did not yield up His life until He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and exclaimed with his expiring breath "It is finished." Angels rejoiced as the words were uttered. They knew that Satan was defeated, his kingdom lost. The great plan of redemption, which was dependent upon the death of Christ, had been thus far carried out, and there was joy in heaven that through faith in Christ the sons of Adam could finally be exalted to the throne of God.

Contrast with the humiliation and sufferings of Christ, the riches of glory, the wealth of praise, pouring forth from immortal tongues, the millions of rich voices in the universe of God in anthems of adoration; and seek to comprehend the magnitude of His love. As a member of the human family, He was mortal; but as God, He was the fountain of life to the world. He could,

in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but voluntarily He laid down His life, that He might give life, and bring immortality to light. He bore the sin of the world, and endured the penalty, that rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul. He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will. The whole treasure of heaven was poured out in one gift to save fallen man.

Nothing could have actuated Christ to leave His honour and majesty in Heaven, and come to a sinful world, to be neglected, despised, and rejected by those He came to save, and finally to suffer on the cross, but eternal, redeeming love, which will ever remain a mystery. O, what love! what amazing love! that the Son of God should come to earth to be made sin for us, in order that we might be reconciled to God, and exalted to a place with Him in the mansions of glory. And O, what is man that such a price should be paid for his redemption!

When we more fully comprehend the magnitude and meaning of the great sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven in dying for man, the plan of salvation will be glorified before us, and the thought of Calvary will awaken sacred and living emotions in the Christian's heart. Praise to God and to the Lamb will be in our hearts and upon our lips; for pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the heart that keeps fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary.

At what a cost has salvation been provided! What will be our portion if we heed not the entreaties of mercy? What will be the fate of those who profess to be followers of Christ, yet who do not take up the cross as humble disciples? How many despise the counsel of this loving Saviour, and permit selfish interest to close the door against the Son of God! He was infinitely rich, "yet for our sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." He was clothed with light and glory, surrounded by hosts of heavenly angels eager to do His pleasure; yet He took upon Him the nature of man, and was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," and became sin for us, "that He might be made the righteousness of God in Him." "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" Here is love which no language can express.

He who beholds this matchless love will be elevated in thought, purified in heart, transformed in character, and will go forth to be a light to the world, to reflect in some degree this mysterious love. The more we contemplate the cross of Christ, the more we shall adopt the language of the apostle when

he said, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

#### CHRIST'S SUNSHINE IN THE HEART.

WHEN we want light in our rooms, we unbar the shutters and let in the sunshine; dark rooms are unwholesome. In like manner, every Christian who wants to be happy—and happy also under all circumstances—should keep his heart-windows wide open towards heaven. Let the warm rays of Christ's countenance shine in! It will scatter the chilling mists of doubt; it will turn tears into rainbows.

One of the happiest Christians that I know is happy on a very small income, and in spite of some very sharp trials. The secret of happiness is not in the size of one's house, or in the number of one's butterfly friends; the fountain of peace and joy is in the heart. As long as that keeps sweet and pure and satisfied with God's will, there is not much danger of acid words from the lips or of scowling clouds on the brow. Some Christians excuse their morose temper or their gloomy despondencies by the plea of poor health, whereas much of their dyspepsias or other ailments may be the result of sheer worry and peevishness. The medicine they need cannot be got from the doctor or the drug-store. A large draught of the Bible taken every morning, a throwing open of the heart's windows to the promises of the Master, a few words of honest prayer, a deed or two of kindness to the next person you meet, will do more to brighten your countenance and help your digestion than all the drugs of the doctors. If you want to get your aches and your trials out of sight, hide them under your mercies.

The glory of Jesus Christ as the Great Physician and Health-bringer is that He deals with the *soul*, and with the body through the soul. The real Marah that embitters life is commonly a sour, selfish, unbelieving, unsanctified *heart*. There's the seat of the disease. Discontent and despondency gnaw out the core of the faith, and starve every grace. They never remove one sorrow and they kill a hundred joys. They disgrace our religion, disgust the world, and displease and dishonour the Christ we pretend to serve. Even when we are on a cross of providential trials, discontent may mingle a cup of vinegar and gall to make the suffering more bitter. On the other hand, a cross may be the means of lifting a true, brave, Christ-loving soul up higher, into the sweet sunshine of his countenance.

Bear in mind that your happiness or

your misery is very much of your own making. You cannot create spiritual sunlight any more than you can create the morning star; but you can put your soul where *Christ is shining*. Keep a clear conscience. Keep a good stock of God's promises within reach. Keep a nightingale of hope in your soul that can sing away the dark hours when they do come. Keep a good, robust faith that can draw honey out of rocks and oil out of the flinty rock. Never spend a day without trying to do somebody good; and then, keeping step with your Master, march on towards heaven, over any road, however rough, and against any head-winds that blow. It will be all sunshine when we get up there.—*Rev. T. L. Cuyler, D.D.*

#### EVIL OF A STATE THEOLOGY.

WE present the disabilities, the persecutions, and the martyrdoms, which are so conspicuous in the history of State theology, as more than suggesting that there must be some radical mistake in the doctrine itself. A doctrine that can by perversion turn the mild and genial religion of Jesus into a flaming persecutor, and make it a ferocious enemy to religious liberty as vested by God in individual souls; a doctrine that undertakes to adjudicate upon questions lying exclusively between the soul and its maker; a doctrine that substitutes carnal for spiritual weapons; a doctrine that resorts to the law of force, where nothing is pertinent except the peaceful persuasion of argument and the gentle and loving voice of entreaty; a doctrine that in practical execution becomes an abominable despotism exercised over the bodies and attempted over the souls of men—yes, such a doctrine has written upon its face in letters of light the glaring evidence of being essentially and fundamentally wrong. Judging it by its fruits, we find it difficult to use terms sufficiently intense to describe the degree of that wrong. Its pervading principle is hostile alike to God and man, although it professes to be the servant of both.

It is, moreover, a significant fact of history that Christianity has always prospered most in the true sense when it has had least to do with the State, and the State has had least to do with it. For the first three centuries it was the theology of individual conviction, resting simply on its own evidence, holding no other relation to the State than that of a persecuted religion, and doing its entire work by the use of spiritual means; and then it was that it spread itself among the nations of the earth with a purity and power that have never since been exceeded. Then it was that venerable and pompous systems of Paganism yielded to the restless energy of its moral march. Afterward it became a State theology; and then, in the hands of the State, it

was not only corrupted and half-paganised, but at once assumed, and for centuries maintained, the character of a persecuting religion. All the persecutions of the Romish Church, and, indeed, all the persecutions that have existed in the name of Christianity, have had their basis in State theology. If God should be pleased to constitute a theocracy on earth, and by inspiring it guarantee its infallibility, then it would be the duty of men to bow to its authority; but until we have this fact established by appropriate evidence, the conclusion drawn from history is that the State should confine itself exclusively to things temporal, and leave theology to the individual convictions and private judgments of men. This is certainly the truth in respect to Christianity.

There can be no doubt that a true theology in the heads and hearts of the people is a very important and much-needed influence for good in relation to civil government; yet it does not follow that the State is the proper party to take care of this theology, to define it, to teach it, to support it, or in any way invest it with the sanction of law. Those who set up the proposition that religion is essential to morality, and also the further proposition that morality is essential to good government, and then infer that the State should establish and support religion are guilty of a palpable *non-sequitur* in logic.

The truth of their premises does not prove that of their conclusion. It may be true (facts show it to be so) that the State will receive the largest and purest contribution of morality founded on religion when the latter is left entirely to the educational influences of the family and the church; and if so, then State theology is not only a superfluity, but a positive damage to the best interests of the commonwealth. The morality as derived from religion which the State needs will be best supplied by the confinement of its agency to things temporal, and the entire omission on its part of any attempt to administer things spiritual. The State can do religion no favour so great as to have nothing to do with it, and itself no favour so great as to let religion alone. The moment the two are put in alliance with each other both are injured.—*Samuel T. Spear, D.D.*

#### BE CHEERFUL.

THE necessity for him who would grow old gracefully is a cheerful disposition and the habit of looking on the bright side. Passion strains the heart to its utmost, melancholy freezes the blood, and worry wears out the best years of a man's life. No one who habitually indulges in these or kindred emotions has half a chance of reaching advanced life. It was the advice of a

man of ninety not to worry. "Don't worry about what you can't help," he said, "for it will do no good. Don't worry about what you can help, but go to work and help it." Sound advice this for all who aspire to become nonagenarians.—*The Young Man.*

#### THE GOD WE CHOOSE.

WHEN Israel chose the service of the true God, He delivered them from their enemies and caused them to prosper; but when they forsook His commandments and served other gods, He said, "Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." Judges x. 14.

The ancient form of idolatry may not appear among us; yet many prefer other gods to the Lord. Gold may be a god, though not moulded in the shape of ancient idols. Many choose wealth as their god; and give their whole lives to this object. Covetousness is idolatry. Farms, merchandise, cattle, horses, and even swine, may be first in their hearts. Fine houses, costly furniture, or a splendid equipage, may be the supreme object of our devotion. Fashion and fame and the applause of men may be exalted in the mind above all that is called God, and worshipped with a hearty devotion. And not the least exalted and adored is pride of self. Self is idolised; our own will and way, desires, appetites and passions, are first of all in esteem.

But however much the gods of this world may be esteemed, the time of tribulation is coming, from which they will fail to deliver us. If we turn now to the living and true God, we shall have a shelter in the day of wrath; but if not, His language to us will be, "Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen." But how vain the cry! Neither silver nor gold nor any earthly god shall be able to deliver in that day. Have you chosen any of these gods? Be persuaded to abandon them at once, and serve your Creator, and Him only. He can deliver; but pride and passion, and all the world, will prove vain and worthless; they cannot deliver.—*R. F. Cottrell.*

#### DISSIPATION.

DISSIPATION means a waste, a scattering, a useless expenditure of means or time or strength. When a person spends his cash for alcoholic drinks or tobacco, or becomes idle or licentious, and thus squanders his precious time and strength, we call him dissipated; he has wasted time, money, influence; his path intellectually, morally, financially, socially, is a downward path, and if continued to the end, will cause him to wreck his hopes and prospects for this life and the future.

But there is a dissipation not of this kind, but one far more common;

namely, mental dissipation. This is caused by light reading and the constant perusal of the trash published in the newspaper and the novel,—sensational articles, reports of crime, and startling news of recent cases of divorce, elopements, and defalcations; while the Bible and good books are neglected.

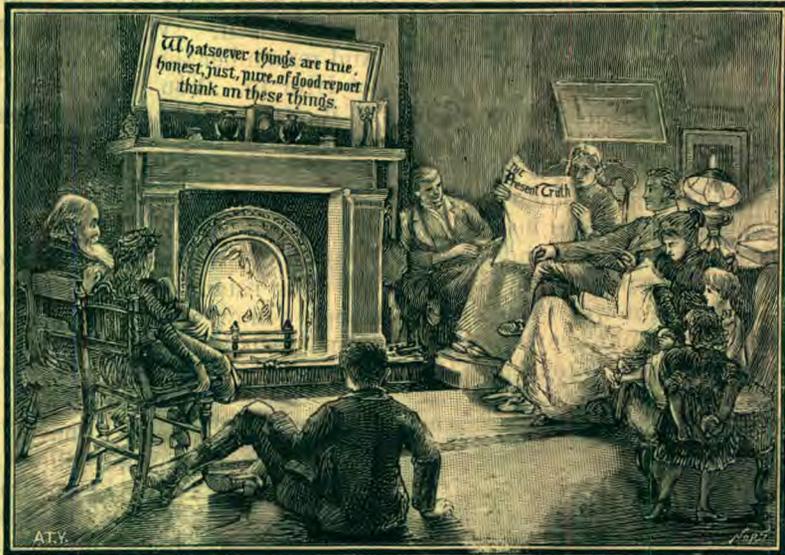
How few really love the Bible as sincerely as they do the latest city paper! How few peruse the holy book with the same zest that they devour the latest news,—the results of elections, reports from foreign countries, of crops and storms, weather reports, prices, etc.! Some love the prize story, continued from week to week; or the magnificent offers in the advertising columns. Others hail the latest novel with unfeigned joy.

Now, it is safe to assert that in proportion as the mind is dissipated in any or all the ways herein mentioned, the Bible is disliked, or read with distaste, or neglected.

Interests too valuable to be appreciated fully by the finite mind, are at stake. The questions for us to consider now are, Which will you choose, life or death? How much will you give for God and heaven? Can you give too much? Do you not at least doubt the value of the trash of this life? Is it not dear at any price? How much will the novels of Bulwer or Dickens bring when the last trumpet sounds the knell of earthly hopes? What then will those rely upon whose minds have been filled with the chaff of fiction, or the rubbish of the weekly filled with exciting stories and light reading? Ah! how those trifling romances have filled the minds of youth, until all love for sober, serious, thoughtful subjects has been dissipated. Dear reader, if such is your case, hasten to lay them for ever aside, and seek for truth and true wisdom.—*Joseph Clarke.*

It is not natural and reasonable intellectual work that injures the brain, but emotional excitement. Most men can stand the severest thought and study of which their brains are capable and be none the worse for it, for neither thought nor study interferes with the recuperative influence of sleep. It is ambition, anxiety, and disappointment, the hopes and fears, the loves and hates of our lives that wear out our nervous system and endanger the balance of the brain. A man can spend more of his strength in five minutes of unnatural mental excitement than in a day of calm, steady brain work.—*Herald of Health.*

THERE is a proverb, but none of Solomon's: "Every man for himself; and God for us all." But where every man is for himself, the Devil will have all. Whosoever is a seeker of himself, is not found of God. Though he may find himself in this life, he will lose himself in death.—*Sel.*



## THE HOME.

### A LOST OPPORTUNITY.

UPON calling at an attractive house not long ago on a hasty errand, I found in the parlour, with their mother, the little son, three and a half years old, and his infant sister. Both were at play on the carpet. A moment's time showed me that the boy was the embodiment of nerve and spirit. He was still not an instant.

In one of his swift movements he planted his chubby foot square upon the tender hand of the babe. A piercing cry followed, although the hurt was but momentary. The restless boy was terrified over his misstep. Instead of observing this and tenderly caring for the injured one, the mother flew at the little offender, beat him upon the head and shoulders, and shouted at the top of her voice:—"You bad boy, you have killed your sister! You bad, bad boy, you have drawn blood upon her hand,"—which was not true. "Run out of my sight." Then she rudely thrust him into the hands of the servant, who came running in, fearing some great calamity had occurred. The woman then took the babe in her arms, and in excited tones informed her that her brother was "the naughtiest boy in the world."

Here was missed an opportunity of wisely training a child full of promise, for the boy possessed quick sympathies, a strong nature, and was by no means difficult to manage. Suppose that, with unruffled manner and tender words, the mother had instructed him that, when playing with his sister, he ought to repress his abounding activity, lest he should do her a serious injury, how different would have been the scene and the effects!

Happier still would have been the lesson taught had the little fellow himself been directed to soothe the infant. This would have laid upon the doer of the wrong the labour of repairing it, which is according to strict justice. Thus, in a lovely and yet most effective

way, would he have punished himself, and have blamed no one.

The next playtime with his sister would have found him more thoughtful. In the after life of the lad there would have been no memory of that terrific cyclone of temper, and of the painful scene I should not now be carrying in my mind an ineffaceable photograph.  
—Mrs. Emma H. Adams.

### A HOLY TEMPLE.

JESUS, can a child like me  
Thine own living temple be?  
Yes, Thy Spirit, day by day,  
In my heart will deign to stay.  
Then that heart must holy be  
A fit dwelling-place for Thee.  
Naughty tempers, thoughts of sin,  
Will not dare to stay within.

—Selected.

### HOLY PLACES.

SOME of the towns of India are said to be very holy, especially those on the banks of the River Ganges. The water of the Ganges is thought to be so holy that it makes the towns on it holy. Some of them are more holy than others because some parts of the river are considered more holy than other parts. Among these are Allahabad, Juggernaut, Muthra, Hurdwar, and Benares the most sacred of all.

Benares is said to have been built by the god Siva out of gold and precious stones, but on account of the sins of the people who lived there it was finally turned into stone and thatch. "The Hindus think Benares is 80,000 steps nearer heaven than any other place, and that those who die there will go straight to Siva's heaven, the best of all.

There are 2,000 temples in Benares, a large number of sacred wells and pools, and 500,000 idols! There also is the Monkey Temple, the temple full of sacred cows, and the Well of Knowledge of which we learned last week. Many are the pilgrims that go there from all parts of India hoping to obtain purity and holiness by coming in con-

tact with such a holy place. But holiness is not obtained in that way, nor from such things, so they go home as unsatisfied and as unholy as when they came. Their gods have no power, their sacred waters are no more holy than any other waters.

What makes a place sacred? What makes a thing holy? Look in your Bible and you will see.

In the third chapter of Exodus we are told of a wise and good man named Moses, a shepherd, who was taking care of the flock of Jethro his father-in-law. One day as he was leading the sheep to the back side of the desert, and came near to a mountain called Horeb, he suddenly stopped, for he saw something very wonderful. Off to one side was a bush on fire, and it burned and burned, but did not burn up!

"And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is *holy ground*. Moreover, He said I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."

Ah, it was the glory of the living God that wrapped the bush in flame; it was the presence of the King of kings that caused Moses to hide his face; it was the holiness of Him who alone is holy that caused that barren wilderness to become holy ground. Before the Lord appeared there it was not holy, and after the Lord left there it was not holy; it was His presence that made it holy.

Once more the Lord appeared in this same wilderness on Mount Sinai, when He came with all His angels and spoke the ten commandments with His own voice. And the mountain became so holy that the children of Israel did not dare to go near it. "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly."

Wherever the Lord is, there is a holy place, as we see again in the fifth chapter of Joshua: "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our enemies? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What saith my Lord unto His servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto

Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is *holy*. And Joshua did so."

Again we read of the *holy* mount where Jesus appeared in His glory and the voice of God said, "This is My beloved Son, Hear ye Him."

The apartment of the temple in which the Lord appeared above the mercy seat was the Most *Holy* Place, because God appeared there. But as soon as He stopped visiting the temple it was no longer holy.

We see, therefore, that it is not where God has been or where He is going to be that it is holy, but it is where God *is*. No place is holy because Jesus was once there, but if it is holy at all it must be because He *is* there now, a *living* Saviour.

Not only in the wilderness does the Lord have a holy sanctuary. He says that wherever two or three are gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst of them. Then if He is there, is it not holy? Should not we, like Moses, be very careful how we act in His presence, that we grieve Him not away and bring not a curse upon ourselves? He says, Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence My sanctuary; I am the Lord." Why?

He does not say because I am a Lord, and you should respect Me as you do earthly kings and lords; no, you should reverence Him for He says, "I am the Lord,"—the Holy One. "For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him."

It is very sad to see even children noisy and impolite and disrespectful in church and Sabbath-school, for it shows that they do not realise that they are in a holy place on account of the presence of the Holy One who is King of kings and Lord of lords, and the Creator of the heavens and the earth. They are not showing disrespect to their teacher merely, but to the God of heaven.

We read that the Bible, God's Word, is *holy*. Then since no place can

become holy unless Jesus is there, who must be in God's word? Yes, Jesus Himself lives in it by His holy Spirit.

Since Jesus dwells in the words of God, since Jesus *is* the Word of God, you see it is very easy to let Him into our hearts. It can be done just by letting God's word into our hearts. If we read it, and believe it, and accept it as God's word to us, and love it, and take it as our rule, it will bring Jesus, the Holy One, into our hearts.

Since Jesus makes holy every place

invited in to make of *you* a holy temple unto Himself. Will you let Him in? And remember that it is not enough to let Him in. You must let Him stay in, if you would have your heart continue to be holy.

#### AND THEN?

"Oh, if I was ever lucky enough to call this estate mine, I should be a happy fellow," said a young man. "And then?" said a friend. "And then? Why, then I'd pull down the

old house and build a palace, have lots of prime fellows around me, keep the best wines and the finest horses and dogs in the country." "And then?" "Why, then I'd hunt, and ride, and smoke, and drink, and dance, and keep open house, and enjoy life gloriously." "And then?" "Why, then, I suppose, like other people, I should grow old and not care so much for these things." "And then?" "Why, then, I suppose, in the course of nature I should leave all these pleasant things and—well, yes—die!" "And then?" "Oh, bother your 'thens'; I must be off." Many years after, the friend was accosted with, "God bless you! I owe my happiness to you!" "How?" "By two words spoken long ago, —'and then?'"—*J. B. Gough.*

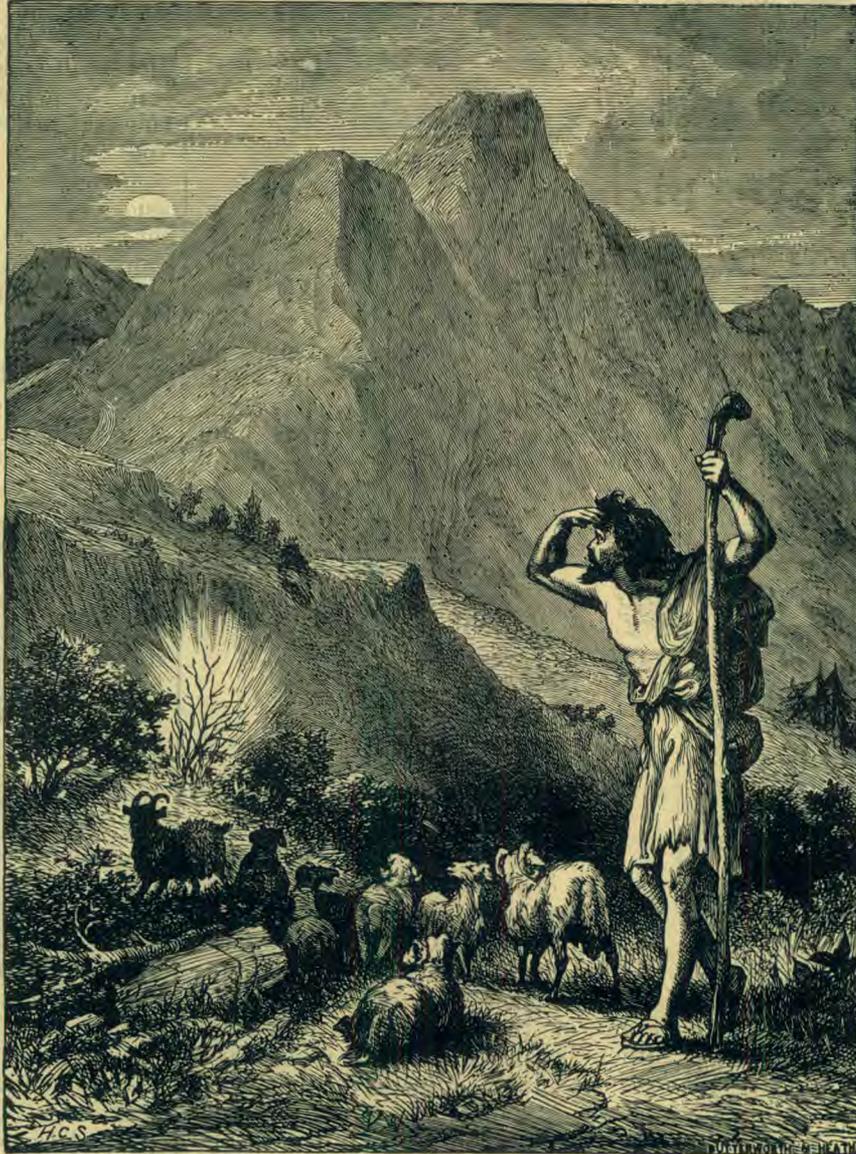
"THERE is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs xvi. 25.

#### ROY.

Roy is a little boy who does not love to go to church. He is not willing to sit still a little while, you see. Do you not think God wants His little children to go to His house? Even if they do get tired, can they not bear that to please Jesus, who bore so much for them? Here is a little verse for Roy, and all who feel as he does:

Patient Saviour, help me be  
Always glad to follow Thee:  
Lead me to Thy house of prayer,  
Let me always find Thee there.

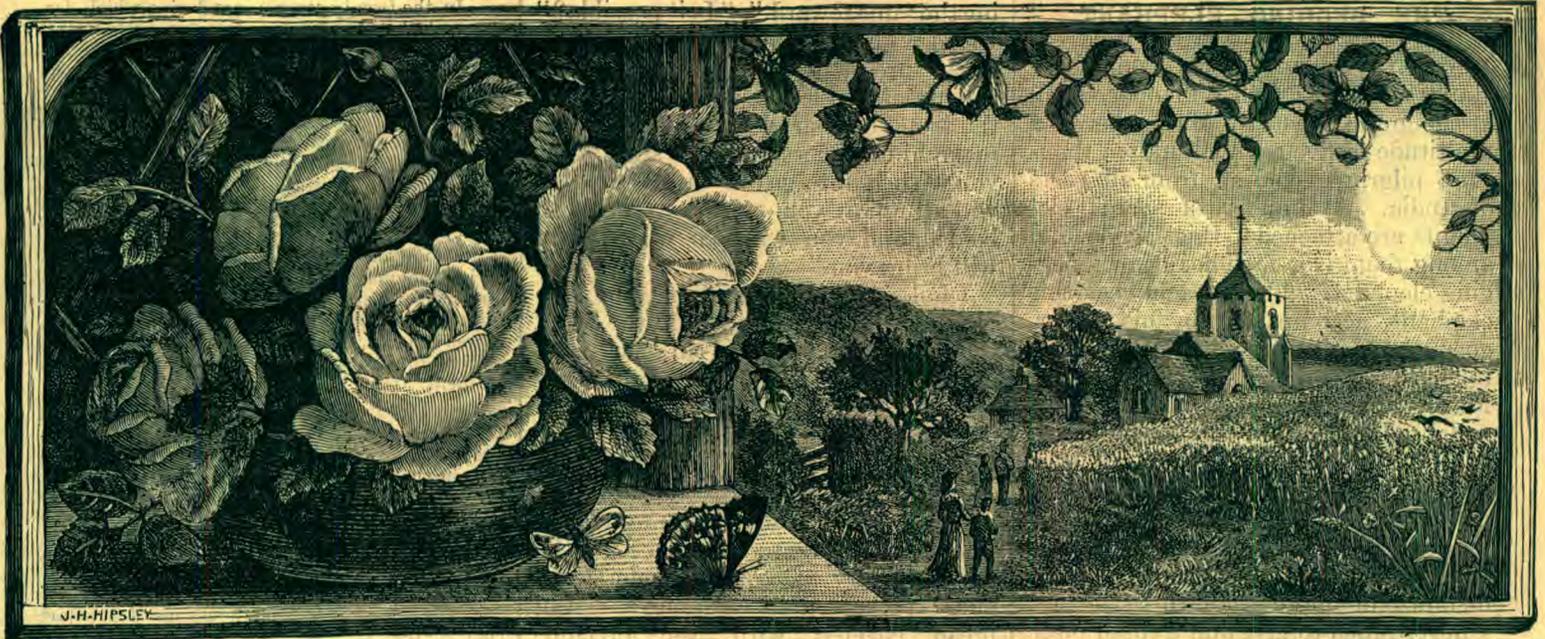
—Selected.



A HOLY PLACE.

that He enters, our hearts will be holy as soon as Jesus comes in. No wickedness and impurity can stay where Jesus is. It flees before Him even as it did when He entered the temple at Jerusalem and found the priests and rulers buying and selling cattle. And that is just what Jesus has bought us for. He has bought us with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, that our bodies may be holy temples where He may dwell.

So you see you do not need to go on long pilgrimages, as the Indians do, to find holiness. He, the Word, the Holy One, is nigh thee, waiting to be

**HARK! THE LARK IS SINGING.**

HARK! the lark is singing,  
In the clear blue sky;  
Now I scarce can see him,  
He has flown so high:  
Yet his glad song floating  
Downward still to earth,  
Shows his little heart is  
Full of joy and mirth.

Little lark, what is it  
Makes your heart so gay?  
Do you love the sunshine,  
This bright, sunny day?  
Do you know who made us,  
And the earth so fair?  
Have you flown to thank Him  
For His love and care?

—Selected.

**THE THINGS THAT ARE MADE.**

How children do love to play! They love to play in the house with their blocks and games, dishes and dolls. But they love to play out-of-doors still better, because there are so many pleasant things there that they cannot find in the house.

The air out-of-doors is so fresh, the sun so bright, the sky so blue, and the carpet of soft green grass all over the ground is so much finer than the carpet in the house. Here and there are tiny flowers and red strawberries peeping out of the grass and waiting to be picked. Bees and bright-winged butterflies and dear little humming birds are flying in and out among the rose bushes. In the great leafy trees are happy birds, singing and building their cosy nests. And even in the grass, nests may be found in which are young birds with their mouths wide open, waiting for the mother bird to give them something to eat. There are pet hens, so tame that they will come and eat right out of your hand, with soft, downy little chicks that follow them wherever they go.

In the farm yard some little people find pet kittens, rabbits, lambs, and goats; the horses waiting to be fed, and the cows to be milked. In tiny streams they find pretty stones and pebbles, and many queer little animals and fish, besides the ducks and geese that love to float upon the water.

Then, there is the garden, in which may be found at different seasons, strawberries, lettuce, radishes, onions, cabbage, beets, currants, gooseberries, blackberries, raspberries, and many other things that are good to eat. Out in the fields are the turnips and potatoes waiting to be hoed, and the fresh hay to be raked up in heaps. In the orchard are apple, peach, and cherry trees, where at certain times are red cherries, great rosy apples, and sweet juicy peaches. Along the road or in the woods are other trees which are sometimes loaded down with hickory nuts, hazlenuts, butternuts, walnuts, bechnuts, filberts, and chestnuts.

How many of these things did *you* ever see? Well, all of these, and many other things, cause it to be more pleasant out-of-doors than in the house.

In the winter, it gets very cold in some places, and when little boys and girls go out they have to put on thick coats and gloves, and tie something over their ears. But how beautiful it is even then! The soft, fleecy snow falls gently from the clouds and covers the houses and trees and ground with a robe of the purest white. Then the sun in the daytime, and the moon and the stars at night, shine upon this snow and make it so bright and sparkling that we can hardly look at it. What fun to go out and skate and play snow ball, to make snow men and snow houses, or to ride down hill

on a sledge! What beautiful and wonderful things there are all around us!

But the grass, and flowers, and trees, and animals, and sunshine were already here when your father and mother were little children, and when your grandfather, and grandmother, and all of your grown-up friends were children. (Ask them to tell you about it.) As all of these things were already here, when your friends were children, we know that none of these friends made them.

Did you ever stop to think where all the beautiful and wonderful things that you see came from? and how they were made? See if you can tell by next week where we can find out all about it.

1. Do you like to play?
2. With what do you like to play when you are at home?
3. Where do you like to play better, in the house, or out-of-doors?
4. Why do you like to play out-of-doors better than in the house?
5. What kinds of animals have you at home?
6. What kinds of birds?
7. What kinds of trees grow near your house?
8. What kinds of flowers grow in your garden?
9. Tell what else you see when you go out-of-doors.
10. When you go out on a clear night and look up, what do you see?
11. Have you a father and a mother? a grandfather? a grandmother? any other grown-up friends?
12. Do you think that they were ever little like you?
13. Did the sun and the moon and the stars shine, and were there animals, and trees, and flowers when *they* were little children?
14. How do you know?
15. Then could they have made these beautiful things?

### THE BEGGING ELEPHANT.

A FEW leagues from Pondichery stands a pagoda called Willenoor, which at the grand feasts of May receives a multitude of five or six hundred thousand pilgrims, coming from all parts of India. A number of sacred elephants are attached to this pagoda, and among them is a mendicant, or a begging elephant. Twice each week this elephant, accompanied by his driver, goes to the villages and to Pondichery to beg alms for the priests of Willenoor. Many times, working beneath the verandah closed in by curtains on the first story of my house, I have seen him lift the movable curtain with his great trunk and balance himself to ask me for a piece of small coin, which he sucked from my hand to his trunk, a distance of more than three inches. I never failed to give him a small piece of money for the pagoda, and for himself a loaf of bread which my servant dipped in molasses, of which the elephant was very fond.

In a short time we became very friendly. He had seen me only in undress, that is, in light silk garments of the country, and then only across the little pillars of the balcony of my cottage. One day I had occasion to go to Willenoor on business. I arrived at noon. The sun was burning the earth; no one was seen in the streets or on the verandahs, every one was resting. My carriage had stopped under a mango tree in the principal square, and I was about to start for the house of the thasildar or governor of the village, when all at once a monstrous black elephant came running out of the pagoda, which was opposite. He arrived in front of us, and before I had time to collect my senses, he lifted me up, placed me on his neck, and started at full speed for the pagoda. He carried me across the first enclosure, in which was a great well for bathing, and brought me direct to the elephants' quarter.

Once there, he placed me on the ground in the centre of all his companions; it was the begging elephant; he had recognised me. He uttered short cries, lifted his trunk, waved his ears, which his friends doubtless interpreted to my advantage, for when the thasildar, followed by the priests of the temple, came out to seek the cause of this strange demonstration, they found me calm and recovered from my surprise, in the midst of these enormous beasts who were tendering an ovation in my behalf.

"This is most remarkable," said the priest, "I never saw them act so friendly toward anyone." I related to him the circumstances of my gifts to the begging elephant. "I am no longer surprised," he answered. "He has already recounted it to the whole band, and the gourmands are paying you these attentions in hope of attain-

ing the same reward." "Is it possible?" I said with amazement. "I am perfectly sure of it. Do you wish to see the proof? Place your arm around the trunk of your elephant friend, and make him understand by signs that you wish him to go out with you; they will all follow you. Allow yourself to be led, and you will see where they will bring you."

I followed his instruction; the begging elephant and I took up the lead, the nine others joined in the pace, uttering cries of contentment among themselves. We passed through the gate of the pagoda, and they led me directly to the shop of a native baker. I would have been utterly astounded had I not already known the wonderful intelligence of these animals. At the shop my duty was readily understood, and I presented to each one a loaf of bread covered with the precious molasses syrup, which is their greatest delicacy.

The priest with whom I had already spoken, and who was a professor of philosophy at the temple of Willenoor, told me that from time to time the begging elephant managed to escape from them, and wandered as far as Pondichery to beg on his own account. Knowing perfectly the market where he obtained the provisions on his expeditions, he would go there, place the money he had collected upon the table of a fruit merchant, and eat as many pine apples, bananas, mangoes, and as much sugar cane and arrack as the Hindoo would allow him for his money.

—Thomas W. Knox.

"My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction; for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." Prov. iii. 11, 12.

### Interesting Items.

—The largest dredger in the world has just been built and tested for the Mersey Harbour Board. It will raise 24,000 tons of sand in a day.

—King Alexander of Servia has granted an amnesty to all ecclesiastics banished or dismissed from their offices by the Metropolitan and Consistory.

—The cholera at Mecca is increasing with great rapidity. On the 26th of June there were 455 deaths, and on the 27th the number of deaths was 999.

—The Ministry of Ways and Communications in Russia has given orders for the establishment of compartments reserved for lady-smokers in all railway trains.

—The Pope has issued an encyclical on the subject of a native Catholic clergy in India, exhorting the Catholics of Europe to co-operate with him in the work of founding Indian seminaries.

—Nearly all the German newspapers now concede that as the result of the late elections, the Government will have a majority in the Reichstag, and that the Army Bill will doubtless be passed.

—A list of 111 Jewish families living in Tiflis has just been sent to the Governor of that province, with the request that he is to take steps to have them removed from his government before November 1,

—In the twenty-seven years during which Dr. Barnardo has been engaged in his work, 22,000 waifs and strays have been rescued. There are now about 5,000 children in the fifty one different institutions under his care.

—A serious riot, in which many people were killed, broke out during the Mohammedan festival at Rangoon, which began June 25, owing to the refusal of the magistrate to allow the Mohammedans to slaughter a cow in the vicinity of the Hindu temple.

—An inn keeper has been sentenced by the imperial tribunal at Liepzig, to seven years penal servitude and ten years loss of the rights of citizenship, for "attempted high treason," in having, as was charged, furnished drawings of the fortress of New Breisach, in Alsace, to the French Government.

—Governor Altgeld, of Illinois, has pardoned Fielden, Neebe, and Schwab, three of the Anarchists who were sentenced to imprisonment for life for complicity in the Haymarket riots in Chicago, in 1886, in which many policemen were killed by a bomb. The Governor holds that the court was prejudiced, and that they did not have a fair trial. The Anarchists are jubilant, and the law-abiding people are indignant, and fearful as to the results.

—It is said that tens of thousands of Jews are congregated on the Russo-German frontier. Driven from their homes in the interior by the Russian officials, they are met on the opposite banks of the Vistula by German sentinels, who refuse to allow them passage into Germany. Permitted neither to go forward nor to return, with little means, and no way of earning a livelihood, they seem destined to perish miserably unless succour is at once sent them.

—In the House of Commons, on the 23rd ult., a motion was made to the effect "That, in consequence of the pressure of public business, and the failure of this House to deal with Scottish affairs in accordance with the wishes of the Scottish people, it is desirable to devolve upon a Scottish Legislature all matters exclusively relating to Scotland." The motion was defeated by a vote of 168 to 150. The House evidently regards one Home Rule Bill at a time as sufficient.

—A terrible calamity occurred in the Mediterranean, June 23rd. The new turret ironclad *Victoria*, having on board Admiral Sir George Tryon, commander of the fleet, went down after collision with the *Camperdown*, taking with her about 400 men, including the commander. The collision occurred while the fleet was manoeuvring off Tripoli, Syria, but the details are not known. The *Victoria* sank, bottom upward, in seventy fathoms of water, within fifteen minutes after she was struck.

—In some parts of the Continent the drought has been severe. In the Jura, the Ardennes, and especially in the Vosges, the drought has completely destroyed the forage crops. It is said that even in the most favoured regions there is but one-tenth of an ordinary crop. At the fair of Mirecourt, three horses have been sold for seven francs and a half. At Darney, a pair of oxen in good condition, and three years old, went for seventy-five francs. At Epinal, horses which found no purchaser have been abandoned on the market.

—A large cylindrical petard, capable of destroying an entire building, was found on the 26th ult. in the Royal Alcazar, at Seville Spain, a burning fuse being attached. A mason employed in making some repairs discovered the bomb and extinguished the fuse by throwing a bucket of water over it. The frequent discoveries of bombs here have thrown the inhabitants of the city into a state of consternation. Armed guards are kept stationed outside many houses, with orders to fire upon any one approaching during the night.

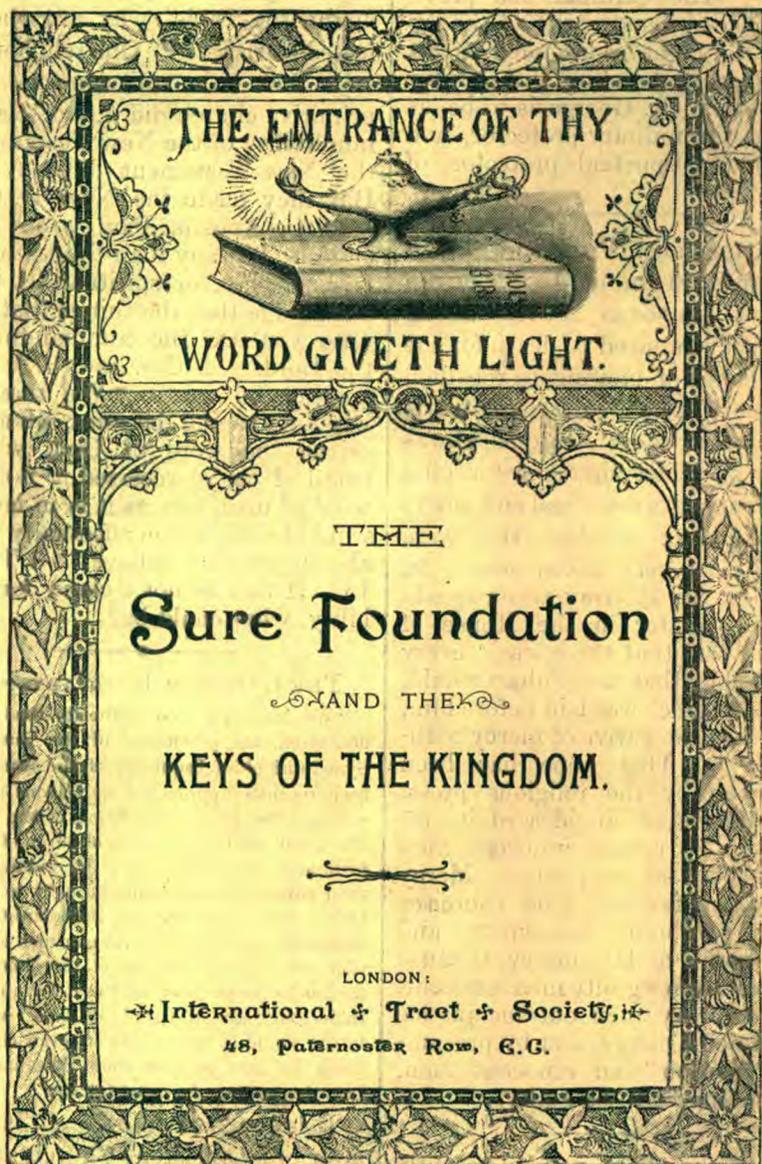
—A correspondent of the *Daily Graphic* speaks thus of the effects of the famine in Algeria; "Men with sunken cheeks, eyes starting from their sockets, legs and arms little more than skin and bone, women in utter despair crying out for a morsel of food to keep their little ones and themselves from starvation, with just a few rags to cover their bodies, excite one's deepest sympathy. It is not uncommon to find people dead along the roads, of sheer starvation. One sees men and women digging everywhere for roots which they dry in the sun and then grind into powder, with which they manufacture a kind of bread, very indigestible, thereby adding a further amount of suffering."

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## The Present Truth.

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

LONDON, JULY 6, 1893.

FOR TERMS, SEE FIRST PAGE.

IN his twenty-fourth anniversary sermon, Dr. Parker said:—

"I open this word of God anywhere (as my mother used to do), and there is the balm, the cordial for me. To me this book is not a rag-shop, where I may find a patch of velvet here and a patch of silk or cotton there. My Bible is to me the word of God which abideth for ever. I have witnessed a great many funerals—funerals in the air. Shut out the visible, and see these funerals in the air. These funerals are always very silent. The theory, the hypothesis, is born amid great acclamation, but the poor little wraith is carried out very quietly, and buried without a tear! I have witnessed several thousands of these funerals in the air. But the all-enlightening Bible abideth for ever. Get rid of hypotheses.

THE danger of falling does not diminish as one ascends. On the contrary it increases. And what is more, the hurt is greater from the higher fall. Even so the Christian of long experience and great attainments has no warrant that he will not fall. He need not fall, for Christ is able to keep him from falling; but the point is, that it is as easy for him to fall as for the one just beginning the Christian life. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." "Thou standest by faith; be not high-minded, but fear." Faith means humility, which alone insures one's standing. As Bunyan has aptly put it:—

"He that is down needs fear no fall;  
He that is low, no pride;  
He that is humble, ever shall  
Have God to be his guide."

At the meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society the Rev. R. Wright Hay related the following incident: "An intoxicated Brahmin, a man of position and education, staggered at midnight to the door of the mission house, clamouring for the sacred privilege of baptism, and argued, 'Am I not as drunk as any Christian?'" What an example that man must have had before him, to imagine that drunkenness is an essential part of Christianity. If he should come to this country, with the popular notion in his mind that this is a Christian nation, would the illusion be dispelled? It would seem as though all Christians would for the honour of Christ, repudiate the idea that any nation can be Christian, and would let it be widely proclaimed that to be Christian is to be like Christ,

ON Thursday, June 29, the ceremony of placing England under the patronage of St. Peter and the Virgin Mary was performed at the Brompton Oratory. Cardinal Vaughan officiated, assisted by all the Catholic bishops of England except two. It was stated that the ceremony was one of "reconsecration," since it is claimed that Peter was from the earliest times the patron saint of England. To demonstrate how intimately devotion to St. Peter entered into the life of the common people, it was stated that there is evidence of the familiar use of his name as an expletive, or mild form of swearing! The Cardinal had previously published a statement to the effect that no slight is intended to St. George, in thus handing the country over to Peter. St. George is to be, as heretofore, the military protector, and St. Peter the spiritual protector, of England.

Two Armenians, Professors Thomaian and Kayayan, of the American College at Marsovan, have, among others, been sentenced to death for the alleged offence of inciting to rebellion against the Turkish Government. It is thought that their sole offence was that they preached vigorously, urging the Christians to greater zeal and unity; and the evidence on which they were convicted was very insufficient. In view of this, Sir E. Gray, when speaking of the matter in the House of Commons, said that there was "every reason to hope that the Sultan would, when the evidence was laid before him, exercise the prerogative of mercy without delay." This hope has been echoed even by the religious press, seemingly without an idea of its incongruity. To release innocent men is but an act of simple justice. Mercy is unmerited favour. God exercises mercy in pardoning the guilty; and there is justice in His mercy, because His pardon makes guilty men innocent. On the contrary, men outrage justice in the name of mercy, and by presuming to "pardon" an innocent man, make him appear to be guilty.

ONE of the daily papers recently said in an editorial, "No law was ever passed that did not work a slight injustice to somebody. If this be true, then there was never a just law. Nobody would claim that a law must work injustice to everybody, in order to be unjust. The question to be decided, therefore, is, To how many people must a law work injustice, in order to be an unjust law? Injustice is injustice, whether it be to one man or to a thousand, and a law which works injustice to a single person, is an unjust law. Now an unjust law is an unjust law, and nothing else. It cannot be both just and

unjust at the same time. Therefore a law which works injustice to one man is, as a matter of fact, unjust to everybody. But however the case may be with human laws, the law of God stands for ever as a law that provides perfectly equal and exact justice for all.

It seems that the great question now before the churches is whether or not the Bible is true. One would think that that question ought to have been settled long ago. It is not surprising that it should be raised by worldlings; but if professed Christians doubt the Bible, why are they professed Christians? One religious paper says that "the missionaries of the primitive church did not proclaim the infallibility of the New Testament, for the New Testament did not exist." But they made the New Testament, and the Apostle Paul wrote to one church: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." 1 Cor. xiv. 37. And to another he wrote: "We thank God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. ii. 13. If this is not a claim for infallibility, what could be?

THE *Christian World* says:—

"We learn on good authority that M. Pobedonostseff, the procurator of the Russian Holy Synod and chief Inquisitor of the Stundists, has been recently approached by persons anxious to mitigate the present condition of the Stundists. The cruel law by which the children of these unfortunate Protestants can be kidnapped from their parents was specially brought to the Minister's notice. In reply, M. Pobedonostseff stated distinctly that he would not consider any suggestion for the amelioration of the 'heretics,' and that as to the children he was determined to save their souls, and the souls of those who in the future would be their children, even though in so doing he gave pain to their Stundist relatives. It is the answer of a cruel fanatic."

It is that, and more. It is the answer of a consistent Church and State man. Whatever ought to be done at all, ought to be done thoroughly. If Government is to teach religion, it can only be because it thinks that it alone has the true religion. But the only power that the State has is force, therefore religion taught by the State means religion by force. And if people can be saved by force, which is the principle of Church and State, then the more force is used, the more surely will the people be saved. That is the theory of the Spanish Inquisition, but it is needless to say that it has not the slightest connection with the Gospel.