

# 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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"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up." Ps. v. 3. The Revised Version renders it, "and will keep watch." For what would he look up and keep watch? Evidently for the blessings for which he prayed. Said he: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." Ps. cxxi. 1, 2. Too many people make their requests known to God, but don't keep watch, so that, although the blessings are extended to them, they do not see them. The Lord loves to have people do Him the honour of acting as though they expected to receive from Him the things that He has promised.

**Creative Power.**—"For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared that we should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10, margin. God adapts things to each other. He makes good works, and then creates good men to do those works. "Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men." Ps. xxxi. 19. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light,

that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." John iii. 21. Only the works that God does are of any value; and only the man who is God's workmanship can manifest those works. The same power that created all things in the beginning, creates the good works, creates men new creatures in Christ, and will create all things new for their inheritance.

**Keeping Power.**—The Apostle Peter tells us of an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter i. 4, 5. Two things are kept,—the inheritance, and the people. The inheritance is kept for us, and we are kept for the inheritance. No one doubts that God is able to preserve the inheritance intact for the saints, therefore they should not doubt that God is able to keep the saints intact for the inheritance. The same power that keeps the inheritance undefiled, will also keep undefiled all who trust it.

God's people are elect "through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." 1 Peter i. 2. From the beginning God hath chosen us to salvation "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." 2 Thess ii. 13. Indeed He has chosen us, in Christ, "before the foundation of the world." Eph. i. 4. Still He allows us full liberty to accept or reject His choice for us. We may resist the Spirit, and grieve it away, and then our election will fail. If we say, "We will not have this Man to reign over us," Christ will not compel us to serve Him. But if we gladly submit ourselves to Him, choosing His ways, we make our calling and election sure.

"WHOM, having not seen, ye love." 1 Peter i. 8. This is said of Christ. We cannot see Him, yet we may love Him. But we cannot love one with whom we are not acquainted. We may admire traits of character, which a man is described to us as possessing, but that is only the character in the abstract that we admire. Love can be felt only for one with whom we are personally acquainted. So the one who loves the Lord, is the one who knows Him. Only such do love Him; and every one who knows the Lord must love Him, for He is love. All that is necessary in order to have faith is to get acquainted with the Lord. Then they can say with Paul: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 Tim. i. 12.

### "SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN."

"THEN came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft 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.

Doubtless Peter thought that he had stretched the matter of forgiveness to its utmost limit when he asked if he should forgive his brother seven times; and the reply of Jesus must have astonished him. Seventy times seven is practically without limit, for remember that this is with only one, and there are very few that would be called upon to forgive one brother four hundred and ninety times. Or even supposing a brother were so great an offender as that, where is the soul so mean as to keep tally of every call for forgiveness, so as not to exceed the exact number? One who would do that would not really forgive at all. Surely the Lord has not left any provision for the cherishing of enmity.

But we have something which makes the case even stronger. Luke (xvii. 4) thus records the words of Christ concerning our dealing with a brother: "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." Seven times in a day, days without number, are we to forgive the one who trespasses against us, if forgiveness be needed so often. If a brother shall do the same thing seven times in one day, and each time ask forgiveness, we are to grant it freely.

But whether the brother ask for forgiveness, or not, is to make no difference with our feelings toward him. We are to feel the same toward him if he does not ask to be forgiven, that we do if he does ask forgiveness. We are told to forgive one another "even as God hath for Christ's sake forgiven you." Eph. iv. 32. If God had not manifested forgiving love to us before we asked for it, we would be lost. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8. It is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. Rom. ii. 4. So we are to win an erring brother to repentance by love. A bitter spirit will never do it. "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."

Our object, however, in calling attention to these texts is not exhortation, but encouragement. It is of very little use to exhort a man to forgive, as a matter of duty, if he has not himself felt the touch of Divine forgiveness, which is the spring of all tenderness. But we write for the encouragement of those who feel that they have sinned too greatly to be forgiven, or that they have so often asked forgiveness for a single failing, and so often repeated the same fault, that God must be weary of forgiving. God is not a man. He says to us:—

"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.

Those who despondently imagine that God cannot forgive their oft-repeated sin, virtually say that God is not so forgiving as He demands that we shall be; and in so doing they greatly wrong God. His infinity is no less in the direction of love and tenderness than it is in that of wisdom and power.

Why, we cannot even know how to forgive if we do not learn from Him. And whether we know how to forgive or not, the fact remains that we are required to forgive the same brother times without number, even to seven times in one day, for the same offence, and that God is infinitely more willing to forgive than man can be.

This is not said for the purpose of encouraging anybody in wrong-doing; and let no one say that the emphasising of this matter will lead people to think that they can sin with impunity. If the forgiving love of God would tend to confirm men in sin, God would not have made it known. The fact is that nothing but the love of God can turn a man away from sin. The world was in sin, and God manifested to them His infinite love, in order that they might be able to cease from sin. The fact that some will despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, does not cause Him to withdraw His love, and should not prevent us from dwelling upon it for the encouragement of any who may want to do God's will.

But it is not alone by what God requires of us, that we may learn what He is anxious to do for us. The death of the Son of God is the pledge of God's infinite love for us, and of His inconceivable desire to cleanse us from sin by the application of His healing forgiveness. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. The gift of Christ comprises everything. And trusting in that unspeakable gift, the humblest and most debased sinner may look up from the midst of his sore temptations, and confidently say:—

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii. 37-39.

THE evangelist B. Fay Mills tells of a young man who went out from the London Pastors' College, and after a time came back and said: "Mr. Spurgeon, I am very much disappointed. I try to preach like you do, but while you see a great many people coming to Christ, I do not see anybody." The story goes on to show

that the reason for Mr. Spurgeon's success was that he always expected converts, while the other failed because he did not. But the story failed to point out the fact that the young man had no reason to expect converts. His failure was the natural result of copying another. He who would succeed in the work of the Lord must have a personal message to give, and not the echo of one that another has given. A phonograph can never be a successful winner of souls, even though it be made of flesh and blood, instead of metal.

#### "HEAR HIM."

"AND there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son; Hear Him." Luke ix. 35. Does this absolve us from hearing and obeying the commandments of the Father? They who think so, evidently do not know who it is that we are commanded to hear. Read what is said of Him: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him." Deut. xviii. 18. Now hear Him: "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me." John vii. 16. Hear Him: "For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." John xii. 49. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father which dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John xiv. 10. "As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things." John viii. 28.

Hear Him: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matt. v. 17. "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke xvi. 17. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." Matt. vii. 21.

Christ is the manifestation of God to man. The law of God is the righteousness of God. See Isa. li. 6, 7; Rom. iii. 21, 22. It is God's way. Ps. cxix. 1, 2. God's way is His life, for He does not act a part. Therefore the law of God is the life of God. He says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter i. 16. Christ, whom we are to hear, says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness."

Matt. vi. 33. But Christ is God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John i. 1, 14. "I and My Father are one." John x. 30. The Father and the Son have one life; therefore the righteousness of God is the righteousness of Christ. The commandments of the Father are, therefore, equally the commandments of the Son.

This is shown more clearly by the fact that it was Christ who spoke the ten commandments from Sinai. The Apostle Paul, in showing the fact that the law and the Gospel are inseparable, says that the law "was ordained by angels, in the hand of a Mediator." Gal. iii. 19. And then he adds, "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." And again, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. ii. 5. In this the apostle is showing exactly what John did in the words, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John i. 17. In Him righteousness and peace are met together.

Christ spoke the law from Sinai, by virtue of His position as the only manifestation of God to men. He spoke as God, for He is God. When He said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," He spoke by Divine right. He was the Creator of all things, and therefore He was by right the lawgiver. "God was in Christ" on the mount Sinai, in Arabia, as well as on mount Olivet, in the land of Judea.

The law was in the hand of a Mediator, and that only Mediator is Christ. For "in Him was life; and the life was the light of men." John i. 4. "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." John vi. 57. His life is the life of the Father, and that is the life which He gives to all who receive Him.

But we have already seen that the law of God is His life; and since the Father and the Son have both one life, it follows that the life of Christ is also the law of God. In the life of Christ we see the law of God in action. As Watts has sung,

"My blest Redeemer and my Lord,  
I read my duty in Thy word;  
But in Thy life the law appears  
Drawn out in living characters."

Therefore the law of God—the ten commandments—are found in their fulness only in the life of Christ. He is the Mediator between God and men,

because His life is the medium through which the law of God flows into men. And the fact that the ten commandments were ordained in the hands of Christ, the one Mediator, is most positive evidence that the law just as it was spoken from Sinai is the very thing which Christ as Mediator ministers to us.

So we are commanded to hear Him, because only as we hear Him can we hear the voice of God. He is the only one who can bring us to God. He does not set aside or alter in any way the law of God, for that law is His own law as well, and "He cannot deny Himself." "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." John v. 23.

#### CITIZENS AND STRANGERS.

"ONLY let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ." Phil. i. 27. In every instance except one, where the word "conversation" is used in the New Testament, it is used in its original sense of turning to and fro, embracing the whole course of one's life. So in the Revised Version the modern equivalent for the Greek word is used, and it is rendered, "manner of life." In the text before us, we have this idea still further emphasised by the alternate rendering in the margin "behave as citizens worthily." The apostle Paul, therefore, exhorted the Philippians, and through them us, to behave as citizens worthily.

Of what country does the apostle exhort us to be worthy citizens? He himself informs us in the same epistle, where he says, "For our citizenship is in heaven." Phil. iii. 20, R. V. In the margin we have the reading, "commonwealth." The apostle did not concern himself with telling the Christians about their duty to vote, and how they ought to mould politics, as so many preachers are beginning to do; he knew that if the disciples of Christ behaved as became citizens of the heavenly country, they would do their duty to earthly rulers.

Is it a fact that true Christians are not citizens of this earth? or is it only in figure that they are said to have their citizenship in heaven? Let us read further. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul." 1 Peter ii. 11. In the sixth chapter of Hebrews we are exhorted to be followers of them who

through faith and patience inherit the promises. Reference is made especially to Abraham, and so we will read concerning him.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. . . . Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is on the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city." Heb. xi. 9-16.

Those who are without God and Christ, are declared to be "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise." Eph. ii. 12. But those who are at home in the earth, and strangers to the heavenly country, are in Christ made nigh to God, and then they are addressed thus: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Verse 19. Here we learn that those whose citizenship or commonwealth is in heaven, are of the commonwealth of Israel.

But God is not only the King of heaven, but He is the Father of His people. Earthly rulers like to be considered the fathers of their subjects, but God is indeed Father. His subjects are His own children, so that the commonwealth of Israel—those whose citizenship is in heaven—are all one family. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Eph. iii. 13, 14. Those who are "fellow-citizens with the saints," are "of the household of God." But they are strangers on this earth.

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James iv. 4. As we have seen, the sons of God are members of the commonwealth of heaven. As such they must be strangers on earth. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." 1 John iii. 1. Christ said to His disciples: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xv. 18, 19.

#### CHRISTIANS AND EARTHLY OFFICE.

THIS being the case, it is evident that the followers of Christ cannot possibly court the favour of the world to the extent that is necessary in order to be chosen to positions of honour and power in the governments of the world. Christ's example marks the course to be followed. When two of His disciples, with their mother, did a little office-seeking on their own account, and the other disciples were indignant because the two had stolen a march on them, Christ said to them all, and to us as well:—

"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.

The rule for Christians, therefore, is self-sacrifice. But that is not the way that offices are obtained in this world. He who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, must be content to be the least in the earth. This effectually cuts off the Christians from seeking place and power on earth. The apostle Paul writes: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." Rom. xii. 10. Again: "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Phil. ii. 3. How much headway would a man make in politics, if he adhered to

these injunctions? The politician, even though he professes to be a Christian, will tell you that such directions are not adapted to this century. But the men of this century are no different from the men in the first century. And the injunctions of the apostle and of Christ were intended for Christians of every age.

Remember that Christ's followers are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Those who are out of Christ are called aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John xviii. 36. Now just as it would be greatly out of place for worldly men to presume to direct the affairs of the kingdom of heaven, and to guide the church of Christ, even so it is out of place for those whose citizenship is in heaven to presume to direct the affairs of earthly governments.

When the Israelites came into the land of Canaan, they were forbidden to make any alliance with the nations around them. The reason was that they were the church of God, and the church cannot have any connection with the nations of earth. Even when the Israelites had so far apostatised as to desire a king, that they might be like the nations around them, the same prohibition remained, for God had not rejected them, although they had rejected Him. And when Christ Himself came to earth, He carried on His work solely by the power of the Spirit of God, and asked no favours of earthly powers; neither did He presume to take any part in their government. It should be enough for the disciple that he be as his Lord.

The apostles went out to fulfil their commission to preach the Gospel to every creature, but they asked nothing from earthly rulers. Neither did they seek office for themselves or their converts. The believers were designated as the "called out," the meaning of which has been lost sight of in the modern translation, "church." They were to be a separate people; separate not because of exclusiveness or unfriendliness, but because by their profession they were cut off from participation in the things which engross the attention of the people of the world. They were to be in the situation of men in a foreign country. They may have their residence there, and may be doing business there, but they are still separate. While they will mingle socially with their neighbours, they take no part in their political affairs.

#### CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE ON POLITICS.

AND yet the apostles and those who followed in their steps exerted a most powerful influence on the government of the world. It was not, however, by engaging in politics. It was by the preaching of the Gospel by the power of the Spirit. By the power of the preaching of the Gospel alone, a complete revolution took place in the Roman Empire. Within less than three hundred years from the ascension of Christ, the Roman government, which was the whole world, proclaimed the principle of religious liberty and equality for all men. Such a thing had never been known before. Both Christians and heathen were given full liberty to adopt whatever religion they chose. It is true that that liberty was maintained only for a moment, as it were, but it was long enough to show the power that there is in the simple preaching of the Gospel.

Christianity has exerted a great influence upon men who have never acknowledged it. Wherever in any government we find principles of liberty established, it is the influence of the Spirit of Christ that is responsible. But never has any government been benefited by the interference of ministers of the Gospel. Christians are sent to influence the whole world, but it is only by preaching and living the Gospel; when they think to accomplish the end in any other way, they are bound to fail.

The fact that Christians are not of right a part of earthly governments, does not make them anarchists, or in any way evil disposed to civil government. On the contrary they are bound by their profession of Christianity to be the most law-abiding people on earth. As subjects of the Prince of peace, they must always keep the peace. They are to live peaceably with all men. They are to love their neighbours as themselves, and consequently they can never do any injury to anybody. They are to submit themselves "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." They must submit even to unjust laws, if they involve no transgression of the law of God; and even when human laws require disobedience to the law of God, Christians are not to rebel, but are to obey God, taking meekly whatever consequences may follow ignoring the law of man.

It may be remembered by some that the Apostle Paul often shielded himself from unjust punishment by asserting the fact that he was a Roman citizen. But in that action of his we

have no contradiction of the principles here set forth. He was by birth a Roman citizen, yet he did not engage in any of the politics of the Roman Empire, and did not try to influence politics in favour of the Gospel. But men have certain rights in this world, with which they are endowed by their Creator. When an appeal to these rights will be recognised by men, then Christians are justified in making the appeal. It is simply appealing to the sense of justice in man. But nations are selfish, and will not generally pay much attention to the rights of men who are aliens. Therefore the apostle made use of the fact that he was by birth a citizen of Rome, to secure the rights he ought to have been accorded as a man. The same thing may be done by the Christian citizen of any country, but never to the extent of compromising the Gospel, or of admitting that the State can have any manner of connection with the church of Jesus Christ.

The principles here drawn from the Scriptures, are far-reaching, and are of the most vital importance. The professed church of Christ is losing her power in the world, solely because she is coquetting with the State, in the vain hope of increasing that power. The true church will keep clear of every shade of alliance with the world, and leaning only on the arm of her Beloved, will shine forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

#### A SAD PROSPECT.

THE *Quiver* contains an interview with the principal of Cheshunt College, where young men are trained for the Congregational ministry. No more important sign of the times can be found; for in the statement of how the young men are trained, we see what is the nature of the religious instruction that is to be given to the world. The principal says, among other things:—

"They (the students) of course read along the lines of study we indicate to them, taking up very carefully the long-ago preparation in eastern and western heathendom for the conception of 'The Word made Flesh'; the Christology of the Old Testament; the Alexandrine Gnosis; the special teachings of the four Gospels; our Lord's testimony of Himself; and the theological conceptions deducible therefrom; but on this they graft their own study of modern theology."

"I have elaborated a rather comprehensive plan of theology, which I am gradually opening up to my classes. I am dealing a good deal with comparative religion, the relation of Christianity to philosophy and theology, starting from Christology, and thence to theology. I teach them that the Incarnation is the great centre, and how it presses on conscience and heart. I take up the doctrine of the Godhead, and here I instruct them

in 'Vanoosterzee,' Ellicott's 'Being of God,' and 'Dorner.' I advise them in their exegesis and general theology to take up the great books, and to regard theology equally from the biblical, the philosophical, and the historical point of view, tracing it all from the Scriptures to the present day."

But this is not all; they must have a special course in infidelity before they are prepared to preach; for the principal says:—

"They have a three years' course in philosophy, psychology, history, dogma, and ethics. They are specially instructed in the points of agnostic and infidel controversy; they are advised where to concede, and where to hold fast."

We have no words of censure; but, oh, the pity of the thing! It would be bad enough if it ended with the young men themselves, but when we think of the thousands of unsuspecting and confiding people upon whom all that mass of speculation, heathen philosophy, and infidel controversy is to be unloaded, the prospect is appalling. It was through just such theological teaching in the seminary under Origen and Clement of Alexandria, that the professed Christian Church in the third century became paganised, and only the same results can follow now.

#### CHRISTIANITY IN SCHOOLS.

THE question of religion in the schools has been very much discussed in London in the past few months, both in the School Board, and even in Parliament. The facts, in brief, are that for some twenty years there has been a "compromise" measure in force, to which all the religious denominations are parties. By this compromise, religion is to be taught, but in a colourless, non-sectarian way, so that the particular beliefs of no party or sect are to be taught. Certain churchmen are very much dissatisfied with this arrangement, with which the non-conformist bodies profess, through their representatives, to be perfectly satisfied. The following extract from a letter to the *English Churchman*, by the member of the School Board who is most prominent in the demand for more definite religious teaching, puts the matter clearly:—

"The Board's rule—the 'compromise' as it is called—provides that 'the Bible shall be read, and instruction given therefrom in the principles of religion.' Last November I brought before the Board evidence that, in certain cases, teachers acting under this rule were denying or ignoring such cardinal principles of the Christian religion as the Incarnation and the Trinity, and I called upon the Board to set this right; hence the whole controversy.

"Here is the position. The Board's rule contemplates a common or 'undenominational' religion. Our opponents contend that this must be of such a character as not to offend Unitarians,

who they allege, were parties to the compromise, and they further maintain that the School Board has no right to make any inquiries as to the religious character of the teachers who give this instruction. I and my friends contend that this common religion ought to be, and, in fact, was originally intended to be, at least Christian, and that to place the child of Christian parents under a Unitarian or infidel teacher (and we have many such now giving the religious instruction in the London Board-schools) and to permit that teacher to ignore, or to explain away and deny, the doctrines of the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Trinity when professing to give instruction from the Holy Scriptures to that child, is monstrous and intolerable."

Speaking of the "compromise" clause, he says:—

"I, in company with many High Churchmen and Low Churchmen, wish to see it repeated, because I regard it as the great support of undenominationalism, and undenominationalism means logically and, as the London School Board controversy shows, practically, no Christianity."

We must say that the Churchmen have the best of the controversy; for indefinite religious teaching is nothing; it is like sugar without sweetness. What benefit the nonconformist bodies think can possibly be gained from religious teaching that scrupulously avoids teaching anything, we cannot imagine. In the discussion of the Education Bill, Mr. Gladstone expressed the "wish that the exposition of the Bible in schools should take its natural course, that it should be confined to the simple and devout method of handling which is adapted to the understanding and characters of children;" but at the same time he would "not admit that that simple and devout character of teaching can be secured by an attempt to exclude all references to tenets and doctrines."

But the fact is, that Christianity, pure and simple, cannot possibly be taught in the schools, and that any attempt to teach it is a grievous wrong, not so much to the children as to the cause of Christianity.

The Bible is not like any other book. It cannot be taught in the same way that secular history or Geography are taught. Christianity is life, even the life of Christ, and can neither be taught nor accepted except through the Spirit of God. A person may be able to explain any one or all of the varying creeds of Christendom, and yet be no nearer the kingdom of heaven than an ignorant heathen. In some of the so-called missionary schools of India there are Hindus and Mohammedans who can write as able papers on the evidences of Christianity as a theological professor could, and yet they have not the slightest belief in Christianity. It is purely an intellectual exercise with them. Will anyone claim that they

are the better for it? Are they not more impervious to true Christianity than if they had never heard the name?

Bible teaching which does not impress the learner with the fact that the Bible is the living word of the living God, and that gives only theory, leaving the heart unmoved, can result only in producing indifference to the Bible, and that is worse than positive irreverence. Whenever the Bible is taught it should be only with the one purpose of making Christians. It was given for no other purpose, and any other use of it is an abuse of it.

It may be claimed by the advocates of more definite religious instruction in schools, that this is what they desire. The desire is laudable, but they are seeking to carry it out by a means not adapted to the end. The schools are Government institutions, and Governments do not exist for the purpose of teaching religion. Government is something which pertains to all people equally, while religion is purely a personal matter between a man and God.

It will not be denied that God gives to every man full liberty to believe the Gospel. It cannot be claimed that He forces any to believe. If He did, there would be no liberty; for liberty to accept a thing necessarily implies liberty to refuse it. If there were no liberty to refuse, then there would be no liberty in the Gospel. But the Gospel is the very essence and perfection of liberty. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. iii. 17. Therefore where the Spirit of the Lord is not, there is no Gospel. Therefore religious teaching which is forced, is not the Gospel, no matter how glibly the Incarnation and the Atonement are taught. Those things can never be understood by the intellect, but are to be grasped and made part of the life by faith.

But it is said that if religion is not taught in the schools, many children will not get any religious instruction. Perhaps; but whose fault will it be? It will be the fault of those whose sole business it is to teach the Gospel, and they are the professed members of the church of Christ. Christ's commission, which is in full force to-day, was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." It is the church's business to carry religious instruction to the homes of those who do not get it elsewhere.

"But what if the people will not allow religious instruction in their homes?" That is their risk; they cannot be forced to take it, as a spoiled

child is made to take medicine. If a man has taken poison, an antidote may be administered, and it will counteract the effect of the poison just as well if the patient is averse to swallowing it, as it will if he takes it gladly; but the Gospel cannot be administered in that way with any success.

The example of Christ will guide us in this particular, as in everything else. Many of His own people rejected Him. He had untold blessings for them, but was forced to say in sorrow, "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life." John v. 40. But He did not force them to come to Him, although His power over them was shown in the cleansing of the temple. In sending out His disciples to preach, He gave them directions how to act toward those who would not receive them. See Luke ix. 5. And still His Spirit says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17. Whosoever will not will be left to the consequences of his own choice.

"The Divine right of dissent" is not an idle phrase. There is indeed such a thing. Jesus Christ Himself is the originator of it. Said He: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness. And 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. 46, 47.

We have no sympathy with Unitarianism or infidelity; but by the permission of the Author of Christianity, infidels and Unitarians have as much right to disbelieve in the Divinity of Christ, as others have to believe it. He has given to every man full liberty to hear Him or not to hear Him, just as he may choose; and no man has any right to go a step farther in the line of compulsion than He did. This is not a local question, but is of world-wide interest. It is a live question everywhere, and the principles involved ought to be thoroughly understood by every Christian.

#### THE POPE AND EUROPE.

IN *McClure's Magazine* for June, M. de Blowitz presents the following outline sketch of the work and influence of the Pope in Europe, which is interesting because of its suggestiveness:—

"No one can have any idea of the life and movement which reigns in this voluntary prison which lies over against the Quirinal. Thither flow innumerable missives from every part of the world, and could I only tell some of them, it would be seen how long still is the arm extending

from the shadow of St. Peter's; how dreadful still are the lips that speak in the shadow of the Vatican. I should show the Pope and his Cardinals writing to the Emperor of Austria, directing him by counsel and advice, and sometimes almost by their orders. I should show Prince Bismarck continuing since his fall, to hold before the eyes of the Pope glimpses of the more or less partial restoration of the Papal power. I should show Leo XIII. now trying to unite, now to alienate, France and Russia, according as at the moment this or that policy seems to him most propitious for his own cause, or the cause of peace. . . . I should show, also, all the leading politicians of France, whether in power or out, soliciting the support, the protection, the favour, of Leo XIII., and the latter working with astounding insight for the fusion, more and more complete, of the liberal monarchical party with the Republic."

#### THE GOSPEL IN THE RAINBOW.

GOD'S works are the height of perfection; and if man cannot discern the perfection which is in them, it is simply because man is not able to discern the design of God in all of His doings. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. It is for us to believe, and then while the mind is seeking to grasp, in the revelation of God, the truths stated, the Spirit of God opens the understanding to comprehend. "By faith we understand."

Upon this point Solomon says: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." Eccl. iii. 14, 15.

It should be remembered that in all God's instruction to the human family by symbols, tokens, or parables, it is to connect the mind of the observer with heaven. It is to teach some grand spiritual lesson, contained in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in all such instruction are Christ and His righteousness revealed. Of the rainbow, God said: "This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you for perpetual generations; I do set My bow in the cloud." "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." Gen. ix. 12, 13, 16.

Shortly after the creation of the

earth it was said: "The Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth," "but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." Gen. ii. 5, 6. God's word was and is an everlasting, eternal, and living power, that has created mist from that day to the present. About sixteen hundred years after God spake and established the mist, He spake further and said, "I will cause it to rain upon the earth." Gen. vii. 4. This does not destroy His first testimony, but the same living power is manifested in the falling of rain from that time to the present, the balancing of clouds in the heavens above, from which comes rain upon the earth, the ascending of the mists from the ends of the earth, the sun shining in the water, which causes the rainbow—all of which is the result of the living power in the word spoken four thousand and four hundred years ago. But what is the lesson God would teach us? Would He not direct our minds beyond the simple rainbow to Himself and His own throne? Would He not have us discern the gospel of Jesus Christ and the power of forgiving grace in the rainbow as it appears? The prophets taught this idea when they beheld the glory of God. When God through Isaiah uttered the following precious promise: "With great mercies will I gather thee; . . . with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee," He makes direct reference to this covenant made with Noah and his descendants: "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. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Isa. liv. 9, 10. This is a most wonderful promise, as it brings to view the covenant made with Noah and all the world at that time, with the covenant of grace for the human family.

John on the Isle of Patmos describes the throne of God as follows: "I was in the spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." Rev. iv. 2, 3. Again, "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud;

and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." Rev. x. 1. This is in harmony with the expression in Rev. xiv. 6, "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

As the sun shines upon the raindrops, so does the Sun of Righteousness shine upon those whose eyes are not blinded by the god of this world, and the reflection of the light of the glorious gospel of Christ causes the rainbow about the throne, that speaks mercy and pardon to the repenting sinner. Ezekiel's testimony is much to the point:—

"Above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." Eze. i. 26-28.

The glory of the Lord is goodness, mercy, long-suffering, graciousness, and forgiveness. Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19; xxxiv. 5-7. Shall we not, then, conclude that the love of Christ as manifested in His precious gospel, causes the bright shining of His presence, which reflects in the rainbow around the throne? Does not that itself speak pardon to the repentant sinner? Is there not then a lesson in every shower and sunshine that produces the rainbow, of the infinite love and mercy of God? And did not God design that we should see a living power in the word which He spake that caused the rain, in the condition of the atmosphere that brings rain, combined with the sunshine, to produce the rainbow? He connects the giving of the rain with His creative power in Jer. x. 11-13, in contrast with "the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth," as follows:—

"He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures." Jer. x. 12, 13.

It is thus that God would instruct men through nature. The gospel of Jesus Christ is, in every event of God's providence, especially shown in all of His creative power and dealings with mankind. S. N. HASKELL.

#### PAGAN CUSTOMS.

IN the *Echo* of July 13, a correspondent who signs himself, "M. A. (Oxon)," and who was brought up in the Romish Church gives the following account of "the origin of the two principal feasts of the Romish Church, namely, Easter and Christmas, which have also been adopted by the chief systems of Christendom." The explanation is the same that is given by all ecclesiastical historians; but the re-statement of it may lead some one to inquire how the observance of Pagan festivals can be a part of Christianity. If the observance of Pagan ceremonies is not Paganism, what would be? But here is the article:—

"The English word Easter is directly derived from the Chaldean word Ishtar, another name of Astarte or Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Philistines, Sidonians, and other heathen nations; the name was found by Layard on the Assyrian monuments. (See Layard's "Babylon and Nineveh," p. 629.)

"If Eostre, as a correspondent remarks, is the name of a Saxon goddess, there can be no doubt that it is identical with or a transformation of Ishtar, and originated in Babylon, the mother and fountain head of all the idolatrous systems of antiquity.

"A further and most conclusive proof of the purely Babylonian origin, not only of the word Easter, but also of the idolatrous rites and superstitious ceremonies connected with the festival of Easter in the Romish Church, is the fact that a Lent of forty days was observed by the worshippers of the Babylonian goddess. Such a Lent of forty days, in the spring of the year, is still observed by the Yezidis, or Pagan devil worshippers of Koordistan, who have inherited it from their early masters, the Babylonians. Want of space forbids me giving further interesting details as to the spread of these Babylonian idolatries to distant countries, such as Mexico, where Humboldt found them to have been practised from the earliest times, etc.

"Another most remarkable fact is that in the third and fourth centuries the festival now observed under the name of Easter was then called Pasch, the same as in most European countries at the present day, as Italy, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, etc. Nor was there at that time the observance of a forty days' Lent. In the fifth century, however, when the Papacy had become utterly corrupt, all this was changed, and rapid strides were made in the introduction of Pagan rites and abominable idolatries, so that at the present day a Roman Catholic church can hardly be distinguished from a Chinese pagoda with its ten thousand idols.

"Christmas.—At the winter solstice, they celebrated in Pagan Rome the feast of Saturn, the sun god, or Baal of the Babylonians. This feast, as regulated by Caligula, lasted five days; loose reins were given to drunkenness and revelry. This was precisely the way in which, according to Berosus, the drunken festival of the month Thebeth, answering to our December, in other words, the festival of Bacchus, was celebrated in Babylon; and many of the other observances still kept up in so-called Christian lands came from the very same quarter.

"The candles, in some parts of England, lighted on Christmas Eve and used so long as the festive season lasts, were equally lighted by the Pagans on the eve of the festival of the Babylonian god, to do honour to him; for it was one of the distinguishing peculiarities of his worship to have lighted wax candles on his altars. The Christmas tree, now so common among us, was equally common in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt.

"Many more irrefutable proofs might be given of the absolute identity of this so-called Christian festival with the festival observed at the same time of the year in Babylon of old, and in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt."

#### GOING TO THE WRONG PEOPLE.

I HAD a sum to invest, let me suppose, and I went to a well-known gambler, and said, what should I do with this, pray? And he said, Entrust it to me: I have experience, you have none; I will handle it for you, and you shall know the result. I went to ascertain the result, and the man had fled away. You will naturally inquire why I consulted such a man.

I wanted to know the exact value of a picture, to continue my parable, and I submitted it to the criticism of a man; he laid his fingers upon it, and said, I do not think much of your picture. Said I, Why lay your fingers upon it? Because, said he, that is the only medium through which I can form any opinion of your picture. Said I, Can you not look at the picture? No, said he, that I cannot do; I am blind. You will naturally ask me why I consulted such a man as to the value of a picture.

I wanted to know how the climate of a far-away country would suit my dying child, so I called upon a man, and asked him: said he, Do not trust it: it is a bad climate; it is a place that I cannot recommend. Were you ever there, sir? said I. No, said he, I have never been out of my native village. You will naturally wonder that I should have consulted such a man.

Now you have consulted infidels about Christianity; you have consulted men who never prayed as to the efficacy of prayer; you have gone in the wrong

direction for advice. You smiled behind my back when you thought I had consulted a blind man about a picture: what shall I do with you when I hear that the only books you have read about Christ are the books that tried to tear Him in pieces? You have consulted His enemies, you have never consulted His friends.

The argument applies to the bad priest, to the ill-behaved professor of Christianity. Blessed be God, our duty is clear. I will not go to the bad priest for a report of his function, I will not go to the bruised and self-damned professor of Christianity, in whose character hypocrisy is conspicuous above every other feature, and say, Who is Christ? and what can Christ do for men? This I will do: I will go straight up to the Lord Himself, and then I shall know what to do.—*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

#### LET HIM WORK.

HE who works in earth and heaven  
Has a work to do  
In the hearts of those who love Him.  
He would work in you.

He would by His Holy Spirit  
Make His will your own.  
He would give you gleams of glory  
From His Father's throne.

Let Him work, O helpless mortal;  
Choose to let Him do  
What He sees is for His glory.  
Let Him work in you.

Hands and feet and mind and body  
All to Him belong;  
Let Him take and let Him use them.  
Yours a glad new song.

Let Him work complete salvation.  
All His word is sure;  
Make a full, entire surrender;  
Praise Him evermore.

—*Eliza H. Morton, in Signs of the Times.*

#### WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM.

THE triumphal ride of Christ into Jerusalem, just prior to His crucifixion, was the dim foreshadowing of His coming in the clouds of heaven with power and glory amid the triumph of angels and rejoicing of the saints. Then will be fulfilled the words of Christ: "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Zechariah, in prophetic vision, was shown the day of final triumph, when Christ shall come in glory; and also the condition of the Jews who rejected Him at His first advent: "And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

The tears of Christ as He wept over Jerusalem were for the sins of all time. The Jewish nation was a symbol of the people of all ages who scorn the pleadings of Infinite love. Those who profess to be the representatives of Christ upon earth, yet whose lives are a continual denial of Him, may read their

own condemnation in Christ's denunciation of the self-righteous Jews. The Saviour came to the world bringing the light of truth; but His counsel has ever been rejected and His mercies despised by those who have allowed selfishness and the love of mammon and worldly honour to possess the temple of the heart.

The sin of Jerusalem was in the rejection of her then present mercies and warnings. As a tender father pities a loved but erring and rebellious son, so had Jesus compassion upon Jerusalem. He had sent prophets and wise men with counsel, entreaties, and warnings of threatened judgments if she refused to forsake her sins. Sacrificial blood had flowed continuously for centuries, symbolising the great atonement of the Son of God, to be offered for the salvation of man. But though the sacrifices of beasts had been abundant, they could not supply the place of true sorrow for sin and obedience to God. A broken heart and contrite spirit would have been of far more value in the sight of God than multitudes of offerings without true repentance.

Jerusalem had not improved her privileges; she had rejected the warnings of the prophets, and slain the holy representatives of God. But the generation that Jesus denounced was not responsible for the sins of their fathers, only so far as they followed their evil practices, and thus made themselves accountable for their course of hatred and revenge in persecuting the ancient messengers of God. It was the present mercies and warnings which that generation were rejecting that fastened upon them guilt which the blood of bulls and goats could not wash away. Proud, self-righteous, and independent, they had separated farther and farther from Heaven until they had become willing subjects of Satan. The Jewish nation for centuries had been forging the fetters which that generation were irrevocably fastening upon themselves.

The tears of Christ expressed His anguish at seeing His people bringing sure destruction upon themselves. Gladly would He have broken from their necks the yoke of bondage to a heathen nation. But, while the Pharisees bitterly complained of their humiliation and oppression, they refused with hatred the only help that could relieve them from captivity, and make them a free and happy people. The voice of the Saviour had been heard for three years inviting the weary and heavy-laden to come unto Him and He would give them rest. He had scattered blessings wherever His feet had trod. But, instead of returning His love with gratitude, they thrust Christ from them, and were now about to seal their own doom by putting Him to death.

The earthly Jerusalem represents a large majority of the professed Chris-

tians of this age of the world. The Saviour has dispensed His blessings to us at the infinite sacrifice of His own life. This is our day of mercies and privileges. In every age of the world there is given to men their day of light and privileges, a probationary time in which they may become reconciled with God. But there is a limit to this grace. Mercy may plead for years and be rejected and slighted; but there comes a time when mercy makes her last plea. The sweet, winning voice entreats the sinner no longer, and reproofs and warnings cease.

That day had now come to Jerusalem. Jesus, from the summit of Olivet, in a voice broken by irrepressible sobs and tears, makes His last appeal to the nation of His choice: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace—" A little remnant of the day still remained, in which Jerusalem might see and repent of her fatal error, and turn to Christ. While the fast westerling sun yet lingered in the heavens there was time for her to be saved. The angel of mercy had long pleaded for the impenitent city; but now she prepared to step down from the golden throne, while the words of irrevocable justice were spoken: "But now they are hid from thine eyes."

The words of Christ, spoken upon the mount, reach to our time. His tears were for our impenitence. He has sent great light to us, as He did to the Jews. There have been given to us reproofs, entreaties, warnings, and the Saviour's yearning love. As the temple courts were desecrated by unholy traffic in the days of Christ, so the temple of the heart where Christ should be enshrined is defiled by selfishness, love of the world, malice, envy, and unholy passions. The Saviour sends messages to warn the sinner of danger and rouse his heart to repentance, but they are too often received as idle tales. Many of those who profess godliness are as unsanctified by the Spirit of God to-day as were the Pharisees in the days of Jesus. The light of truth is rejected by thousands because it involves a cross; it does not harmonise with their practices, and the natural inclinations of their hearts.

The prophets of God did not find favour with apostate Israel because through them their hidden sins were brought to light. Ahab regarded Elijah as his enemy, because the prophet was faithful to unfold the monarch's secret iniquities. So, to-day, the servant of Christ, the reprover of sin, meets with scorn and rebuffs. Bible truth, the religion of Christ, struggles against a strong current of moral impurity.

Prejudice is even stronger now in the hearts of men than it was in Christ's day. Men, prompted by Satan, raise doubts as to the truth of God's Word, and exercise their independent judgment. They choose darkness rather

than light at the peril of their souls; for God does not propose to remove every objection against His truth which the carnal heart can offer. The mysteries of the Word of God remain such for ever to those who refuse to accept the precious rays of light which would illuminate their darkness. Divine love sheds tears of anguish over men formed in the likeness of their Maker who will not accept His love and receive the impress of His Divine image.

Christ overlooked the world and all ages from the height of Olivet; and His words are applicable to every individual who slights the pleadings of His Divine mercy. Scornful of His love, He addresses you to-day. It is "thou, even thou," who shouldst know the things which belong to thy peace. The retribution of the sinner will be proportionate to the light which he has received.

MRS. E. G. WHITE.

#### SPIRITUAL SIGHT.

ALL will acknowledge that natural sight is a great blessing; especially must this be the case in a family one member of which has been born blind. What sorrowful sadness must always oppress the parents of one so grievously afflicted! But there is a worse form of blindness than that which afflicts the body, and it is one of which the sufferers are unconscious. We are all born spiritually blind, but we are insensible to the calamity until sight is restored. It is a sad picture of misery to those who have recovered spiritual sight to behold so many still in darkness. The Lord Jesus spake to the Pharisees as blind, though they exalted themselves as men of light and leading in the Church of that day. He said: "They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Soul blindness is no fiction of the imagination. The whole world may be divided into two classes—those who see spiritually, and those who are blind. The latter do not go to Jesus to have their eyes opened, because they are not aware of their blindness. This miserable condition is enough to make angels weep; and unless the true remedy be applied, it must lead to eternal death. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians—"But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

The captives of Satan hug their chains, and say—"We were never in bondage to any man," and they think they see. "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." Satan takes advantage of this blindness to pass himself off as the friend of man-

kind; and only those whose eyes have been opened see the fraud.

Faith has eyes to see the truth of God's word, and ears to hear it, passing by the criticism of unbelief. Faith sees things invisible to the eye of sense; it sees the glory of heaven, and Christ there as King and eternal Priest, and rejoices in the thought of endless happiness with Him. When the Syrian host encompassed Dothan where Elisha was, his servant was afraid, and said unto him, "Alas, my master! How shall we do?" Elisha said, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." When the servant's eyes were opened in answer to Elisha's prayer, "he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." In the same manner God's people have a more powerful array on their side than the people of Satan have; but blind eyes see not this. All the power of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are on their side; but Satan casts dust in the eyes of his people, so that they will not believe.

There are many in this land of Gospel light who have never uttered a fervent prayer for themselves, and whom sin is destroying. Under the sound of the Gospel, the hardening process seems to be going on with those whose hearts are not open to receive it. In many pulpits another Gospel is preached, and the word of life is neglected, whilst wretched platitudes are put in its place. Yet we know not how soon the Lord Jesus may come again. They that are ready will go in with Him before the door is shut. Is there no anxiety on the part of professed Christians to have their names found in the Lamb's book of Life, and to obtain a mansion prepared by His loving care as their eternal home.—*English Churchman*.

#### THE PROPS OF THE FIRMAMENT.

I WAS looking out of my window at midnight, and I saw the stars—the whole majestic vault of God supporting itself, without my being able to see the columns on which the Master rested it. But it fell not. There are men now-a-days who insist upon finding out these invisible columns—nay, who insist upon touching them with their own hands; and because they cannot achieve this, they tremble and lament and beat their breasts, fearing the firmament is about to rush down upon them. The heavens will not stir any the more for their groping.

In the morning I saw huge, heavy-laden clouds floating over my head like an ocean. I saw no pillars supporting the enormous masses; yet they fell not, but, saluting me, gloomily passed on, and as they passed I perceived beneath the curve which had sustained them—a delicious rainbow. It was very slender and very delicate, and some

might have trembled lest the heavy clouds should destroy it, yet its slight aerial line was strong enough to bear all that weight, and protect us from danger. We have among us too many who fear the clouds and distrust the rainbow; they would fain ascertain, by some experiment of their own, the exact force of the rainbow; and as they cannot do this, they are all alarmed lest the clouds should break and overwhelm them in their fierce waves. The clouds are very heavy, they say, and your rainbow is very slight. Time will try its strength.—*Martin Luther.*

#### OLIVE-TREE CHRISTIANS.

A GENEROUS old tree it is, yielding its fruit to prince and priest and peasant for two or three hundred years. One generation cometh and another goeth; but its bounteous boughs still rain down the bright berries. Even when the tough old tree stands on a desolate stone bed it "brings oil out of a flinty rock," and pours down fatness amid surrounding dreariness and desolation. It presents a beautiful emblem of the *fruit-bearing Christian*; and is well worth studying in these days when worldly ambition and Mammon consume the strength of so many members of the churches. The most striking feature of the olive tree is its fixed and permanent habit of yielding fruit. Season after season—on the low alluvials or up on the rocky cliffs—the same bountiful crop comes in, prompt as a sunrise and always "on time." A follower of Jesus Christ who is habitually laborious in every good enterprise, who is always abounding in love deeds and sweet, gentle words of sympathy, and in ministrations of mercy at sick beds and in poverty's cellars or attics, who distills true piety like holy oil into every day of his life, who drops his benign influences on the driest and bleakest spots that misery ever cursed, who loves to do good and cannot help it, and would chafe himself to death if he were not allowed to do good—such a man answers to the Bible description that "his beauty is as the olive tree." He has a habit of loving Christ and loving his fellowmen; not on special occasions, but all the while. It is his way. We can count on him; and we go to him for a contribution of money, or a good service of any kind, just as confidently as we go to a Bartlett pear tree in its September abundance of golden fruit. This blessed fruitfulness is the gift of the Holy Spirit who dwelleth in him; he is always alive, because Jesus Christ liveth in his innermost soul and supplies the vital sap.

There is nothing mean or scanty in this man's religion. He never gives God or man short measure. He speaks out his convictions when speech is a virtue and when cowards are dumb. Is a righteous cause unpopular? then he loves it all the more. To do an

honest deed in times of financial stress and panic if it takes his last dollar, to put his shoulder to the wheel of slow-going enterprises of benevolence, to give systematically to Christ's treasury even if it pinches his pocket, and to face stormy weather in his rounds of duty—all this is as much the spontaneous acting of his godly heart as it is for an olive tree to rattle down a revenue of ripe berries every autumn. And never does he pour down such a shower of the "fruits of the Spirit" as when the flail of God's providential discipline is beating hard on every bough.

Such Christians are well rooted. No part of a tree is so invisible, and none is so important as its roots. The condition of a tree commonly reports where its roots are, and what they are doing. A dearth of life below ground soon means death above ground. The roots of our religious life are our secret motives and our ruling affections. When we are shocked to discover the loose living and the spiritual barrenness of some church members it is because the branches of their profession only hang over on the church-side of the wall, while their roots are in the bad soil of "the world" on the other side. There is no soul-union to Christ; for He has declared that "except ye abide in Me ye can bear no fruit." Some professed Christians root down into covetousness, and there is no use in shaking their branches with any hope of filling even the smallest basket of benevolence. Others root down into secret sensualities and fleshly indulgences. A genuine olive-tree Christian draws the inspiration of his daily conduct from his deep-down heart loyalty to Jesus Christ. These are the motives which subdue selfishness; these are the holy affections which hold him as stout roots hold the veteran olive both under the severities of wintry gales and parching droughts of midsummer. Every year is a bearing year. The beating of the boughs always insures the filling of the basket.

The growth of an olive tree may be slow, but it is steady and sure. Such is the growth of a fruit-bearing Christian. A solid, godly character is not to be finished up during a revival. Regeneration may plant the roots of grace; but the trunk of character is built up in the solid fibre of *Christ within the soul*, the boughs spread broadly to the sunlight and in the face of all men the "tree is known by its fruits."—*T. L. Cuyler.*

#### DIVINE SYMPATHY.

God has sympathy with anybody that is in any kind of toil. He knows how heavy is the load of bricks that the workman carries up the ladder of the wall; He hears the pickaxe of the miner down in the coal-shaft; He knows how strong the tempest strikes the sailor at the masthead; He sees

the factory girl among the spindles, and knows how her arms ache; He sees the sewing-woman in the fourth story, and knows how few pence she gets for making a garment, and louder than all the din and roar of the city comes the voice of a sympathetic God: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee."—*Dr. Talmage.*

#### REFUSING LIGHT.

I ONCE happened to be on a visit to a great castle situated on the top of a hill. There was a steep cliff, at the bottom of which was a rapid river. Late one night there was a woman anxious to get home from that castle in the midst of a thunderstorm. The night was blackness itself; the woman was asked to stop till the storm was over, but she declined; next they begged her to take a lantern, that she might be able to keep upon the road from the castle to her home. She said she did not require a lantern, but could do very well without one. She went. Perhaps she was frightened by the storm—I know not the cause—but in the midst of the darkness she wandered from the path and fell over the cliff. The next day that swollen river washed to the shore the poor lifeless body of this foolish woman!

How many foolish ones are there who, when the light is offered them, only say, "I am not afraid; I fear not my end!" and how many have perished because they have refused the light of God's truth, which would have guided them on the road to heaven.—*Bishop Villiers.*

#### SEPARATED FROM AND UNTO.

THERE are many professed Christians who think that it is a great hardship to be separated from the world. The reason is that they have learned but one side of the separation. They look upon the separation *from*, and their hearts still long for the past. What they need to learn is that they are separated *from* in order that they may be separated *unto*,—*from* the world, *unto* Christ, from sin to righteousness, from trouble to peace, from folly to joy, from weariness to rest, from self to love, from death to life. Is not such a separation a privilege rather than a hardship? Look not on the *from* side but on the side of *unto* with all its blessings.—*Signs of the Times.*

WHOSOEVER will go to heaven must have a faith of his own. In Gideon's camp every soldier had his own pitcher; among Solomon's men of valour every one wore his own sword, and these were they that got the victories. The five wise virgins had everyone oil in her lamp, and only these enter in with the bridegroom. Another's eating of dainty meat makes thee none the fatter.—*T. Adams.*



THE HOME.

## CONTENTMENT.

A PASTOR tells the following story of one of his flock:—

A poor widow, who supported herself with the most rigid economy by knitting, I saw in the intense cold of last winter. The house was one upon which time had made such sad ravages that only one room could now be inhabited; and in that she dared not have a fire when the wind blew hard, because the chimney had become unsafe.

"How favoured I am!" she said, "for when it has been coldest the wind didn't blow much; or there was so much snow on the house I could have a fire without danger; I cannot be thankful enough. And then," she continued, "Joseph has been at home nights almost all winter, and he could get my wood and water when there was so much snow I could not get out."

"But do you not feel very lonely while Joseph is away?"

"Oh, no; I get along very well through the day"—her Bible lay on the table by which she was sewing—"and when I can see the neighbours' lights in the evening they are company for me. I have thought a great deal about sick people this winter; and then I think how favoured I am that I can go to bed and sleep all night in health."

I saw her again to-day. Rheumatism had disabled one foot, and she sat still sewing, with a swollen, painful limb raised upon a cushion. "How favoured I am!" she exclaimed; "when my poor Lydia was alive I lost the use of both my feet for a time, and she took care of me; but now I can get about by moving my foot upon a chair, and I make out to do my work, and get Joseph's meals ready nicely. What if it had been my hands? How favoured I am!"—*Christian Commonwealth.*

## THE TRUE CONCERN.

A FRIEND told us that he was visiting a lighthouse lately, and said to the keeper: "Are you not afraid to live here? It is a dreadful place to be constantly in." "No," replied the man, "I'm not afraid; we never think of

ourselves here." "Never think of yourselves! How is that?" The reply was a good one: "We know that we are perfectly safe, and only think of having our lamps brightly burning and keeping the reflectors clear, so that those in danger may be saved." That is what Christians ought to do. They are safe in a house built on a rock which cannot be moved by the wildest storm; and in a spirit of holy unselfishness, they should let their light gleam across the dark waters of sin, that they who are imperilled may be guided into the harbours of eternal safety.—*The Quiver.*

## MISSIONARY SONG.

TUNE—"Revive Us Again."

THERE'S a cry from all lands  
For the love of the King,  
There's a reaching of hands  
For the offering we bring.

CHO.—Oh we bring our gifts to Jesus  
At His feet lay them down,  
For we long to bring to Jesus  
Lost souls for His crown.

There are people who sigh,  
And who know not of heaven,  
How that Christ came to die  
That they might be forgiven.

There are girls, there are boys  
Who've not heard of the Friend  
Who can give them sweet joys  
In a world without end.

Let us give every thing  
For the lost ones who die,  
And at last with our King  
We shall greet them on high.  
FANNIE BOLTON.

## THE CHILDREN OF INDIA.

WE introduce to you this week a few of your little brothers and sisters of India. Their faces are a light brown when they are babies, but soon become quite dark from playing in the hot sun. But that should not cause us to love them any the less, should it? Their eyes are as full of fun and mischief and good nature as yours, and they can feel and love and suffer as much as you can. How solemn they look as they carry their precious dollies down the steps to throw them into the river Ganges. They love their dolls as much as you love yours, although they are often but rude things made of clay or wood.

Dear little children! how their hearts would thrill with joy if they could have some of the pleasant things that you have. If they could have a pleasant home where there were no cross words, no frightful idols, and no child-marriages; a home where the little girls could be as free and happy as the little boys, and know that they were as welcome; a home where they could have the privilege of climbing upon father's knee, of running to meet him when he returns from work, and of going for an outing with father and mother, or for a play under the green trees. How happy these little girls would be if they could have pretty picture books, and go to school and learn to read and write, and be taught how to knit and

sew. And oh, if they only could gather round their mother's knee in the quiet twilight hour and hear stories of the lovely Jesus Friend, and learn to sing His praises, and clasp their little hands in thankful prayer.

Dear child, if you are ever tempted to feel discontented with what you have, think of these little brothers and sisters who have so much less, and see if you do not find many things to thank God for.

Jesus loves little girls as well as He loves little boys, and of course those parents who have the love of Jesus in their hearts love them also. But in India most of the fathers and mothers know nothing of Jesus so they do not have this impartial love in their hearts.

Their religion causes them to pay out so much money and to make such grand feasts at the marriage of a daughter, that if they have many daughters it takes all their money and more too just to get them married. They therefore think it a great calamity to have many little girls, for they do not know how they ever can get money enough to have them all married. And married they must be before they are ten years old, or it would be thought a very great disgrace.

"You will hear a Hindu talk about 'children and girls,' as though girls were not children at all, but something not nearly so good; and often if you were to ask a father how many children he had, he would tell you only the number of boys, for they say 'girls don't count.' When a little girl is born, the Hindus say the gods must have been very angry, or else they would have given a boy."

You can imagine something, therefore, of the general rejoicing when a son is born, and of the anger and disappointment when a daughter is born. The mothers finally get over their disappointment and love and pet their girls, for they know that it is only when they are little that they can have any pleasure at all.

The boys and girls live together in much the same way until they are five or six years old, but after that their lives are very different. The boys then begin to go to school, but as there are no Hindu schools for the girls they never go to school unless it be to some English or missionary school, but they begin to be taught how to worship the idols.

If they are high-caste they must be shut up in the zenana, or women's room, as soon as they are married, for their husbands might kill them if they went out of doors or let another man see them. Some of them are married when they are but little babies not old enough to walk, and others when they are five, six, or seven years old, and all of them before they are ten. So you see how soon they must be shut away from everything that is pleasant. Some of them who are now grown

never saw a green tree in all their lives.

The only useful thing the little girls do is to help their mothers to cook, and so learn to be good cooks. They are not taught to knit and sew, for the boys and men do all the sewing in many parts of India; and they have no picture books.

What a lonely tiresome life they must lead! About all they can do is to help with the cooking, and amuse themselves with putting up and taking down their mother's long hair, and listening to her stories about the ugly idols. You see their mothers cannot read either, so they know no stories but what their husbands tell them.

We shall have to tell you at another time about the boys' schools, and about the little girls after they are married.

Mohammedan children are not taught to worship idols of stone or brass, but to reverence the prophet Mohammed, and to turn their faces toward his birthplace, Mecca, when they pray. They are taught that Jesus is not the Son of God, so you see their prayers do not reach God any more than the Hindus' prayers, for Jesus says that no man can come to the Father but by Him.

Their sacred book, the Koran, is written in the

Arabic language, and the children are made to learn and repeat page after page of it, although they cannot understand a word it says. If they do not say it just right they are beaten. They are taught to say their prayers in Arabic also, and how to stand when they pray, how to clasp their hands, and throw themselves on the ground, and count beads, saying a different name of God with every bead.

But we are happy to say that a few of the dear children of India are beginning to learn of Jesus, the living Saviour, and of His blessed Bible. And when they do get acquainted with Him they become just as good little Christians as any of our white boys and girls.

Some little girls have prayed so earn-

troubles? He is just as willing to help you as He is to help them. If you only would study His word and become better acquainted with Him, we are sure you would thank Him for His goodness, and go to Him for help oftener than you do. Are you allowing His word to be a lamp to your feet, and are you doing all that you

can to send this wonderful lamp to shine upon the path way of others?

#### KATIE'S PRAYER.

KATIE climbed up into the broad window seat, to have a nice time with her new picture-book. And just as she was beginning to have a lovely dream about two little girls in a picture, Robbie came and wanted to get up there, too. Now Katie wanted to be alone very much, and when she saw Robbie coming, she felt just like saying, "Go away." Shall I tell you what she did? She whispered a little prayer to Jesus, like this: "Dear Jesus, make me a good little sister to Robbie." And then she put out her hand and helped him up and they had a happy time together. I think Jesus answered Katie's prayer, don't you? —Sel.

CHILDREN, what is it that you never can catch, even if you were to chase after it, as fast as possible, with the swiftest horse in



HINDU CHILDREN.

estly that their mothers have also begun to pray. They pray that Jesus will help them to learn their lessons, and when they get into trouble they tell Jesus, and He helps them out of it or gives them peace and comfort in bearing it.

Will not you, who have had so many more opportunities of learning of Jesus than these poor children have had, will not you go to Jesus with your difficult lessons and with all your

the world? You can never catch the word that has once gone out of your lips. Once spoken, it is out of your power; do your best, you can never recall it. Therefore take care what you say, for — "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise." Prov. x. 19.—Sel.

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Prov. i. 10.



#### THE WORD OF GOD.

"Tis like the sun, a heavenly light,  
That guides me all the day:  
And through the dangers of the night,  
A lamp to lead my way.  
—Isaac Watts.

#### OUR BEST LAMP.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. cxix. 105.

WHEN your father is far from home and wants you to come to him, he writes you a letter telling you what to do to get ready, and what road to take to come. Then he tells you about the road. If there are any dangerous places he tells you just where they are, and how to keep out of them. If there is anything very pleasant, he tells you where to look for it that you may enjoy it. You feel quite safe and happy as long as you have father's letter.

Your heavenly Father, your best Friend, loves you so much that He wants you to come and live with Him in His glorious, happy home of which we learned last week. But the road is very narrow and straight, and there are broad, dangerous paths leading from it on both sides that lead to death. He does not want you to lose the right road and get into these dangerous places, so He has sent you a long, loving letter, which tells you all about the way to come to Him. He did not write it Himself, but holy men wrote as they were guided by His Holy Spirit. Do you know, now, what we call this letter that your Heavenly Father has sent to you? Yes, it is the Holy Bible. He says that it is for little ones like you, as well as for father and mother.

But this letter from your Father in heaven is much better in every way than the one from your earthly father; for if you do as it says, it will lead you to a home in heaven. There are no mistakes in it, and it tells so very plainly where to step and where not to step in the way to your heavenly home, that it is better than the best lamp that was ever made. You know in a dark night how a lamp shows the safe places and the dangerous places along the road.

But a lamp cannot lead you safely

to your earthly home unless you use it, and unless you walk in the safe places that it shows you. Neither can the wonderful Bible lamp from heaven lead you safely to your heavenly home unless you use it, and do as it says,—unless you walk in the safe places and keep away from the dangerous places about which it tells you.

Jesus says that if you carefully read and study the Bible, and do what it says, just as you would follow the light of a lamp, He and His Father will love you and send holy angels to be with you all the time. But that is not all. He promises that if you love His words and do them they will lead you safely to His heavenly home, where you may live with Him for ever.

Ah, this precious letter from God, this heavenly lamp, is worth more to you than gold or silver, or any other thing on this earth. Love it; study it; do as it says; and you will be following its light. Walk in the narrow path of obedience, and keep out of the crooked paths of sin. Then you may truthfully say, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

1. When your father is far from home and wants you to come to him, what does he write you?

2. If there are dangerous places along the road, what does he tell you?

3. What do we call the letter that your heavenly Father has sent to you?

4. Why did He send it?

5. Which is better, the letter from your father, or this one from God?

6. Why is the one from God better?

7. How plainly does it tell where to go, and where not to go?—As plainly as a lamp shows the way in a dark night.

8. So what does David call it? Ps. cxix. 105.

9. Suppose you should never read the letter that God has sent, would it then be like a lamp to your feet?

10. Suppose you should read it and learn all it says, but not do what it says, would you be walking in its light?

11. Then how must you use the Bible so that it will be to you a lamp?

12. What is the straight path in which it says you must walk?—Obedience to your parents and to God.

13. What are the crooked and dangerous paths which it says you must not go near?—Disobedience; all kinds of naughty ways.

14. If you love and study the Bible and do as it says, who will be with you every day?

15. And to what beautiful city will you finally come?

16. Can gold, or silver, or any other thing in the world do you so much good?

17. Then what is worth more to you than anything else in the world?

18. How can you show that you are very thankful for this precious gift from your best Friend?

#### A LETTER FOR YOU.

HAVE you ever watched the post-man coming down the street with his bag of letters? If you see him coming up your steps do you not run quickly to open the door for him? Why are you so glad to see him coming to your house? Is it not because you know he brings messages for you or for some one in your house from some distant friend? But suppose you should refuse to receive the letter or to open it, could you ever enjoy what it contains?

I have heard of a young girl who had a foolish quarrel with her family and left her home and refused to receive any messages from her friends. But her father loved her still, and often sent letters to her assuring her of his forgiveness, and begging her to return home. The foolish girl, however, would not even open the letters and never knew just how much love they contained. At last she became very ill and was unable to work, and when all her money was gone she was near starvation. She had no bread, no medicine, no nurse,—nothing to make her comfortable. Some people found her in this condition and tried to help her. A number of sealed letters were lying in the room, and when they were opened several of them contained money with a loving invitation from the good father to come home. There was money for all her wants, but the poor creature did not know it because she had refused to receive the messages. She was dying of hunger while her father's home and comfort were offered to her.

This is a picture of the way some people treat the messages of God. He offers forgiveness and help and a heavenly home to all His children, but too many, alas! will not even receive the good tidings of His love.

When you see your own name written on a letter don't you feel glad to know that whatever it contains of good belongs to you, all for your own? God's message is like that—it has been written for you. God says, "To you is the word of this salvation sent."  
—Lucy Wheelock.

It is not enough to walk in the light of God's word at home, you must let its light lead you when you are at school, on the playground, or on the street. If you do as it says you will never stumble over selfishness, or fall into disobedience, or be turned aside into the public house or into any other of Satan's traps.

THE Holy Bible is the best lamp that you can have in your home, but remember this one thing: You need to walk in its light during the day, as well as in the night.

### SCIENTIFIC TEMPERANCE IN THE NURSERY.

DON'T let your child think you send him to bed early to get rid of his noise; but tell him of the tiny cell workmen who are building his house; how they do most of their work when he is asleep, and the very best in the first part of the night. He can understand that we need less sleep, because our houses are finished, and they have only to keep up repairs for us, while for him they are really building up flesh and bone. His imagination will make these wonderful little labourers more real to him than the microscope makes them to us.

Tell him how they have to get building material from the blood, just as the mason has to use brick and mortar for a wall. Each set of cells, or workmen, select the material for their special use. The bone builders use lime and the brain builders phosphorus and many other substances, but all must get supplies from the blood. All use a great deal of water. Alcohol takes the water supply, as a great thirsty beast might drink the water from the mason's tank, leaving none to mix the mortar with; then the work stops. Then it saps the water from tissue already formed, leaving it tender and brittle, just as a wall begins to crumble after fire has burned the water out of the cement. Doctors call that "fatty degeneration." A great deal of oxygen is necessary too. There isn't much oxygen in tobacco smoke.

Before this your little philosopher will ask, "What is blood made of?" When he hears it is made from what we eat, he will have interest as well as pleasure in his food, and you will have power over his appetite. He will begin to exercise self-control. Explain that the tooth builders must have lime phosphate for the enamel of a tooth, as surely as a mason must have plaster-of-paris to hard finish a wall. The chief source of lime phosphate is the grains, but only a very little is found in the white part of any grain.

He will soon learn to like brown bread, especially if his mother cultivates her taste as well as his. Tell him the meat makes so much waste the builders have to stop work to clear away the rubbish. Milk does not hinder them so. Even pups, the little wolves, and lion whelps, who eat flesh entirely when grown, eat only milk when they are small and their mothers take care of them. Or you may save him from forming that unnaturally carnivorous appetite which leads to the craving for stimulants, and of itself causes some kinds of fatal disease. Four of our teeth are "flesh tearing." From this we may get a hint of the proper proportion of meat in our dietary.

Tell him coffee and tea hurry and worry the nerve builders so they cannot possibly do their work well, while beer

and whisky make them so dizzy that everything they do is crooked. Thus every fact and law is idealised, or rather materialised, and physiology, to the imaginative child—and another too—is a fairy tale. To do this the mother must acquire the hard scientific facts, and let her imagination play with them till she can give them to the child in pleasing form. The trouble is mothers neither learn nor think of these things.

Inspire the child with ambition for a fine body, and he will do what has to be done to secure it. Show him what is involved in physical culture. The body is the instrument; not music, but the melody of life, largely depends upon the perfection of the instrument. He may make it a noble creature, with every nerve steady and every muscle trained to do his bidding, or he may neglect and abuse it till it becomes jaded and mean-spirited; or, most disastrous of all, he may allow it to become his master. Then both horse and rider go down in the hot sea of sensualism.

Teach by precept and example that physiological law is God's law, and transgression is sin.—*Dr. Bessie V. Cushman.*

"It is another's fault if he be ungrateful, but it is mine if I do not give. To find one thankful man, I will oblige a great many that are not so."

### Interesting Items.

—There is trouble again among the native chiefs in Samoa.

—The telegraph brings daily reports of the suspension of United States banks.

—Thirty warehouses were destroyed in West London by a fire on the morning of the 18th.

—The coins struck in the German mint last year represented in value 3,147,969,059 marks.

—One of the Russian monasteries on Mount Athos has been attacked and plundered by a band of Greek pirates.

—The overland journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific is to be shortened twenty-two hours by the Canadian Pacific railway.

—An address on the peace question is about to be sent through the executive of the Society of Friends to the European monarchs.

—The Turkish Minister of War has signed a contract with a firm for the supply of 150,000 rifles, to be delivered before February, 1895.

—A narrow gauge railway line is being commenced by a French company between Beyrout and Damascus. The line will be 87 miles in length.

—Gold to the value of \$87,503,463 was exported from the United States during the past fiscal year. The net silver exports amounted to \$17,544,067.

—The barque *Royal Tar*, which sailed from Sidney July 16, for Monte Video, had on board 209 emigrants whose intention is to found a "New Australia" settlement in Paraguay.

—The Russian Minister of Imperial Domains has in hand a plan for laying under cotton cultivation an area of nearly 1,000,000 acres in the neighbourhood of the Merv Oasis.

—It is stated in military circles at St. Petersburg that the Russian Government will shortly reply to the adoption of the Army Bill in Germany by the formation of a 19th and 20th Army Corps.

—Troubles have broken out in Mashonaland, the territory of the British South Africa Company. The Company's police at Fort Victoria have had a skirmish with some of Lobengula's warriors, and a war with the Matabele is feared.

—The Vatican has just received an intimation from the German Government that the latter will not oppose the proposal to introduce into the Reichstag a motion in favour of the religious orders being permitted to return to Germany.

—Some weeks ago the Russian Government promised to send no further expeditions into the disputed territory in Central Asia, but now a body of troops is again on the march. The present expedition, which is the third of its kind, is intended to be a decisive one, the Russians having made up their minds to take possession of the Pamirs.

—A terrible tornado swept through Northern Italy, on the 18th. It did not leave a single building at Voghera undamaged, and a large number of houses were levelled to the ground. The great Marogliano Palace is a vast mass of ruins. At Casteggio 100 houses were completely wrecked. The loss of life is great, but the number killed is not known.

—Sunday, July 16, was the last Sunday that the World's Fair at Chicago will be opened. This decision of the Directors was by twenty-four votes to four, the reason being that Sunday opening has not paid. The proceeds of the last Sunday opening were devoted to the families of the firemen who perished in the recent terrible fire on the Fair grounds.

—There has lately been a serious conflict between Chinese men-of-war and a fleet of pirate vessels in Chinese waters. Three gunboats were escorting a flotilla of merchant junks, and the pirates opened fire upon them. After a fierce conflict in which the Chinese men-of-war lost sixty men, the pirates were captured, together with a large quantity of booty.

—After the 1st of December, postal orders in France are to be cashed at the residences of the persons to whom they are made payable. As the postmen in charge of this service will necessarily have at times large sums of money in their possession, the Post office authorities are considering the advisability of arming them. Thus the "advance of civilisation" opens up greater possibilities for crime and violence.

—As might have been expected the South Carolina experiment of the State's going into the wholesale and retail liquor business, is not giving satisfaction. People resent the intrusion of the police into their houses, to see if they have any liquor. It is in keeping with the paternal theory of government, that the State should be supposed in some way to know just how much liquor each man may be allowed to drink with impunity to himself, and profit to the State, and to allow him just so much and no more.

—On the 15th inst., the German Reichstag passed the third reading of the Army Bill by a vote of 201 to 185. On the result of the vote being announced, the Social Democrats left the House. "After the supplementary military estimates had been passed without debate, Count von Caprivi read the imperial message closing the Session, and expressed the thanks of the Emperor and the Federal Governments for the patriotic action of the Reichstag."

—There is difficulty between France and Siam, some French gunboats having forced their way to Bangkok. The French claim that it was because they were fired upon by Siamese forts, although the evidence seems to be that the Siamese fired because the French ships were advancing. It is very easy for a great power to find that a weaker power has been making attacks upon it, which will justify it in taking the weaker power under its "protection." It is said that the English are gradually leaving Siam.

—It is reported from America that the feeling against the suspension of silver coinage is so bitter in Colorado that "a secret organisation has come into existence in the Rocky Mountains called 'The Knights of the Silver Circle.' The knights threaten in case the Sherman law is repealed to compel Colorado to leave the American Union, and unite with the Republic of Mexico, which is a silver coinage country. The western States are honeycombed with secret societies, who are deliberating the question of secession. Many of these societies are armed organisations, and, it is said, are in the habit of holding moonlight meetings for purposes of drill."

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## The Present Truth.

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

LONDON, JULY 27, 1893.

FOR TERMS, SEE FIRST PAGE.

In a recent contribution to the *North American Review*, Dr. Briggs, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, anticipates the union of all Protestant denominations, first with the Roman Church, and then with the Greek Church. The current is evidently in that direction.

"WITHHOLD not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." Prov. iii. 27. Whatever else may be included in this commandment, it certainly charges those who have money that is due to the Lord's work, to give while they are alive, and not to leave it until after death. Then it is not in the power of their hand to do anything, and there is no certainty that their intentions while living will ever be carried out. If God loves a cheerful giver, how must He regard the man who holds fast to his money until his latest breath, having previously made a will that the Lord may have it when it is of no more use to him?

THE Jews are not flocking to Jerusalem as rapidly as the advocates of a certain theory like to imagine that they are. There are about 45,000 Jews in the whole land of Palestine, 27,000 of whom live in and about Jerusalem. A large portion of those who are there are largely supported by charity. It is safe to say that the average Jew would far rather live in London or New York, where he can be unmolested, and can make an independent living, than to go to Jerusalem. There will be a gathering of Israel to Jerusalem, but it will not be to "Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children;" it will be the gathering of all the saints of God—the true Israel—to the New Jerusalem.

THE Conference over "The Reunion of the Churches," at Lucerne, has not made much progress. As a matter of fact a reunion is not expected, but only a federation, and that really exists now for all "practical" purposes for which union is desired, namely, influencing legislation. In the course of the discussion, Dr. Duff maintained that it was "unreasonable, and an insufficient argument, to take the New Testament as the one sole criterion of what a

church in the nineteenth century should be." That means that the New Testament may be followed as far as it meets men's ideas, and departed from when men have ideas that they think better. And that is to put man in the place of the Bible. All the indications are that whatever "union" of the churches is effected will be upon the Papal basis.

WHEN Livingstone was in Africa, there was a chief named Sechéle, who accepted Christianity, and who was very devoted to the missionary. Of this chief Livingstone tells the following story:—

"Seeing me anxious that his people should believe the words of Christ, he once said, Do you imagine these people will ever believe by your merely talking to them? I can make them do nothing except by thrashing them; and if you like, I shall call my head men, and with our *litupa* (whips of rhinoceros hide) we will soon make them all believe together."

Let no one laugh at the simplicity of the African chief. He had grasped the great principle of the union of Church and State. It was by such means that "the Gospel" was sought to be propagated in the Middle Ages; it was by similar methods that the different nations of Europe became "Christian nations"; thus it was that Cortez Christianised the Mexicans; and in that way the Czar of Russia is "converting" all the people of his dominions. Whoever thinks to advance Christianity by any political method whatever has ideas of Christianity in common with the African chief.

As has been noted in our "Interesting Items," the World's Fair at Chicago will from now on be closed on Sundays, unless the Directors should take another freak, which, considering their past record, is not impossible. They have made themselves ridiculous by their lack of principle and purpose, and will receive no thanks from either the friends or opponents of Sunday closing.

MANY readers have evidently misunderstood the position of the PRESENT TRUTH, on the matter of the Sunday opening of the World's Fair. It has been stated that we were in favour of Sunday opening. This is a mistake. We neither favour nor oppose it. In the thing itself we have not had the slightest interest. Whether it should be open or not, has been from the first a matter of perfect indifference to us. We have continually stated that it was a matter for the Directors themselves to decide, just the same as whether or not a manufacturing establishment shall be opened on Sunday, or a railway train run on that day is

solely a matter for the managers to decide.

WHAT we have been interested in is the light that has been thrown on the development of the control of United States affairs by the churches. The question as to whether or not the Fair should be opened on Sundays has demonstrated the fact that the churches of the United States control Congress, and that the spirit of the Inquisition is active. When Congress offered the Directors of the Fair a bribe of two and a half million dollars if they would keep the gates closed on Sundays, it was at the dictation of church people. Congress had no jurisdiction over the Fair, and hence could not order it to be closed; but what was done was in violation of the Constitution, which expressly declares that "Congress shall make no law respecting religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Thus it was shown that the churches are held by Congress as above the Constitution.

In that lies the evil of the whole thing, and that evil cannot be undone by any action of the Directors, either in opening or closing the Fair on Sundays. The question is one wholly apart from that of whether or not Sunday is a sacred day. The interference of the church in affairs of State, and State legislation upon religious affairs, is always a sin. It is never anything less than the manifestation of the spirit of antichrist. The Scriptures teach that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and that it alone of all the days of the week is holy. We heartily believe this; but if it were proposed that the State should make any law respecting the true Sabbath, that would in any way whatever tend to influence any person's action upon that day, we should protest with all the vigour we possess. We repeat, State recognition of religion is always and everywhere a sin. The religion of Christ asks for nothing from the State,—not protection, nor recognition in any way. The worst thing that any government can do for Christianity is to presume to pass laws in its favour.

By this all readers may understand that all our reference to the controversy over the Sunday opening of the Chicago Exposition, has been for the purpose of illustrating a principle and of showing the growth of the union of church and State in the United States. With this we may let the Fair rest for the present. But the matter of union of Church and State, in whatever form it appears, we cannot be silent upon, since such union strikes at the very foundation of the Gospel.