

# The Signs of the Times.

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

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## The Signs of the Times

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### What Have I Done for Thee.

Oh, thou who didst for me,  
Hang bleeding on the tree,  
On far off Calvary,  
That I might live,  
What offering can I make,  
Dear Saviour, for thy sake,  
What bounty give?

Thy holy martyrs, Lord,  
With blood have sealed thy word;  
Their groanings hast thou heard—  
Thine eye hath seen  
The faggot-fire's glare,  
The dungeon dark and bare,  
Where saints have been.

Thou'st seen thy prophets die,  
Thine ear hath heard their cry;  
And Saviour, what am I  
Better than they?  
What can I do for thee,  
Who didst so much for me,  
Dear Lord, I pray?

Almighty as thou art,  
Give me with thee a part,  
O, God, accept this heart,  
Nor turn away.  
Though full of guilt within,  
O cleanse me from my sin,  
I humbly pray.

Wilt thou, my blessed King,  
Accept my offering,  
The tribute that I bring,  
A heart so true?  
Before thy feet I fall,  
And give to thee mine all,  
Thy rightful due.

MRS. L. D. A. STUTTLE.

## General Articles.

### MARTYRDOM OF STEPHEN.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

WHEN he connected Jesus Christ with the prophecies, and spoke of the temple as he did, the priest, affecting to be horror-stricken, rent his robe. This act was to Stephen a signal that his voice would soon be silenced forever. Although he was just in the midst of his sermon, he abruptly concluded it by suddenly breaking away from the chain of history, and, turning upon his infuriated judges, said, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as you fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers; who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

At this the priests and rulers were beside themselves with anger. They were more like wild beasts of prey than like human beings. They rushed upon Stephen, gnashing their teeth. But he was not intimidated; he had expected this. His face was calm, and shone with an angelic light. The infuriated priests and the excited mob had no terrors for him. "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

The scene about him faded from his vision; the gates of heaven were ajar, and Stephen, looking in, saw the glory of the courts of God, and Christ, as if just risen from his throne, standing ready to sustain his servant, who was about to suffer martyrdom

for his name. When Stephen proclaimed the glorious scene opened before him, it was more than his persecutors could endure. They stopped their ears, that they might not hear his words, and uttering loud cries, ran furiously upon him with one accord. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Amid the agonies of this most cruel death, the faithful martyr, like his divine Master, prayed for his murderers. The witnesses who had accused Stephen were required to cast the first stones. These persons laid down their clothes at the feet of Saul, who had taken an active part in the disputations, and had consented to the prisoner's death.

The martyrdom of Stephen made a deep impression upon all who witnessed it. It was a sore trial to the church, but resulted in the conversion of Saul. The faith, constancy, and glorification of the martyr could not be effaced from his memory. The signet of God upon his face, his words, that reached to the very soul of all who heard them, except those who were hardened by resisting the light, remained in the memory of the beholders, and testified to the truth of that which he had proclaimed.

There had been no legal sentence passed upon Stephen; but the Roman authorities were bribed by large sums of money to make no investigation of the case. Saul seemed to be imbued with a frenzied zeal at the scene of Stephen's trial and death. He seemed to be angered at his own secret convictions that Stephen was honored of God, at the very period when he was dishonored of men. He continued to persecute the church of God, hunting them down, seizing them in their houses, and delivering them up to the priests and rulers for imprisonment and death. His zeal in carrying forward the persecution was a terror to the Christians in Jerusalem. The Roman authorities made no special effort to stay the cruel work, and secretly aided the Jews, in order to conciliate them, and to secure their favor.

The learned Saul was a mighty instrument in the hands of Satan to carry out his rebellion against the Son of God; but a mightier than Satan had selected Saul to take the place of the martyred Stephen, and to labor and suffer for his name. Saul was a man of much esteem among the Jews, for both his learning and his zeal in persecuting the believers. He was not a member of the Sanhedrim council until after the death of Stephen, when he was elected to that body in consideration of the part he had acted on that occasion.

After the death of Stephen the disciples were restrained in their active ministry, and many of the believers who had temporarily resided in Jerusalem now retired to their distant homes because of the violent persecution against them. But the apostles dared not leave Jerusalem till the Spirit of God indicated it to be their duty to do so; for Christ had bidden them to first work in that field. Although the priests and rulers bitterly persecuted the new converts, they did not venture for a time to arrest the apostles, being overawed by the dying testimony of Stephen, and realizing that their course with him had injured their own cause in the minds of the people.

Christ had commanded his disciples to go and teach all nations; but the previous teachings which they had received from the Jews made it difficult for them to fully comprehend the words of their Master, and therefore they were slow to act upon them. They called themselves the children of Abraham, and regarded themselves as the heirs of divine promise. It was not until several years after the Lord's ascension that their minds were sufficiently expanded to clearly understand the intent of Christ's words, that they were to labor for the conversion of the Gentiles as well as that of the Jews.

Their minds were particularly called out to this part of the work by the Gentiles themselves, many of whom embraced the doctrine of Christ. Closely following the death of Stephen, and the consequent scattering of the

believers throughout Palestine, Samaria was greatly stirred. The Samaritans received the believers kindly, and manifested a willingness to hear concerning Jesus, who, in his first public labors, had preached to them with great power. Anything in regard to Christ was heard by them with intense interest. Here the disciples began to more fully understand that the gospel was not in any wise to be confined to the Jews; for conversions occurred among all classes, without any definite, special effort on the part of the Christian teachers. Many converts to Christ among the Gentiles demonstrated to the Jewish believers that they were not the only ones embraced in the message of Christ.

The animosity existing between the Jews and Samaritans decreased, and it could no longer be said that they had no dealing with each other. Philip left Jerusalem, and preached a risen Redeemer in Samaria. Many believed, and received Christian baptism. Philip's preaching was marked with so great success, and so many were gathered into the fold of Christ, that he finally sent to Jerusalem for help. In answer to this petition, the church sent Peter and John to his assistance, who labored in Samaria with wonderful results. They now perceived the meaning of Christ, when he said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Among the converts in Samaria was one Simon, who, by the power of Satan, through sorceries, had gained great fame among the people. "To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries." But when he saw a greater power manifested by the apostles in healing the sick and in converting souls to the truth, he thought that by uniting with the believers in Christ he might do wonders equal to those accomplished by the apostles. He hoped thus to add greatly to his fame and wealth, for he made merchandise of his sorceries and Satanic arts, pretending to impart their secrets to others.

His darkened mind could not distinguish between the power of the Holy Ghost and that of Satan. He went to Peter and offered him money if he would give him power to heal the sick, and impart to men the Holy Ghost, by laying his hands upon them. Peter was filled with horror at such a proposal, and severely rebuked the presumption of Simon. Said he, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

The magician trembled with fear as his sin was presented before him in this vivid manner. He began to perceive his own wicked audacity, and entreated Peter to pray that the wrath of God might not come upon him for his presumptuous sin. Peter had, with startling force, shown Simon that he was yet untouched by the grace of God; for if his mind had been thus enlightened, he would have known that the sacred power of the Holy Spirit could not be bought or sold for money. Christ, at the infinite price of himself, had obtained for his people the power of the Holy Spirit, to be given only to his chosen instruments, whose lives must be free from selfishness and sin.

The Lord now sent his angel to Philip, directing him to cross the desert and go to Gaza. "And he arose and went. And, behold a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet." The eunuch, in his blindness, had been groping for light. He believed the Scriptures, but could not fully understand them. He therefore went a journey to Jerusalem to the temple. Hungering and thirsting for knowledge, he laid

his perplexities before the priests and scribes; but he was still more mystified than before by their interpretation of scripture. He prayed fervently for light and knowledge, and God heard his prayer, and sent his angel to Philip, bidding him go to Gaza for the purpose of preaching Christ to a single soul that hungered and thirsted for the truth.

The eunuch had heard at Jerusalem various conflicting reports in regard to Jesus of Nazareth. His mind was troubled upon the subject. He had a copy of the Scriptures with him, and was diligently studying the prophecies in reference to the Messiah, when Philip met him. They were strangers; but the mind of Philip was impressed that this was the man who needed his help. Philip, walking by the side of the chariot, inquired of the eunuch if he understood the prophecies he was reading. He answered that he needed instruction, and invited Philip to take a seat beside him.

The scripture he was studying was Isaiah 53:7. Philip understood the desire of his heart, and preached unto him Jesus Christ revealed in prophecy, and his mission to the earth to save sinners. He showed him the steps necessary to take in conversion—repentance toward God because of transgression of the Father's law, faith in Christ as the Saviour of men, and baptism in the likeness of his death. The eunuch's heart was all ready to receive the light and truth, and he accepted with gladness the gospel preached by Philip.

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The answer of the eunuch was prompt and decided. He commanded the chariot to be stopped, "and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."

In this instance we have an illustration of the care of God for his children. He called Philip from his successful ministry in Samaria, to cross the desert and go to Gaza to labor for a single inquiring soul. The promptness with which the eunuch accepted the gospel and acted upon its belief should be a lesson to us. God designs that we should be prompt in accepting and confessing Christ, prompt in obeying him, and in answering to the call of duty. The eunuch was a man of good repute, and occupied a high and responsible position. Through his conversion the gospel was carried to Ethiopia, and many there accepted Christ, and came out from the darkness of heathenism into the clear light of Christianity.

### How To Find God.

"THE fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Ps. 14:1. The holy Bible, in which Christians believe, teaches that there is one living God, who is almighty, infinite in every perfection, eternal in his nature, the Creator of everything which exists, and the Father of all. This Bible claims to be a revelation of his will to man. It teaches that those who do his will shall be rewarded for it, both in this life and also eternally in the life to come; and that those who disobey him shall be punished.

But what evidence have we that the Bible is what it claims to be—the word of God, a revelation from our Creator? Infidels pretend that there is not sufficient evidence to justify this claim. We affirm, and shall show, that there is an abundance of evidence that the Bible is the word of God. Indeed, there is so much evidence in proof of this, that many volumes would not suffice to contain it all. However, we shall state only a few of the plainest evidences for Christianity. Our acquaintance with infidels has thoroughly convinced us that it is not merely evidence which is needed to convince them, but that the difficulty lies far back of that. If an overwhelming amount of evidence

could cure infidelity, the disease would long since have ceased to exist.

"Well," says the skeptic, "if there is a God, why don't he show himself? If he will appear in mid-heaven, if he will come personally and talk with me, then I will believe him. I will stand in the door and call upon him to cause it to thunder out of a clear sky, to flash his lightnings where there are no clouds, to make the earth shake in answer to my questions—let him do this, and then I will believe."

"Suppose God should take as much of his nature as we can understand, and bring it to us in the way of adequate personal manifestation to the senses. Could we endure the exhibition? Why, we can hardly bear such sights and sounds as we ourselves can produce. We can kindle such glory of conflagration, can detonate such might and majesty of sound, as will destroy sight and hearing, and even shock the weakly out of life. And surely if God should come upon our senses with such imperialism of sights and sounds as would appropriately represent the utmost power and knowledge we can conceive—as would worthily express our ideas of Eternity and Almighty and Omniscience—that moment would be our last.

"Even now, when the common lightning shoots before our eyes, how they quiver back from the blinding flame; and when the common thunder comes upon us in some great crash, how our ears and hearts quail under the terrible bass! And were God himself to come flashing and pealing on the world in all that outward majesty that rightfully belongs to him, and fitly signifies to sense the presence of a virtually infinite being, who of us would see another moment in the body? We should straightway be dazzled out of life. Our frightened senses and hearts would give one leap, and then become motionless forever—and this though they were a thousand-fold stronger than they are. . . . The men who ask that God should personally manifest himself to their senses as God, know not what they ask. . . . Should a being of virtually infinite glory and majesty come on our senses, or our thoughts, with any but the most inconsiderable fraction of his greatness, our feeble souls would infallibly go into unbeingment." *Pater Mundi*, pp. 122-124.

Foolish man, you have no right to thus put tests to your God, to say just how he must prove himself to you. Do you know that God himself has given many tests by which he offers to prove to any man that he does exist; and that he will manifest himself to all who will put him to the proof? Now if you despise the way that God has chosen, and demand some other test, of your own invention, do not expect God to come to your terms and change from what he has declared he will do. You would better first try the tests which God submits. If you will do this thoroughly, we are willing to warrant that the results will be perfectly satisfactory. They have never failed and they never will fail in the case of any individual who will put them to thorough trial.

Try the following test: The Lord says, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John 7:17. Now, skeptic, here is a chance for you to try an experiment. Commence to walk carefully according to the light you already have on matters of duty, and see whether faith in the Bible, and the God of the Bible, does not spring up in your heart. Begin to act upon the Bible as a rule of life, and see if it does not harmonize with your better nature. Promise this hour, that for the next six months you will go once a day, and upon your knees, alone, humbly ask that if there is a God he will help you to the light, will help you to find him, will help you to know the truth; if the Bible is his word that he will help you to believe it, and open it to your understanding so that you may see it is the truth. My skeptical friend, do this and your infidelity is gone.

"Who cannot put God and the Scriptures on the test of this actual experiment? Who so poor, so weak, so ill-informed, so uncultured, so busy, that he cannot try these things by his liberality, by his prayer, by his conscientious living? Such a variety of easy practical methods enables all the world to become critics in religion." *Pater Mundi*, pp. 20, 21. But I have little hope that any skeptic will try this test. And why? Because he is not so willing or anxious to believe as he pretends. God must come to his terms or he will have nothing to do with him. The trouble, my friend, is not in the head; it is deeper than that, in the secret springs of your heart. Yours is a corrupt, sin-loving heart, which does not desire communion with a holy sin-hating God. However loudly you may talk and prate, the judgment will show that this was the trouble.

Who is it that wants to get rid of God?

"There are persons who would as soon be without God as not; nay, there are those who could hardly hear pleasanter news than that the whole Theistic argument has been fairly overturned from the foundation, and the impossibility of a God proved beyond all possibility of denial. Oh, how scoffing Voltaire, and licentious Rousseau, and bloated Paine would have clapped their hands and shouted, could they have fallen on some wonderful geometry which by its rigid demonstrations could compel even the most unwilling to give up their last plea for Deity! Oh, how the high-handed evil-doers of every name, sinning and impetuously bent on sinning, would congratulate themselves, could it be made as plain as day that such a machine as a thinking, embodied man was created by chance; that chance fitted up the earth as his convenient home, and hung out the heavens above him with the blazon of stars and suns!

"But as soon as a sinner has made up his mind conclusively against sin, and has fully committed himself for endless war upon it in all its forms, then he ceases to be averse or indifferent to the divine existence; then he begins positively to like the idea, as including that of a righteous, divine government; then he begins to cling to it, to bless it, to feel that he cannot do without it; and as he goes on to higher and higher grades of virtue, the feeling in behalf of God gradually deepens into a profound hunger and thirst. He says, 'My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.' To him an offer to disprove God would be an offer to make the universe an awful solitude and desert." *Pater Mundi*, pp. 203, 204.

It is neither impossible nor difficult to find God to the entire satisfaction of your mind, if you are really in earnest about it. If you will humbly study the word which God has given, and try the many tests there proposed by God himself, you will soon lose all your doubts, and receive in exchange firm faith in God.

D. M. CANRIGHT.

*Bowling Green, O., November 14, 1878.*

### The Seventh Part of Time.

(Concluded.)

TEXT: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." Ex. 20:10.

FIFTHLY, this theory, if carried out, would prove destructive of the highest interests of society.

When we speak of society and the confusion which would be created in it by a general and practical indorsement of the tenet before us, it is not with reference to that temporary disturbance which would arise from a change of views, but it is that permanent disorder which would result from the inauguration of a line of public policy which can never be reconciled with a state of things every way normal and necessary.

With this understanding of the declaration which stands at the head of this division of the subject, we see the weight, which if true, it ought to have in this discussion. For, as God the Creator and God the Lawgiver are one, certain it is that he has not approved in the first capacity that which he has condemned in the last; i. e., if God in his omniscience, has so related us to each other, socially, that a Sabbath which is not fixed would be a curse, then he has never given us such an one. That this would be the case, however, might be illustrated from every walk in life. Take, for example, the commercial world. In it men are intimately connected with, and largely dependent upon, each other for success. So true is this that even the most common transactions are seldom perfected without the joint action of several individuals, and, in many cases, that of a much larger number. Now let a certain portion, say one-seventh, of your business men retire each day from the active scenes of life. A glance reveals the fact that those who are not of this number would find themselves vexed and annoyed at every step, if not prevented from making any progress whatever, by the absence of those whose presence was to them indispensable in order to the accomplishment of their designs. This would be especially true with those more complicated organizations which have been created for the purpose of facilitating an exchange of commodities between cities and nations; such as railroad corporations, which are wholly dependent for success upon the united and timely effort of many individuals, scattered along a line stretching for hundreds, and sometimes for thousands, of miles. In fact, it may well be questioned whether they would not, from the very necessity of the case, perish immediately upon, and as a consequence of, the introduction of the change proposed.

Again, it would prove fatal to our educational system, since it is wholly dependent

for success upon classification, and this can never be maintained except through the regular attendance of pupils, a thing which would be altogether out of the question should they or their parents act upon the plan suggested.

But, as we have neither time nor disposition to examine in detail the many institutions which we so much cherish, and which distinguish civilized from barbarous life, in order to trace the effect which will be produced upon each, we propose to show at once that it would prove ruinous to them all, since it would utterly subvert that upon which they must depend for existence; viz., law and order.

While there is much in human governments to be regretted, there is, also, much which is commendable; and it is difficult to see how they could be dispensed with so long as men are either criminal in intention, or liable to err in judgment. Hence we are instructed in the word of God that we should be subject to the powers that be, as they are ordained by him; that we should render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's; that rulers are a terror only to evil-doers. So important was the idea of a well regulated State in the eyes of the Lord that he organized one for his chosen people, the laws of which have furnished a model for the ages which have followed. We unhesitatingly affirm, however, that neither that, nor any other government, can be administered upon the principle of a Sabbath movable at will; for the very idea of a government is that of a condition of society regulated by law; but law enforced implies a judiciary, in some form or other, clothed with power to try cases and inflict penalties. That this, however, would be practically out of the question, with the condition of things alluded to, will be apparent from a moment's thought. We will suppose that the legislature, acting in good faith, and in supposed harmony with the will of Heaven, has enacted that every citizen shall be guaranteed the right of deciding for himself when he will solemnize the Sabbath; and the people, equally ingenious in lauding the wisdom of this plan, proceed to act upon it. The result is that, from one motive or another, every one of the seven days of the week has been appropriated by a portion of the community to rest. Who does not see that, with this state of things, it would be the idlest nonsense to talk of administering justice through the courts? for the judge, having passed the period of his rest, might, perhaps, be ready to proceed to business at the very moment that the officers of the court are about to lay it aside, so that they may enter upon theirs.

This difficulty surmounted, after much delay, the calendar is taken up in order on this, and every subsequent day of the week; but it is found, upon examination, that they cannot come to trial in a single case in the long list, since there is not one of them in which adjudication is not impossible because of the absence of either one or the other party, or of one of the counselors, or one or more of the witnesses, or some one of the twelve jurors, whose presence is indispensable, and yet who cannot be compelled to appear, because this would be an invasion of his legally-recognized right to consecrate to the worship of God whatever hours might seem to him good.

The result of such a state of things is apparent. Criminals, perceiving that the hilt of the sword of justice is in their own hands, become defiant, crime becomes rampant—the land is deluged with vice, the flood-gates of iniquity are thrown wide open—and no man can close them until the State is ruined, except by a repudiation of the fatal dogma, the legalization of which has caused all the trouble.

We have now been brought by five distinct processes of reasoning to the same result, viz., that the seventh, or last, day of the week, and no other, has been, and is now, the Sabbath of the Lord our God.

Have you, hitherto, by an unfortunate combination of circumstances, been found desecrating it through ignorance of its true character? Then a humble confession of your guilt will secure you the fullest pardon. But in this case, as in all others, the genuineness of the repentance is determined by the fruits which it brings forth. Should you, for the future, continue in the way of the transgressor, even the sins of the past cannot be blotted out. Is this the first time your attention has been called to the subject? Then your position is, indeed, a critical one. Thousands of staunch vessels have gone to pieces on the identical rock of decision that your bark is now approaching. Perhaps you have never in all your life been placed in a situation where your love for God and his word has been so thoroughly tested as it will be here. On one side of this question stands almost every consideration of a worldly na-

ture. There, perhaps, are your friends. There is the multitude of wise men whose opinions you have been taught to revere. There are the churches with which you have acted so long and so pleasantly. There, it may be, are your property interests. There is your reputation and standing in society, while, on the other side, are the tablets of the law, bearing the inscription, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Do you falter? Then listen to the voice of Him who, while he seeks to deter us from evil by fierce denunciations of wrath, also strives to win us to holiness by promises of future good, as precious as they are incomprehensible: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 58:13, 14.

Can language convey an idea of felicity more perfect than that which is portrayed in the above? If so, it will be found in the following benediction pronounced by our Saviour upon those who are seeking to obtain it: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14. Not the city of an earthly king; not the Jerusalem of the land of Judea; but that of the "King of kings," the "Jerusalem which is above," "whose builder and maker is God;" the same which John saw coming down from God out of heaven, shining with a light clear and beautiful as that of a living stone, with twelve gates of pearl, every several gate of one pearl, and each one guarded, not with a grim and frowning soldier, but by a mighty and shining angel of God; with walls of jasper, and twelve foundations, each of precious stone; with a street of gold, like unto transparent glass, through the center of which flowed "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal," and on either side of it was the tree of life, "which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month;" while at the head of the great avenue stood the throne of God and the Lamb, from which proceeded an effulgence so bright that the "city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb was the light thereof."

Such will be the future and eternal home, not of those who *hear*, but of those who *do*, God's commandments. There will be fulfilled to the courageous, God-fearing men of this generation—standing as they do in the last, or Laodicean, state of the church—those most mysterious words of the Lord: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 3:21.

Would you be of this immortal number? Then remember that the promise is not to him that *is overcome*, but to him that *overcometh*; and that, if you fulfill the conditions named, the combined powers of earth and hell cannot separate you from your reward.

W. H. LITTLEJOHN.

### Experience and Belief.

ONE'S view of Christ is greatly affected by his experience. If there be a man who has never had a fierce fight with his passions, and been conquered; who has never felt self-condemned for sin, or baffled in his efforts after a higher life; who has never shuddered before the broken law of a majestic God, or longed for a mediator who could assure his trembling soul and lift his weakness into strength; if a man has felt none or only a little of this, he is very likely to find Christ only an unselfish friend of the race, and a martyr to the truth, instead of seeing in him the Redeemer and Saviour of souls. One needs Paul's experience in seeking justification by the law, and that triumphant after-experience narrated in second Corinthians, before one is likely to unite with him in the confession that he is "God over all, and blessed forever," and that in him "dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily."

So long as we can maintain a deep and true religious experience we shall be able to keep our hold upon a sound and vital theology. But when our religion becomes one of only superficial sentiment, generous sympathies, and decent behavior, as we find it within ourselves, it will probably be little more than a surface theology, as we imagine it to be in our unstudied Bibles, or as we set it down in our indefinite and uncared-for creeds.—*Morning Star*.



"Not as the Hypocrites do."

AMONG the various offenses of His day which Jesus condemned, that of ostentation was conspicuously denounced. A very large portion of the Sermon on the Mount abounds in forbidding this sin. "Take heed," said the Master, "that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them;" and he significantly added, "otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." His disciples were not to "sound a trumpet," as the hypocrites did—and still do; alms were to be bestowed in secret; and in place of ostentatious prayers offered in public places, the disciples were commanded to enter into their closet and shut the door. Even in fasting all publicity and conspicuity were to be avoided; and all through the Gospels we meet with the lessons of humility and self-abnegation, followed with the declaration that "every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Does it not seem as if the church were largely in danger of forgetting the Master's command—and is there not a marked tendency to offend in this direction exhibited in the various forms of ostentation which characterize many in their utterances and in their acts of benevolence? Very often this offense of ostentation is apologized for by the remark that it is "only a bit of harmless vanity"—yet perhaps nothing more completely demoralizes character, and visits a keener reproach upon religion, than this irrepressible hankering after popular approval, this itching for public notoriety and applause.

Some years ago a noted reformer lived not far from Albany who had a wide reputation as a public philanthropist. The papers often proclaimed his deeds of benevolence. Sometimes it was one hundred dollars to one institution, and fifty dollars to another; but whatever the amount, it was sure to find its way into the newspapers. A minister once going to him for a contribution to a benevolent object, was refused: "I have heard nothing from my contribution of last year," was all the explanation the minister received;—in other words, he had neglected to place the previous benefaction prominently before the public in the newspapers! Nor is it so very surprising to know that although this gentleman was a professed reformer in a certain direction, he allowed his property to be devoted in just the opposite direction, and under the guise of a law-suit which deceived no one. And so careful and exact was he in his financial matters that at his death it was easy to trace nearly every dollar of his disbursements; and it was noticed that scarcely anything had been given to benevolence which had not already found its way into the public press.

At a series of religious meetings held in this city some two years ago, a gentleman not unknown to the public was noticed to be continually appearing on the speakers' platform, constantly going out and returning, yielding to an irresistible propensity for exhibiting himself. In like manner with our Albany friend, this gentleman bestows his benefactions very ostentatiously. His acts of benevolence have been flashed along the ocean cable, and sent by telegraph to all parts of the country. And yet, numerous as his benefactions have been, his means have also been great and his opportunities many. But, and we rejoice to say it, there are those in our city and elsewhere who have given munificently, and although occasionally their benefactions have come to the light when they could not be hid, we know how gladly they would have shunned publicity. In their own quiet way they have given of their means, and relieved distress to an extent little guessed at by the outside world, and which only the last great day will reveal. Between the quiet beauty of such charity and that counterfeit spirit of beneficence which flaunts its gifts like circus posters in the face of the public for every passer-by to read, and which keeps a telephone in its right hand by which the left may be constantly advised what it is about, a mighty chasm intervenes.

In this matter it is to be feared that ministers themselves are by no means wholly free from blame. Quite apart from the fact that they are liable to the foibles and failings of mankind, they not unfrequently assist in the development of vanity and ostentation in others whose benefactions they herald from the pulpit. What Mr. So-and-so has generously contributed to the Relief Fund of the church, or what the generous deed which Mrs. This-and-that did on a particular occasion, are not unfrequently announced from the pulpit, and in the face of the parties themselves. Sometimes this spirit of personal exaltation takes the form of servile flattery, uttered in the face of some one only too glad to receive it; indeed, we once heard a minister—a good brother he was—proclaiming at a public meeting, and in the presence of the

previous speaker, a layman, to whom he referred, "I feel, standing here in the presence of the brother who has just spoken, as if I ought to take my shoes from off my feet!"—a great many in that audience thought the best thing that speaker could do would be to take his feet off that platform! Alas and alas for those men who make a pulpit-show of their benefactions, and wear their religion on their backs! The world keeps its eyes open, and has long since learned to distinguish between those who stand on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men, and those others who do their alms in secret, and whom, in His own good time, the Father who seeth in secret will reward openly.—*Christian at Work.*

Grace versus Law.

It is surprising to what inventions people resort in order to evade obligation to God's law. Everywhere in the Old Testament they find the law of Moses, but never the law of God. Obedience to law is made synonymous with transgression; at least it is treated as a kind of violence offered to the grace of Christ, to make the ten commandments the rule of life. The pardoned criminal is expected to obey the laws of his country, to love and not to hate, nor to sneer at those laws, and by obedience to show thankfulness to the sovereign who pardoned him. In fact his after conduct is expected to reflect honor upon the laws which he once violated.

Just so it should be with the pardoned sinner. He has not been pardoned that he may defy the law of God, but that he may honor it when the condemnation is removed, by obeying it, and thereby showing that he loves God with all the heart. But many seem in one way or another to cast opprobrium upon the ten commandments. They are called Mosaic, and therefore are not the Christian's rule of life. The changes are rung upon the words: "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," as though an ellipsis of the word condemnation were impossible in that sentence, and wholesome law were obnoxious, and grace a license. Starting with the assertion that the ten commandments are Mosaic, they are declared not to be moral.

Then the Sabbath is attacked, for this class think the Sunday to be of Christ, while the Sabbath is of Moses only! They say it was not commanded before the flood, and hence it must be Jewish; but why do they not tell us that idolatry, blasphemy, dishonoring parents, adultery, and lying, were not, so far as the record goes, forbidden before the flood, and hence are Mosaic prohibitions only, and have been done away by the death of Christ? The antinomian spirit manages to publish itself abroad, much to the inconvenience of many in the churches. Rather than be drawn into this wordy cant of "grace and no law," we should think that brethren would vastly prefer the Sabbath and the harmonious relations of law and gospel.

Recently we heard a Baptist deacon express himself on this wise: "I wish the teachers of the Sunday-school and the brethren would join me in a pledge not to use the word grace for the next twelve months." Of course there were some to protest against the proposal, but we wish it success—for as used it is meaningless, or it is used to parry obligation, and to disown the eternal law which Christ came to magnify and make honorable. The sophistry of their reasoning is apparent: "Take the decalogue for your rule and you must take as your atonement Aaron's priesthood and sacrifices." This reminds us of Christian Sabbath-keepers in Austria and Russia who are not allowed to call themselves Christians because they keep the Sabbath, but are obliged to be denominated Jews!! For ourselves, we choose the decalogue—the ten words, written in the heart by the favor of the Lord Jesus. This is our preference, and to this end Sabbath-keepers live and preach, and will contend earnestly till the glorious appearing of their Lord.—*Sabbath Memorial.*

I LIKE controversy when it is thoroughly honest. I do admire to see two large and generous minds approach a subject at opposite quarters, and then to watch the new lights that flash over it in a thousand relations that were not obvious before. It lifts us out of the ruts of our sect and party, in whose treadmill we have been grinding all our lives, and mistaking it for the universe. But controversy with small minds is the smallest business that is done in this world. It slides inevitably into the word catching, and ends in personalities. The moment I saw a man consciously trying to put my language to a different use from what I had put it myself, I would stop short with him, and say, "I am glad to compare ideas with you, but I have no time for word-catching."

Will He Come?

SHALL we be prepared for that great and awful day that is about to dawn upon the world, when the Lord shall appear in the clouds of heaven surrounded with an innumerable throng of shining attendants? When the dead in Christ shall rise and the living wicked shall be slain by the brightness of his coming?

How anxious were the disciples to know and understand the time of the end. They came unto their Lord privately and asked, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3.

Should we be less anxious than they to know just where we are? Shall we believe that all things continue as they were from the beginning? Let us not endorse what men may say or teach, but take the word of God as the man of our counsel. Hear the answer given to their inquiry:—

"Take heed that no man deceive you." Matt. 24:4. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and given in marriage."

Noah used his greatest efforts to convince the people of their errors, but their whole study was to gratify their own passions and desires. The faithful Noah labored a hundred and twenty years to deliver his message to that people, that they might forsake their evil ways that in the infinite mercy of God he would have pity upon them and they might yet be able to avert their doom.

Noah entered the ark and they knew not until the flood came and swept them all away. "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Will the people of to-day take heed to the message that is being given at the present time?

Listen again to the words of our Lord: "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven."

The signs have been fulfilled, and the great day fast approaches. Can you, dear reader, be still careless and indifferent to the many warnings that ring in your ears? "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

And he still further says that the generation that shall see these things shall not pass till all be fulfilled. How important that we be found keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Let us take heed to ourselves lest at any time our hearts be overcharged with the cares of this life so that that day come upon us unawares; "for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." Luke 21:34, 35. C. N. STUTTLE.

Vernon, Mich.

Sleeping—Waiting.

"ASLEEP in Jesus." Oh how blessed, how sweet, how quiet, is the rest of God's saints. No sorrow, no pain, no fear. Nothing shall disturb the sleep of the righteous dead; and they shall rest until the resurrection morn. Then, at the sound of the trump of God they shall awake with songs of thanksgiving, and everlasting joy upon their heads. Then shall they realize the fulfillment of that glorious promise made so long ago by our blessed Saviour to his disciples, as he was about to leave them. While they were conversing with him upon his departure their hearts were grieved, they were sad, because their Lord, their friend and sympathizer was going to leave them; and they were filled with doubt and fear. But Jesus told them if he went away he would come again, and receive them to himself, that where he was they might be also. He told them to not let their hearts be troubled, neither to be afraid. He said in his Father's house are many mansions, and that he went to prepare a place for them, and when he had accomplished his work, when he had prepared the place, they might look for him, for he would come again. Oh, how blest were those disciples who stood in his divine presence, and listened to those blessed words of hope and cheer which fell from his gracious lips! Thus, while they were sad and despondent at the thoughts of his departure he cheered them with words of love and hope. He said he would not leave them comfortless; he would pray the Father, and he would send them another comforter to abide with them until he should return. And at parting, he blessed them with peace, his peace, the peace that passeth the understanding of man. How blessed to wait for

the coming of our Lord. If we sometimes feel impatient, let us remember that he has not left us comfortless, he blesses us with his Holy Spirit, he knows all the fears and sorrows which we feel because of his absence; he pities us just as he did the disciples when he was with them. He is preparing a place for us. He will soon, very soon, come to take us to himself. The night is almost past, the day is dawning. Watcher! be faithful; the Lord will soon appear to his waiting ones. He will never leave us, never forsake us; but will guide and keep and save us for his name and mercy's sake.

MRS. DELIA WALKER.

New London, Wis.

The Times in which We Live.

THEY are active times. Many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased. The political, moral, and social worlds are all theaters of intense activity. The very foundations are shaken and the landmarks removed. Old truth is superseded by new fancies, and one can hardly tell where the old paths are. Society is a seething caldron of conflicting theories and opinions.

They are wicked and perilous times. Crime, including murder, rape, robbery, and sins of every hue abound on every hand. We shudder as we open our daily paper. We are afraid to have our children read it. Fraud seems to be the rule, and honesty the exception.

The world spirit has largely crept into the church, and one might almost as well try to find the lines of longitude and latitude upon the surface of the earth, as in many cases to find the line of distinction between the church and the world.

They are sceptical times. Many deny the Lord who bought them. Professed Christian men and ministers deny the resurrection of the body, the second coming of Christ, the punishment of the impenitent; and so on, we might go through the entire round of doctrinal truth. Scarcely a doctrine of the New Testament but has been called in question in some professed Christian pulpit. It has been well said that if Tom Paine were now living, he might be Rev. Thomas Paine, and might give expression to his sentiments from a nominally Christian pulpit.

They are the last times, the last days of the last days, the beginning of the end. Every month, almost every day brings this truth out clearer. The indications all point in one way.

"Thy tokens we with joy confess,  
The war proclaims the time of peace,  
The earthquake speaks thy power;  
The famine all thy fulness brings,  
The plague presents thy healing wings,  
And nature's final hour.

"Whatever ills the world befall,  
A pledge of endless good we call  
A sign of Jesus near.  
His chariot will not long delay;  
We hear the rumbling wheels, and pray  
Triumphant Lord, appear."

So wrote Charles Wesley. We believe it all save, "Nature's final hour." God hath made the earth for the children of men. Nature will be purified, but not destroyed. Throughout eternal ages it shall show forth the power and glory of God. God's resurrected saints are not to float in cloudland, or wander like ghosts and phantoms in a region of dreams and myth. A place, a home, not a mere state, will be our eternal portion. O! that so many would stop this twaddle about heaven being only a state! Christ says a place, and I believe him.—J. S. GILBERT, in *Messiah's Herald*.

A Whole Family in Heaven.

THE following eloquent passage is from the pen of the Rev. Albert Barnes:

"A whole family in heaven! Who can picture or describe the everlasting joy? No one absent. No father, nor mother, nor son, nor daughter are away. In the world below they were united in faith, and love, and peace, and joy. In the morning of the resurrection they ascend together. Before the throne of God they bow together in united adoration. On the banks of the River of Life they walk hand in hand; and, as a family, have commenced a career of glory which shall be everlasting. There is hereafter to be no separation in that family. No one is to lie down on a bed of pain. In heaven never is that family to move along in the slow procession, clad in the habiliments of woe, to consign one of its members to the tomb. God grant in his mercy every family may be thus united."

INFIDELITY is ignorance, ignorance is darkness, knowledge is light. Knowledge by reading and thinking must be won. It cannot be explained from father to son.

## The Signs of the Times

"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, DEC. 5, 1878.

JAMES WHITE,  
J. N. ANDREWS,  
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RESIDENT EDITOR.

### Inefficiency of the Ministry.

WHEN we assert that the preaching of the present day, in all popular denominations, is ineffectual to stir up the consciences and reach the hearts of the people, we are accused of being censorious and fault-finding. Were we the only ones who saw the matter in the same light there might appear better reason for the accusation. Dr. Wayland, in his book on the "Ministry of the Gospel," speaks at length on the subject, and, in part, gives the reason.

He considers the method of theological training defective. He says:—

"Our theological students are collected together in large dormitories, where they associate with no others than themselves, and, for three years, read books and attend lectures and recitations, being, in many cases, even discouraged from preaching, unless at the close of their course. Their views of the ministry are formed not from the observation and experience of actual life, but from the conversation of young men with each other. They of necessity enter the ministry with no practical knowledge of its duties; and that they should be ignorant of the best methods of presenting the truth to living men, is only a thing to be expected. Were men in other departments of life to pursue a similar course, must it not lead to inevitable failure?"

"In the next place, the business of a minister is to address men in public on the most momentous of all subjects. Is it not desirable, then, that he should learn to address assemblies with the greatest possible effect? Ought he not to be a public speaker rather than a public reader? I do not, of course, mean to advise that men should be taught to speak when they have nothing to say. When I use the word *extempore*, I do not suppose that a man is to address an audience of intelligent people without any preparation; or, as some of our older ministers used to boast, that they did not know what text they would take until they entered the pulpit. I would have young men taught not merely the force of the Greek article, the meaning of the aorist, and the difference between the particles; I would have them familiar with the very ideas and spirit of the word of God, thoroughly imbued with the great doctrines of the gospel, as they are revealed by Christ and his apostles, and not as they are announced in systems of theology."

Again, he considers the popular style of writing and reading sermons to be erroneous, cramping the preacher, and that it imparts dullness rather than interest to the hearer. On this he says:—

"When we write in a quiet study, we may it is true, and if we believe what we preach we actually do, look up to the Holy Spirit for his guidance and direction. But still the *tendency* is apt to be rather to the intellectual than the moral. In writing we strive to present some doctrine clearly, to express it correctly and rhetorically, and if we have done this to be satisfied. We cannot rise to that feeling of earnestness which enables us to press home the truth which we have presented, directly and affectionately upon the conscience. We feel that we cannot *write* what we know we ought to *say*; at least this, I must confess, has been my own experience. During the preparation of the manuscript there is none of that sensibility of the presence of an audience that makes a preacher tremble in his knees, without which it is said that no one ever spoke well. The sermon is arranged according to the rules, and by this test the writer knows that it is a good one, that the audience *ought* to like it; and with this he is too prone to be content. He enters the pulpit with more or less of this assurance. He has no need to pray for the assistance of the Holy Spirit so far as the matter is concerned, for that is all prepared already. He may pray that it may be received into good hearts, but he has no wish that it be different from what it is. He has no fear of breaking down, if only his voice and eye-sight remain; for it is all plainly written out to a syllable before him. He reads it with such animation as may be natural to him, or with none at all, looking steadily at his manuscript, and rarely or never

catching the eyes of his audience. If he makes a gesture, it is with his eyes fixed on his paper; one hand on the line which he is in danger of losing, and the other sawing the air without any kind of significance. When he closes, he perhaps feels that he has not succeeded in arresting the attention of the people. He has labored hard, but the result has not corresponded with the pains that he has taken. Something has been the matter, but he does not know what it is."

"Where, but in the pulpit, would written addresses to a popular assembly be tolerated? Were a lawyer to read to a jury a finely written dissertation, bearing as much on the case before them as many of our sermons do on the salvation of the soul, would he not soon put the whole panel to sleep? Were the same mode of address adopted by senators and representatives, would not the member find himself surrounded by nothing but empty benches?"

And he appeals to his brethren in the ministry in the following manner. The point is easy to be seen:—

"But we do not apply the same rule to others which we assume for ourselves. We declare it is impossible for us to address men from the pulpit on the subject of religion, without writing out all we have to say. We leave the church, and descend to the lecture-room to attend a conference meeting. We expect our private members to address the audience on the very same subjects, but we never expect them to use a manuscript. What should we say, if, when we called upon one of our brethren to speak, he should excuse himself on the ground that he had not anything written? What sort of a conference meeting would we have, if nothing were spoken which had not been written out, and then read after the manner of the pulpit? I fancy that the minister and the readers would very soon constitute the entire audience. Why should we expect our brethren, engaged in the ordinary pursuits of life, to use a manner of addressing an audience which we declare it impossible for us to acquire after eight or ten years of study devoted to preparation for this very duty?"

We say that he presents the reason *in part*. The above extracts are sufficient to show that our statement is true, and that the truth has received the attention of some of the wisest and best in the ministry. But there is another reason outweighing all these.

Truth is progressive in its development. Bible truth forms no exception to the statement. There are truths in the Bible which ever remain the same, and their relation is much the same to all men of all ages. There are other truths which differ from these in being applicable to a certain generation or in a certain age. In the words of the apostle Peter, there is a "present truth." And every age has had its present truth—a truth made especially applicable by the events and circumstances of the age. Such were the proclamations of Noah, and the prophets; of the apostles; of Luther, and all the reformers.

Our own age is not an exception in this respect. We live in one of the most eventful ages in the history of the human race. Look whichever way we will, and events of startling significance present themselves to our view. From one end of the earth to the other, the nations are in a state of anxiety and disquietude. With the blessings of abundance in most lands, and such means of transportation as were never before known, people are starving to death, even by millions. The Bible—the gospel of peace—is printed in every tongue and carried to every land, as if the merciful God would leave the race without any excuse; yet crime increases; man is everywhere a foe to his neighbor, and distrust and dishonesty are almost all-prevailing. With the accumulated light of past centuries resting on the medical profession, pestilence stalks abroad, and none to stay it.

Many important prophecies have been fulfilled, and these show that others, of the utmost importance, are about to be fulfilled. The symbols of the books of Daniel and the Revelation clearly prove that we are in the closing period of this world's history. The subject of the second coming of the Lord Jesus to this earth is receiving the attention of many of the best minds and the most devoted hearts in the world. The signs given by the Saviour which precede his second coming have been fulfilled, and even now "men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Scoffers ask, in derision, for the promise of his coming (2 Peter 3:3), and the worldly-minded servant

says, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Matt. 24:45-51.

These things as having any relation to the fulfillment of prophecy and to Christian duty, are entirely ignored by the ministry of our day. This is generally true; the exceptions are only exceptions. Instead of *present truth* being presented, dry essays are read, touching upon anything but the soul-stirring truths which God's word and providence have developed for the present time.

"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." The Spirit of God always accompanies his "present truth" when it is preached in faithfulness. And this alone gives efficiency to the work of the ministry. Worldly methods, fashionable styles, worldly themes, and a world-loving church; in these there is no power to attract or to convert.

Beloved reader, we make our appeal to you. As you love eternal life, seek to know these things, and be "established in the present truth." 2 Peter 1:12. God has not forsaken his own work; but man has gone far from God. By the truth we may be sanctified and saved, "in the day of the Lord Jesus."

### A Most Singular View.

A WRITER in the *Herald and Presbyterian*, the Presbyterian paper of Cincinnati, Ohio, giving a description of the Seventh-day Adventists of Battle Creek, Mich., closes up his article with the following paragraph:—

"Leaving out the question of what constitutes the true Sabbath, the utter annihilation of the wicked, and saying nothing about "immersion," they are a sect that all Christians would do well to pattern after in many respects. What the church needs to-day is a *positive* Christianity. It needs—and the world demands of it—an *outward* exemplification of that spirit we claim to possess *inwardly*—a showing forth, by our daily walk and conversation, by our honesty in business affairs, that we are 'Israelites indeed' and in truth, 'in whom there is no guile.' Are there not many more *professors* than *possessors*?"

He seems to think we would be a commendably peculiar people if we would discard our peculiarities! He is not alone in this. Many have expressed themselves in the same manner; they will be ready to accept the effect whenever we will put away the cause which produces it. Individuals have often said to us that they loved our preaching; they admired our zeal in trying to spread the truth; they were convinced that the preaching of the age is not what it should be to convert the heart and to reform the life; and that our success would be assured if we would drop the seventh-day Sabbath, the near coming of Christ, the destruction of sinners, and such like objectionable doctrines. What a short-sighted view. As well might his neighbors have said to Samson, "We admire your display of courage and strength; but we object to your fashion of wearing your hair so long. If you will consent to be shorn, we will be glad to make an alliance with you, knowing that your strength may be of service to us in our battles." Samson gave an answer to such reasoning. "If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man." Judges 16:17.

So as Seventh-day Adventists we say to our critics: Our strength lies in the things to which you object. Our love for the Sabbath is indispensable to proper regard for the authority of God and his law. Our belief in the advent near urges us on to diligence in warning our fellow men, and urging them to accept the Saviour before he ceases to plead for them and comes to take vengeance on his foes. Our belief in the mortality of man guards us against that greatest of all of Satan's deceptions, modern spiritualism. And not the least in the list, our belief in spiritual gifts, to which the strongest objection is urged, insures unity in our faith and efforts, and the correct application of the word of God to our hearts and lives. Remove these and you take away our strength. These are the cause of all the effects which you commend. Our strength is not in ourselves, but in the "present truth" which God has graciously given us for the last days.

A correct faith lies at the foundation of a correct life. If the tree is good, the fruit will be good. We are very far removed from antinomianism. We do not believe that people are saved by faith without works; but we believe in "the obedience of faith." Rom. 16:26; that by adding to our faith the Christian graces we shall have an entrance ministered to us into the kingdom of Christ. 2 Peter 1:1-11.

### "Having Eyes, They See Not."

THE Prophetic Conference in New York has called out sermons on the subject of Christ's coming, from very many of the ministers of the various cities. This doctrine of Christ's second advent fares no better among the doctors than he fared in person among the doctors at his first advent. A report from Chicago shows the following result.

Dr. Everts believes that the successful proclamation of the gospel constitutes the second coming of Christ.

Dr. Thomas does not believe at all in a literal or personal coming.

Mr. Parkhurst believes in the second coming, but only after the gospel has been universally accepted.

Mr. Peeke speaks hard things of the doctrine and those who believe in it.

Dr. Owen believes the book of Daniel refers to the Jewish people and has no reference to the last days or the coming of Christ. Thinks the whole subject of the time is purposely left in obscurity; but he shall know about it when it is necessary. (Of course without the aid of God's word!)

Dr. Crafts is inclined toward the doctrine of the near, personal, and pre-millennial coming of Christ.

Dr. Perrin believes in the personal second coming of Christ, but the gospel is first to be given to the world, the Jews are to be converted, and antichrist will appear. And, his coming cannot now be near, as a sect must first arise who deny the coming of the Lord. This, he says, has not yet been.

On this we would recommend Dr. Perrin to walk around and take a look at some of his neighboring D. D.'s and their congregations. The Universalists as "a sect" deny the second coming of the Lord; and some of the most highly esteemed ministers in his own city utterly deny it, and so it is all over the land. No scripture is more clearly fulfilled than that which speaks of last-day scoffers who deny "the promise of his coming." We fear another scripture will be fulfilled in the case of these wise men. That day will come upon them unawares. These things seem to be wonderfully hid from "the wise and prudent" as this world measures wisdom. They who come trustingly to the word of promise, as little children, will not be in darkness that that day shall overtake them as a thief. 1 Thess. 5:1-4.

### Catholic Increase.

THE New York *Tablet*, a Catholic paper, November 23, speaking of the Catholic church in the United States, says:—

"In the year 1850—twenty-eight years ago—there were in the entire United States only six Catholic archbishops—one of whom was an American, three of Irish birth, and two of French origin—and twenty-seven bishops. There were 1,800 priests, 1,073 churches, 29 ecclesiastical institutions, 17 colleges, and 91 female academies. There are now 11 archbishops, 5,548 churches, 5,634 priests, 21 theological seminaries, with 1,121 ecclesiastical students, 74 colleges, and 519 academies. Here is a growth in twenty-eight years of 44 prelates, 3,834 priests, 3,475 churches, and 477 seminaries, academies, and colleges. The Catholic population was estimated in 1850 to number 3,000,000 souls; to-day it is known to be not less than 6,408,000, and by some authorities it is believed to exceed that figure by one-half."

It must not be supposed, however, that this increase is by growth in this country. A large proportion of the priests are foreigners, Irish and Italian mostly. But their influence is as great as that of American priests could be—perhaps greater.

They have 74 colleges, 21 theological seminaries, and 519 academies and select schools, besides 2,180 schools of lower grade. Their academies are principally for females, of which the *Tablet* says, "many of the pupils are the daughters of Protestant parents." And many Protestant parents have lived to deeply regret that they ever sent their daughters to them. The largest of these academies is in San Francisco.

Many other interesting statistics are given in this article, all going to show that the power of the Roman hierarchy is fast increasing in the United States. They are as a unit in politics, and their influence in elections is courted by some and felt by all.

A PIOUS and humble inquiry after truth is commendable, which is always ready to be taught, and studies to walk in the sound doctrines of the word of God.



### Natural Immortality.

By natural immortality is meant the doctrine that man is immortal by nature. This theory asserts that God gave to the first man a deathless nature, and that all who are descended from him inherit that nature. Of course this is not asserted respecting the bodies of men, but it is asserted of their souls. Every human being is, by this theory, held to be the possessor of immortality. Not only is it held that every wicked man in gospel lands possesses a deathless nature, but also that every individual of all the countless multitudes of heathen is an immortal being. Several important consequences follow from this doctrine:—

First, that when each human being dies, the soul, or real man, remains alive. If the person dies in Christ, this immortal soul goes into the presence of God to dwell in heaven until the resurrection. If he dies in sin, his soul goes into hell, into the torments of the damned, there to continue till the resurrection of the unjust.

Secondly, that when the day of judgment arrives, these souls are summoned from heaven and from hell to stand at the bar of the Judge for the decision of their cases.

Thirdly, that both the righteous and the wicked, being re-united to their bodies, the righteous are returned to the joys of the blessed, and the wicked to the torments of the damned.

Fourthly, that the wicked, possessing immortal, or deathless natures, shall be incapable of dying, or perishing, or being consumed, or devoured in the fire, and shall live therein to all eternity.

These things are worthy of careful thought. Here we have all men rewarded or punished before they are judged. Then we have all summoned to the judgment after having been already assigned to their respective portions in heaven or hell, ages before this, or at whatever time the individual died. And, finally, all the wicked shall live eternally in hell fire.

Now these conclusions necessarily follow if men are immortal by nature. For there is such a thing as death in the world, and there is a day of judgment, and a place into which the wicked will be cast after the judgment. These are great facts, but if men are immortal by nature, they involve these most serious difficulties.

It is true that natural immortality is supposed to be in itself a very precious and desirable doctrine. But many who firmly hold it have no definite idea of what it involves. The innumerable multitude who die out of Christ go direct at death into hell fire, and when the judgment has set upon their cases, they are turned into it again to live therein eternally. What makes this a most agonizing reflection to every thoughtful mind is, not merely that some of our friends are already in the place of the damned, but that millions of heathen who have had at best only the dim light of nature, must live eternally with the lost, and so also must all those children who have died in sin after barely crossing the line of accountability.

Now do not these things indicate something wrong in this theory? Is immortality so common a thing that all men have it by virtue of their existence? Must sin continue to exist as long as God shall sit upon his throne? Shall countless millions suffer either mental or physical anguish, or both, to all eternity, who, nevertheless, have had barely light enough to know, to some extent, the difference between right and wrong? Is it so light a thing in God's sight to put men into the place of the damned that he casts them in thither without waiting for the session of the judgment? And is there afterwards some doubt in his mind as to the propriety of this action which causes him to bring them forth from thence to judgment? What questions can be raised at that tribunal that have not been settled by the direction of the Judge before men come to it, if men enter heaven or perdition when they die?

Certainly these are serious questions, and they are asked in no uncandid spirit. Has God in creating man fixed the matter by irrevocable decree that every individual of the race shall live for endless ages? Is there no condition affixed to the privilege of living in the universe of God? Has he tied his own hands that he cannot even cause those to cease to exist who form fixed characters for evil? And is there nothing short of endless pain for every individual of our race who is not actually worthy of a place in the holy city?

It will not be a sufficient answer to this question to say that the suffering of such will be comparatively light, for endless pain, even where that pain may be such as human forti-

tude can endure, is not light if it be known to the sufferer that it shall never cease. What but despair can fill such a breast? And who ever found despair a light thing?

Nor will it satisfy the inquirer to be assured that persons of comparatively small degrees of guilt shall be in some way admitted to the holy city. The Bible never speaks thus. God proposes to take into his presence only those who possess moral worth. If this be wanting, those who are found thus can never pass through the gates of the city of God. This very idea that all men must live forever has caused many schemes to be originated that should either take all men into heaven at death, or that should do it ultimately, or that should take in nearly all, or, failing in this, that should make the best place in hell and the poorest place in heaven only one degree apart in excellence.

Now is it not lawful to inquire whether this doctrine of inherent or natural immortality is really found in the Scriptures? It involves difficulties in the very nature of things which are certainly serious enough, and which call us to thoughtful consideration. It is no subject, however, for angry disputation. The matters which are connected with this inquiry are of the most serious character, and should never be treated except in the most candid and devout spirit.

We must respect the conscientious feelings and prepossessions of those who differ with us on this subject. Indeed, many consider natural immortality one of the most precious truths of the gospel. In their estimation, the man who questions it is infidel at heart. They cannot see how any one can do this unless he denies future existence. And some even argue from it that those who do not believe man now immortal must actually, if consistent, deny the existence of God.

Such prejudices, however, are not to be despised nor to be treated with lightness. Let us consider others as we would be considered in like circumstances. We think we have something better than the doctrine that men are immortal by nature. Let us first of all show that this more excellent doctrine has made us the better for having received it into our hearts. Let us show that we are not bigots, and that we have not a bitter spirit towards those who do not agree with our doctrine. If others think that in denying natural immortality we deny the doctrine of accountability to God, and that the fear of God is not before our eyes, let our course of conduct show that they are in these things wholly mistaken.

We shall inquire concerning the true source of immortality, whether derived from Adam the first, by natural descent, or given by Adam the second, at the judgment, to those who are by him counted worthy to receive it. We ask the candid attention of those who think differently from ourselves. We shall never give you just occasion to complain of what we say respecting the subject in dispute. If we do not show that immortality, as the gift of God through Christ, is more scriptural than is the doctrine that it is inherited from the first man, do not accept the views we offer. But if we do show that both Scripture and reason teach that immortality is to be given only to the just, and this too when their trial is finished, we ask you not to despise what we say, and not to count us enemies of Christ.

J. N. A.

### Evidences of Truth.

As prophecies are being fulfilled light is increasing, as foretold, and consequently there is progress in the cause and work of God. But progress in truth is not made by overturning past positions, but by adding truth to truth. In the divine plan, one event follows another in the prescribed order, and the work of God moves forward, step by step, as light advances; so that those who are in the light, and hold a position in present truth, can look back upon the steps that have led them to their present position, and see a glorious path behind them made luminous with the light of prophecy fulfilled. "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." But while it shines more and more as we advance, it shines no less on the past. The light of the present does not make the past darkness.

But there are those who profess to be walking in the increasing light, who leave a dark trail behind them. With them, the light of to-day extinguishes the light of yesterday. The past is repudiated as darkness and error. They were all wrong yesterday, but to-day they are all right. Their present position destroys every position they have occupied in the past. Such are those who set times for the advent. Their work resembles the work of men that would

think to build a bridge by taking up the plank behind them and laying it before, or, rather, by taking up the plank they stand on, and standing on nothing while they lay it in advance.

If we are very near the second advent, it is time for the advent messages of Rev. 14 to be proclaimed; and if it is time they should be proclaimed, they are being proclaimed; for, in the providence of God, they cannot fail of their fulfillment at the proper time. Therefore, those who can truly claim to be Adventists, having a position in present truth, can point out their position in the fulfillment of these messages. The experience and work of the true people of God were here laid down in prophecy 1800 years ago; so that there is no need of a mistake.

The evidences from the prophecies, and their fulfillment, show conclusively that we are in the last days, and, consequently, that the advent is at hand. The three messages have been announced in their order; therefore, all that is necessary in order to know that the last message of probation is being fulfilled, is to believe the word and providence of God. And the steady progress of the work from its small beginning, and its stability, mark it as the work of God. It commends itself to the humble and discerning mind, as bearing the impress of the God of truth, who knows the end from the beginning. The humble seekers after truth will, ere long see this truth. It does not require a superior order of intellect to apprehend the truth and the evidences on which it is based. Bible truth and salvation are for the common people. The ordinary mind, disposed to believe, can see the evidences, so as to believe for itself, and so obtains that salvation that comes by faith; while the great and the learned are liable to overlook the evidences and die in unbelief. The believer and the obedient shall be saved.

R. F. COTTBELL.

### "Can Ye not Discern the Signs of the Times?"

THIS question was put to the Jews by the Saviour with reference to the first advent, yet it contains principles which are applicable in the times in which we live. In many respects, the first and second advents are parallel events, and as there was danger of overlooking the signs of Christ's first coming, so there is now danger of overlooking the signs of his second coming.

One reason of this danger is, that events lose their force upon the mind by their frequent occurrence. At the commencement of our late war, the American people were more shocked at the news of ten falling in battle, than they were afterward to learn that one thousand soldiers had been killed in an engagement. This should not be the case. Each event of this nature should tend to deepen the first impression, and arouse the soul. So it should be in regard to the increasing signs of Christ's second coming. But, alas! this is not the case. As it was in the days immediately preceding the deluge, so it is now. The nearer the world are to God's awful judgments, the less are they moved by them. The nearer they are to the coming of the Lord, the less inclined are they to believe that he is near. This is owing to the fact that when light shines upon impending events, and upon the duty of men with reference to them, they harden their hearts by turning from the light. Thus the light that is in them becomes darkness; and how great is that darkness! In this condition, Satan controls the mind, and men act as though bereft of reason in overlooking the riches and glories of the immortal kingdom, and confining their interests and pursuits to the things of time and sense.

But the danger in this direction is by no means confined to the world at large. The church are also in great danger here. Hence, the caution of the Saviour to take heed and not be overcharged with eating and drinking, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon us unawares. Luke 21:34. The greater the light that people reject, the greater the darkness that follows. The higher the point from which one falls, the greater the injury that is experienced.

Great is our light as Seventh-day Adventists. We have all the signs of the times that God has given to the world, and we have, besides these, the most forcible and valuable evidences of the end near, in blest experience in living out the truth, and in the glorious progress of the cause. How encouraging and interesting it is to reflect on the advance steps that God's people have taken in the establishment and use of mighty agencies to advance the last message of mercy within the last few years! Surely, this work has moved like the work of God. Those who

have opposed it have had leanness, darkness, and death, while those who have stood by it have prospered. And no features are better calculated to bring courage and joy to every true friend of the cause, than the present efforts put forward in the missionary work. God is inviting us, through this enterprise, to work for him, and to work fast, to invest our talents of means, and our talents of influence, that the message may soon go to every civilized nation, and to missionary stations in heathen lands, and stir the world as no other message has done. Truly, a great and glorious work is before us. Our inmost souls should vibrate with gratitude, joy, love, and holy zeal, that we are connected with it.

Shall we, as Seventh-day Adventists, discern the signs of the times in the advance steps that God calls upon us to take? And, discerning, shall we act? Shall we cultivate a spirit of sacrifice? Will those who are called to be messengers of the cross of Christ respond to the call by saying, Here am I? Affect my heart with a sense of the greatness and sacredness of the work. Touch my lips with the living coals from thine altar, and send me.

Will those who are called upon to help with their means also respond to God's call to them? or will they excuse themselves, to lay up treasures upon earth to be consumed in the burning day? All can help more or less in this direction. But there is great danger of being blinded through selfishness and the deceitfulness of riches. God has claims upon our property. How wicked to appropriate God's means to our own selfish purposes. Shall a man rob God? Many have had the use of God's property for years. Shall they now return it to him with usury? or shall they study to put it where it will neither benefit them, nor the cause, and bring upon them a fearful debt in the end?

May we all discern the signs of the times and fulfill the obligations under which they bring us.

D. T. BOURDEAU.

### Christiana, Norway.

ANOTHER week has passed. I have been busy writing and preparing for meetings. I have earnestly sought the Lord for help and strength, and have realized in some degree the presence of his Spirit. I have never commenced a course of meetings with greater interest, and desire that it may prove a success through the mighty help of God.

Last night we held our first meeting. Probably about three hundred were present. They filled the room for meeting and our private rooms, as well as the entrance and stairs. A large crowd went away because they could not get into the house. The word spoken made a solemn impression on many hearts. Over one hundred small tracts were distributed, and I sold tracts for Kr. 5.10 (\$1.36). A brother who is a good hand at canvassing would be a great help to us in this city. May the Lord direct for his own glory.

October 28.

JOHN G. MATTESON.

### Labors in Missouri.

I MET with the friends at Sedalia, Sabbath, November, 16. Spoke to them twice. We had a most excellent social meeting after preaching, in which nearly all took part, many of them for the first time. The Spirit of God was present, and hearts were melted in tenderness. Surely God is good to give us an occasional oasis in this desert of toil and sorrow. There are good souls in Sedalia, who give promise of future usefulness.

I spoke three times in Green Ridge, where Brother Wood has recently given a course of lectures. We had a full house Sunday night, and the best of attention was paid. We hope for a little church, at least, in this place; and others we trust will come in to swell their numbers.

GEO. I. BUTLER.

WHAT roundabout ways people often take to see the truth. They don't look it square in the face, but try to climb up some other way. They dress it in all sorts of garbs to disguise it, and are themselves befooled. The simplicity of the New Testament has been made difficult and hard to understand by just such measures. In trying to explain, it has been explained away. In talking too liberally, the obvious meaning has been ignored; and in the multitude of words meant to bring the meaning more clearly to us, wisdom has been darkened and the truth muddled.

MANY words do not satisfy the soul; but a good life gives ease to the mind; and a pure conscience affords a great confidence in God.

**Vigilant Missionary Societies—Why Needed.**

THE question is frequently asked, "Why do we need a vigilant missionary society where there is a church tract society organized?" We answer: First, It is not usually practicable for the officers and leading members of our church societies, who are mostly brethren, to devote the attention and labor required to carry out our present plan of distributing reading matter, especially the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and no others feel any special responsibility in the matter, unless it is made incumbent upon them. Second, It opens to the sisters a field of labor for which many of them are well qualified, independent of the general management of the tract society. Third, It gives system and order to this part of the work, which is indispensable if anything is really accomplished.

**OLD METHOD OBJECTIONABLE.**

The old plan of gathering up names and having periodicals sent to individuals directly from the Office, without first learning whether those to whom they were sent would be interested or not, has serious objections. 1. There is a law forbidding publishers sending out printed matter at publishers' rates of postage to any who are not regular subscribers. 2. Many to whom the papers were sent were not interested, and never would become so; and a year's subscription was lost. 3. Two or three copies were sometimes sent to the same individual by different tract workers. 4. The individual simply paid his money, and had no further care or responsibility in the matter, and no burden of labor.

**THE PRESENT PLAN.**

By the present plan, the society or an individual subscribes for a club of from four to four hundred copies of our paper, and remails them to such individuals as he thinks would be willing to read. Three numbers are sent to one address, and then a letter is written. If the answer indicates that the person is interested, more papers or tracts are sent. But if no response is made, the name is dropped, and others tried.

This plan has advantages over the old method in the following particulars: 1. It educates people to labor for others. 2. It lays upon each person a weekly responsibility which cannot be properly discharged without thought, planning, and much prayer. 3. It calls into exercise talent which would otherwise be useless to the cause of God. 4. The systematic workings of a vigilant missionary society prevent any of the copies of the SIGNS being left over in families, because they cannot find interested readers. 5. By this method, at least ten families will be visited by the SIGNS, where, by the old method, only one family would receive it. 6. It brings into the church a good moral atmosphere.

**WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP?**

The first questions that arise are, How many copies of the SIGNS can this church take? and how can we pay for them?

A paper is drawn up, as follows: "We, the undersigned, do hereby agree to pay monthly the sum set opposite our names, for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to be sent to this church at club rates for one year, these papers to be used in the tract and missionary work. The amount pledged will show how many copies of the SIGNS can be taken by the church. One dollar a month will pay for eight copies.

**VIGILANT COMMITTEE.**

Where the members are few and so scattered that a regular attendance of five or six cannot be secured every week at some appointed time and place, a vigilant committee of one, two, or three is appointed to attend to the distribution of these papers. It is the duty of this committee to obtain a sufficient number of addresses, so that each copy can be used weekly. In such cases the SIGNS should be sent to one of the members of the committee, who should furnish copies to those who have pledged, if they are so situated as to use them.

**THE VIGILANT SOCIETY.**

The vigilant missionary society is an arrangement entered into by members of the church, usually sisters in small churches, though all are invited to join. These persons meet weekly, and take the responsibility of seeing that all the copies of the SIGNS not otherwise appropriated are used weekly for the purposes designed. This organization can be effected in churches where six or more sisters can meet weekly at some stated time, to confer together and transact such business as pertains to their work.

**ORGANIZATION.**

In organizing a vigilant missionary society, at least two officers are necessary, a president, and a secretary who shall act as treasurer. A vice-president, assistant secretaries, and corresponding agents may be added

when circumstances render these officers necessary.

For the benefit of those who are able to effect an organization, we present the following by-laws, which in substance are adopted by regularly organized vigilant societies east and west.

**BY-LAWS.**

**ARTICLE I.** This society shall be called the S. D. A. Vigilant Missionary Society of the church.

**ART. II.** The object of this society shall be to secure the world-wide circulation of our periodicals and other publications, and to awaken and increase an interest in pure and undefiled religion wherever, and in whatever manner, practicable.

**ART. III.** The officers of this society shall consist of a president, and a secretary who shall act as treasurer. These shall be elected semi annually. Corresponding agents may be appointed as the work demands.

**ART. IV.** Any one who keeps the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus may become a member by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting, and by the payment of fifty cents.

**ART. V.** The duties of the president and secretary shall be the same as are common to such officers. The duties of the corresponding agents shall be to circulate tracts and periodicals; also to render aid by securing names and addresses of those who they think would be benefited by receiving reading matter or letters from the society.

**ART. VI.** These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting.

**ORDER OF MEETINGS.**

The meetings of the society are opened with singing and prayer, followed by the reading of the report of the preceding meeting; then any business pertaining to the interests of the society is in order. Addresses of individuals to whom the SIGNS may be sent can be handed in, cases of need can be brought up, those not taking our periodicals may be looked after, and letters which have been received during the previous week may be read. Then the SIGNS should be distributed among the members present, and the meeting closed with a season of prayer for special cases which may have come before the society.

When the name of any person is reported to the society, according to Art. V., the president should appoint a member to furnish reading matter to, and correspond with such person. And it is expected of all members who may be designated to write or visit, that they should first seek the blessing of God upon the effort. All members of the society are expected to state any convictions that they may have concerning writing to, or visiting any particular individual. But nothing in the by-laws shall prevent any visits being made where the way may open, though appointments have not been made. It is also expected that all absent members, wherever they may be, will unite with the society in seeking the special blessing of God upon it and its efforts at the stated hour of meeting.

During the week, the SIGNS distributed among the members of the society are to be sent out. After sending a paper for three successive weeks to the same individual, a letter should be written. If no response is made, cease sending the paper, and try others. Some might be interested by continuing the paper, but the probabilities are that they would not be; and as the world is full of people who have not heard the truth, it is better to give others an opportunity to investigate than to continue to send papers to those who make no response.

**SCATTERED BRETHREN.**

Brethren and sisters living alone, or in company with others, but who are so situated that they can do nothing with the SIGNS themselves, should link their interests with some society that is in active operation. They should not feel that they can do nothing simply because they live alone. Many living alone can use five or more copies of the SIGNS themselves. Some sisters individually use fifty copies.

**WORK FOR THE SOCIETY OR COMMITTEE.**

The work of these societies or committees, should be: 1. To find interested readers for the SIGNS and other periodicals, by correspondence and otherwise. 2. To correspond with all who they may have reason to believe will be benefitted thereby, especially lonely Sabbath keepers. 3. To visit, converse, and pray with such families as we might suppose our Saviour would visit were he upon earth. 4. To become acquainted with each family in the church, and see that our periodicals are taken by them. 5. To see that those who are sick or destitute in the church where they belong, do not suffer for want of attention; and if not able to give relief themselves,

to call the attention of others to the matter. In short, they should be vigilant committees indeed, to watch the inroads of Satan and make war upon him by getting the truth into his ranks by every possible means which is lawful in the sight of heaven.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.**

The following questions are frequently asked:—

1. "How can addresses be obtained?"

**Ans.** From friends; from periodicals of all kinds; from corresponding agents. A successful method with some has been to correspond with individuals, stating that they were interested in a missionary work, and wished to send out religious reading matter, and then asking these persons to send them names and addresses. Some have written to post-masters for names. Addresses may be secured by every lawful means.

2. "Should the brethren join the vigilant society?"

**Ans.** All are invited to join.

3. "Does money paid to the vigilant society constitute one a member of the tract society?"

**Ans.** It does not.

4. "Is it necessary for every member of the vigilant missionary society to join the tract society?"

**Ans.** They should do so.

5. "Must members of the vigilant society individually report to the tract society, if they are members of that society?"

**Ans.** Yes; just the same as though there was no vigilant society. Then the vigilant society report will show what proportion of the work reported by the district secretary was done by members of the vigilant society.

6. "Should the secretary be required to wrap all the papers, write all the letters, and perform all the general labor of the society?"

**Ans.** No; this work should be divided among the members present at the meetings of the society.

7. "How shall the postage be paid?"

**Ans.** Each individual should pay on the papers which he sends out, or it may be paid by donations.

S. N. HASKELL,  
President General T. and M. Society.

**Elevate the Standard.**

The standard of Christian character and consecration which are in the minds of professed followers of Christ, is altogether too low; and unless the aim can be directed to higher attainments, it is in vain to hope for a preparation for translation at the coming of Christ. Iniquity abounds; it is so common; the standard of piety is so low, that to purify a people and prepare them to stand in the hour of temptation which is coming to try them, is truly a great work. In the time of the end, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried." It is a perfect purification that will prepare them to bear the trial. They must stand blameless at the close of the intercessions of Jesus, our High Priest, or they cannot stand with him thus on Mount Zion in the city of the living God.

This work can and will be done for the waiting church; but it cannot for those who aim no higher than the standard in the minds of professors generally. It must be seen that it is our "reasonable service" to sacrifice our all, our dearest idols, for His sake who "gave himself for us." The Spirit of Christ will lead to self-sacrifice for the good of others, and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." To renounce one's self and take up the cross and follow Christ, is a greater work than the mass of professed Christians are aware of. To get the mind elevated from the low grounds of sin, and from the selfish desire of being saved by Christ by a mere profession of faith in him, or a little less than that, without following him in his example of self-sacrifice and labor of love, is the great work that is needed, and which is most difficult to be done.

In consequence of prevailing apostasy and loose moral sense, the standard of Christian character is trailing in the dust. Who will take hold to elevate it? Who will go up into the gaps, that the house of Israel may stand in the battle in the day of the Lord? Who is ready to meet the fiercest assaults of the enemy, by advancing and taking position in the gap?

Let those who can see the need of a higher standard take hold of the work. Let them begin at home, and build against their own house. Until men can see that there is a higher standard, no progress will be made in coming up to it. Let Israel arise. Let them come up to the help of the Lord. We have the light, and we are responsible for it. Let us advance at the risk of all. It is the courageous that will be victorious.

R. F. COTTRELL.

**THE HOME CIRCLE.**

**Three School Girls.**

THREE schoolgirls over their lessons bent,  
All still, by the evening light;  
Their lips in a busy murmur went,  
For the task must be done to-night;  
"To-morrow," they said, "we shall sore repent,  
If all is not learned aright."  
"Now what," said Maud, "is the worst you fear  
If the lesson at last should fail?"  
And May looked up with a grimace queer—  
"Oh, I know that the rest would rail,  
That the girls would laugh and the boys would sneer—  
At the very thought I quail."  
"And what," said Grace, "is your thought of dread?"  
And Maud said, "Oh, that frown!  
If I left to my teacher a word unsaid,  
And brought his censure down,  
More his displeasure would bow my head,  
Than the sneers of all the town."  
"Then what," cried May, "would you grieve for most?"  
"And," said Grace, "My heart would burn  
That I had forgotten at such dear cost  
The truth that we all must learn;  
I should grieve," she said, "for the lesson lost,  
And the day that would ne'er return."

**The Immolation.**

"Do NOT run, my daughter, but walk with dignity, for you know ladies never skip and jump," were the words of one of fashion's votaries, as she was tripping on her way to a fashionable millinery establishment, in company with her little daughter. Bessie was a sprightly, active child, too much so for the precise mother. The effect of this and similar injunctions was, as we shall see, to ruin her health and fit her for an untimely grave.

Listen! she is now eight years of age. There are roses on her cheek—the flush of health blooms there. But let us follow them to the fashionable shop, to select a hat for the daughter.

"Ah! here is one which will become your young lady well," said the milliner, as she placed one upon the young girl's head.

"Does she not look beautiful?" said the doting mother, as she surveyed her daughter with an evident air of pleasure; "but what is the price of this beauty of a bonnet?"  
"Only ten dollars, ma'am."

The "love of a hat" was purchased, and the shoppers proceeded on their way.

Next they entered a shoe store, where a pair of Parisian slippers were purchased. What though the souls were not thicker than paper, and the wearer must suffer with damp feet as soon as they touch the ground, they were the real French article, and this was a rare purchase!

The mother and daughter returned home. A dress-maker was in attendance, ready to compress the lungs, and complete the slow murder which was already commenced. This was done by the aid of whalebones and stays, and all to give the poor girl a fine figure. When other children were "skipping 'neath sunny skies," breathing heaven's pure air, Bessie was not permitted to take such healthful exercise.

The fashionable mansion is brilliantly lighted, for there is to be a splendid party, and Bessie Bentley is to make her first public *entree* in the fashionable world. The mother sought the dressing-room of the daughter, in order that no part of the young girl's toilet might be left incomplete.

"What, Bessie not ready yet; the guests are all assembled!" said the mother, as she entered the room where her young, hopeful daughter had thrown herself upon a sofa, to gather strength for the coming night of revelry and mirth.

"Emma could not clasp my dress, so I have laid it aside; and appear in one of my old ones I will not."

"Try it again, and I will assist you," said Mrs. B.

After many long moments in which the breath of her daughter was suspended, the dress was clasped, and by the mother pronounced a *perfect fit*.

"But, Bessie, how pale you look! We must remedy that."

The fresh rouge was applied to the pallid cheeks, and they once more assumed a healthy glow. And then, although the thermometer was at zero, there was no covering for the arms and neck.

Bessie had danced until she had become so flushed and heated that she sought the cold, damp, night air, regardless of the injury to health and constitution, which would be the result of this careless exposure. Soon the company were found around the supper table, which was spread with the most delicate and costly viands. There, at that late hour, they ate, and they drank. Just before the morn-



ing light, the gay party separated. With an aching head, Bessie sought her pillow. Visions of fancy floated before her mind, and she could not sleep. At a late hour in the day she rose and entered the breakfast room. The rouge was not on her cheeks now, and they were deadly pale. . . . Two months from that night, Bessie Bentley was a cold corpse. She was murdered. The murderer was her own mother! But, ah, this was not all! The mind, too, had been poisoned! and the fatal draught was administered by the same mother who had destroyed the mortal life. She had taught her young daughter to believe that the present was all she lived for. She had told her not to think of death. It would be many years before the grim monster would visit her, and she must live while she lived, for the present.

Her purpose was accomplished. But, ah! how bitterly did the mother regret the course she had pursued, when in the deep agony of dissolving nature, her daughter groaned and cried, "I have no hope of heaven!" The lone mother shed many bitter tears; for, strange to say, she loved her daughter. The coffin was lowered into the grave, and I thought, as I beheld each heaving gush of agony, as it burst from her very soul, does that blind and infatuated parent realize that she has murdered her idolized child! Will not the mothers of our land be responsible for many lives which are daily being sacrificed on fashion's altar?

The foregoing is but a solitary case. There are many others. Mother! daughter! be admonished in time, lest a similar fate and similar reflections await thee.—*Advocate and Guardian.*

## GOOD HEALTH.

### Dyspepsia.

#### BATH—CONCLUDED.

5. Be careful to thoroughly dry the patient after his bath, rubbing vigorously to prevent chilling.

6. The most favorable time for taking a bath is between the hours of ten and twelve in the forenoon.

7. The temperature of the room should be at about 80° or 85°.

The following are brief descriptions of the more important baths applicable in the home treatment of dyspepsia:—

**SPONGE-BATH.**—This bath consists in rubbing the whole body with a sponge or towel wet in water of an agreeable temperature. It is most useful for a general ablution.

**SITZ BATH.**—A tub made especially for the purpose, or a common wash-tub, may be employed. Place in the vessel sufficient water to cover the hips and lower part of the abdomen. The patient or an attendant should rub and knead the abdomen during the bath. The water should be of a temperature ranging from 85° to 98°, according to the condition of the patient. Cover the patient during the bath.

**FOOT-BATH.**—Prepare vessels of water, one containing that as hot as can be well borne, and the other containing quite cool or cold water. Place the feet in the warm bath for from five to ten minutes, and then remove them quickly to the cold bath, returning them to the warm bath after a few minutes, and thus alternating three or four times, concluding by dipping the feet in the cool water and then wiping them dry.

**WET SHEET-PACK.**—Spread two or three comfortables upon a bed or mattress. Spread over the whole a woolen sheet. Wring out of water of the desired temperature, a linen or cotton sheet. Spread it quickly upon the bed, and let the patient immediately lie down in the middle. Then quickly envelop him in the wet sheet, wrapping him snugly from head to foot. Then cover him with the comfortables, and let him remain quiet as long as required. Elevate the head a little, and use care to have the feet warm. Half-packs may be taken in a similar manner, confining the application to the trunk of the body.

**CHEST-WRAPPER.**—The wrapper should be made of coarse cloth, and should be shaped so as to fit the chest. Apply it after wringing just sufficiently to prevent dripping. Cover with a light, dry flannel wrapper. Change three or four times a day.

**HALF-BATH.**—For this bath is required a vessel of sufficient size to allow the patient to sit upright with his limbs extended. Enough water to cover the limbs, thighs, and lower part of the abdomen, is necessary. During the bath, the attendant should rub vigorously the limbs, back, chest, and abdomen, of the patient.

**PAIL-DOUCHE.**—This consists in pouring water over the shoulders of the patient. It is often employed to tone up the surface after a hot bath.

**FOMENTATIONS.**—Wring out of water as hot

as can well be borne, a folded flannel cloth, and apply it quickly to the part to be treated. Cover with a dry cloth or piece of oiled silk, and change in a few minutes.

**COMPRESSES.**—Apply wet cloths in the same manner as in fomentations, wetting them in either cold, cool, or tepid water, according to the effect desired.

**RUBBING-WET-SHEET.**—This bath consists in enveloping the patient in a wet sheet, and rubbing him briskly with the hand outside the sheet.

**ENEMAS.**—An enema is a small portion of water thrown into the rectum by means of a syringe. The water may be either cool, tepid, or warm, as occasion may require.

#### MOVEMENTS.

Active and passive movements are among the most important remedial agents which can be brought to bear in the treatment of dyspepsia. Kneading and percussing the abdomen are perhaps the most directly beneficial of the various useful agents which may be thus employed. Many dyspeptics have been entirely cured by the simple practice of daily percussion, which consists in striking the abdomen with the open hand, gently at first, but with daily increasing force as the abdominal muscles acquire tone and elasticity. When an individual is suffering from an undigested meal, his pain may often be quickly and effectually relieved by continuous kneading for a half hour, the stomach being thus aided in the work of digestion.

Kneading and percussion are sovereign remedies for torpidity of the bowels.

Another excellent form of movements is friction of the whole surface of the body by rubbing the skin with the dry hand. This may be practiced upon rising each morning, and again upon retiring at night, with the excellent result of keeping the skin active and free from impurities. The rubbing may be done over a dry sheet when desirable, as in the rubbing-wet-sheet.

Percussion, kneading, and rubbing, of various parts of the body, are useful in many cases, together with other movement processes, a description of which cannot be given here.

#### DIETARY.

While a correct dietary is one of the very best preventives of indigestion, it is still more important as a curative agent in the treatment of the disease. As a general rule, dyspeptics may make use of the same food which is perfectly healthful for people not suffering from the disease. In aggravated cases, the following suggestions will be found to be conducive to easy and prompt digestion:—

1. Avoid the frequent use of liquid food, as soups and gruels. Mushes are also rather objectionable, unless eaten with graham crackers or cracknels. Dry food, requiring thorough mastication, is the most preferable.

2. Avoid eating fruits and vegetables at the same meal.

3. Do not use very sour fruits, as lemons, limes, currants, and cranberries. Also avoid such acid, pungent vegetables as onions and radishes.

4. Eat but few kinds at a meal, and let the food be prepared in as simple a manner as possible. Do not overeat.

Flesh-meats are not so good food as vegetables; but if animal food must be employed, as in some cases seems to be necessary, for a time at least—use only lean meat slightly cooked, or soft-boiled eggs.

Good bread is very essential for the dyspeptic. Fermented bread, and that "raised" with soda or saleratus, are poor articles of food, often being the occasion of indigestion. The following is a recipe for making perfectly wholesome bread:—

Make a stiff batter with cold water and the best graham flour; work in as much flour as will knead well, and then knead for twenty minutes or half an hour. Make into rolls one-half inch thick and bake in a hot oven, moderating the heat a little after four or five minutes. Several kinds of flour may be mixed together. Oatmeal, corn meal, and rye meal may be made into good bread in the same way.

**ANOTHER EVIL OF TOBACCO-SMOKING.**—The *Scientific American* says that "vulcanized red rubber dental plates are turned black by tobacco smoke. The plates regularly color by degrees, after the fashion of meerscham pipes. This will account for numerous cases of deteriorated plates, the owners of which have asked us to explain, and at the same time exhibits a new evil of the deleterious habit of tobacco-smoking."

If the poison of tobacco will produce such a chemical effect on vulcanized rubber, what must be its damaging effect upon such delicate tissues as the minute fibers of the nerves, the cells of the brain and spinal cord, and the corpuscles of the blood?

## RELIGIOUS NEWS AND NOTES.

—Dr. McCabe, Auxiliary Bishop of the diocese of Dublin, succeeds Archbishop Cullen.

—Mrs. Tilton wickedly persisted in confessing her guilt with her pastor, and was expelled from Plymouth church on the 26th ult.

—Upwards of 1,200 churches in Great Britain now use the unfermented wine, the true "fruit of the vine," and free from alcohol, for communion purposes.

—The *Presbyterian at Work* says: "Near Arcot, South India, there is a village where every heathen family has become Christian. The stone gods have been pulled down and serve as steps to the church."

—Rev. W. F. Stevenson, of the Irish Presbyterian Church, states that about 400,000 persons are connected with the Christian churches, in India, China and Japan, besides 200,000 children receiving a Christian education.

—A letter from a lady missionary to the official magazine of the Southern Presbyterian Church, states that the Bible is now scattered all over Brazil, and that many who do not attend worship are friendly to the gospel as a means of elevating their country.

—The Bible work among the Turks is very interesting. The Scriptures are sold all over the empire. The Bible house at Constantinople is quite as prominent a building as the Bible houses of New York or London are for those localities, and the Scriptures are publicly exposed for sale in more than twenty languages.

—The Iowa Eldership of the Church of God, sometimes spoken of as "Winebrennarians," which met at Moneka in that State, recently, took cognizance of the fact that as there is great deficiency in education among their ministers, that this deficiency is the occasion of their practical exclusion from many avenues of usefulness, and that it is perpetuated by an irrational opposition to an educated ministry on the part of many good people.

—The Presbyterian church in Ireland raised last year for all religious purposes by far the largest sum total ever reached and more than \$60,000 more than the previous year. The average given per family was nearly \$10. In the Canada Presbyterian church it was \$17. In some of the Presbyterian churches of the United States it is more than that for each communicant. State endowment does not cultivate Christian liberality.

—It is said that one of the disciples of Rousseau had invented a religion which he was quite anxious to see adopted in France as a substitute for the Christian religion, but not making much progress with his substitute he complained to Talleyrand of his want of success. Talleyrand suggested that it would doubtless help his cause very much if he would allow himself to be crucified and to be buried, and to rise from the dead on the third day, and then to show the people the print of the nails in his hands and his feet.

—Mr. George Muller's work at Ashley-down, Bristol, England, is in a flourishing condition. The annual report just issued states, that, after meeting the year's expenses, amounting to \$210,000, the accounts have been closed with a small balance in hand. Since the founding of the institution \$3,920,000 have been received without any one having been appealed to personally, 66,600 children and adults have been taught in the various schools, and tens of thousands of Bibles have been circulated. The present attendance at the schools exceeds 10,000 and 2193 orphans have been sheltered during the year. Mr. Muller is an outspoken second Adventist.

## SECULAR NEWS.

—Serious rebellions are reported in China. —It is reported that Russia is taking steps to assist the Afghanistans.

—A special dispatch says that a malignant type of smallpox is raging at Grand Forks, Dakota Territory.

—It would seem that the days of "gas monopoly" are numbered. The electric light is proving a success.

—Intelligence has been received from New Caledonia, the French penal colony, of a fresh massacre of colonists by the natives.

—An effort has been made to assassinate Count Andrassy, the Austrian minister, Tisza, the prime minister of Hungary, and other notables.

—The marquis of Lorne, son-in-law to Queen Victoria, is now Governor-General of

Canada. He is considered a man of great ability.

—Failures are reported in London amounting to over \$15,000,000. Trade and commerce in Europe are in a more critical condition than in the United States.

—A *Times* special states that Red Cloud's six thousand Indians are in danger of starving, as their supplies cannot be transported by themselves under ten months.

—A United States Marshal arrived at Maysville, Ky., November 27, with a party of nine illicit distillers that he had captured in the country back of Catlettsburg.

—In Lancashire, Eng., there is a strike of 12,000 workmen, affecting 120 mills. There is fear of serious difficulty. This destroys the hope of a speedy return of better times in that country.

—There is prospect of a war between Chili and the Argentine Republic, about the possession of some islands on the coast of Patagonia. An American vessel has been seized by the Chilian authorities, which may complicate the difficulty.

—The sequestration of the estate of Henry Taylor & Son, Glasgow, grain and flour merchants, is announced. The liabilities are \$6,000,000. William Taylor, the imprisoned director of the city of Glasgow Bank, is the senior partner of the firm.

—Socialist difficulties increase in Europe; It is reported that Berlin will soon be declared in "a state of siege," to better deal with the question. The Pope is urging upon the governments the duty of repressing socialism, and of restoring the privileges of the church! This may be a hope to them in their trouble.

—The six columns that remain of the great Temple of the Sun, at Baalbec, are in danger of falling. The Turks have undermined them and the frosts may complete their destruction with the coming winter. These columns, the largest and most beautiful in the world, measure with pedestal, capital and entablature, about 89 feet in height.

—The English are pursuing the Afghanistans, having obtained a decided victory in the first combat. We have noticed that in all the recent wars, the party getting the first victory has been badly beaten. Only by speedy assistance from the Russians can the Afghans hope to succeed against the power of Great Britain.

—The attempt by certain members of the California Constitutional Convention, now in session at Sacramento, to restrict the liberty of the press, by placing defendants in libel suits solely at the mercy of county judges, is being roughly handled by the press. So far sixty-three journals have denounced the measure, and only two are found to favor it.

—Another steamer has gone down in the English channel, with a loss of 57 lives. There was a very dense fog. The captain was at his post, and is reported to have gone down with his vessel. He was a faithful officer, and it was his one hundred and fifty-first passage across the Atlantic. His vessel, the *Pomerania*, left New York November 14.

—While so many are left in absolute want by the recent break in the stock market, it is announced that J. C. Flood and James G. Fair, two heavy stock speculators, are preparing to erect private palaces on California street hill, on opposite sides of Mason street. The grading will be done at a cost of \$100,000, and the cost of the houses is only estimated by comparison with other like palaces, as the effort will be to excel all others.

—The office of the London *Times* was recently lighted by the electric light, the invention adopted being that of Mr. Rapieff. Six lights were kept burning in one circuit, and in the presence of a large party of gentlemen they were blown out and instantly re-ignited automatically. The lights were lowered just the same as in the case of ordinary gas. They were put out all together, and each one separately. Milton S. Latham of San Francisco has procured the United States exclusive right in the United States to certain patents on "electric candles," and a machine for generating electricity. His privileges cover all the systems now in use in Europe.

## OBITUARY.

DIED, at San Pasqual, San Diego County, November 4, Susie Bandy, daughter of J. D. Bandy, aged fifteen years, seven months, and nine days. Susie died with faith in a Saviour's love, and in hope of immortality.

Discourse by the writer, from 1 Cor. 15.

JOHN JUDSON.

The Signs of the Times

OAKLAND, CAL., FIFTH-DAY, DEC. 5, 1878.

JUST as we close up this paper we receive the painful intelligence of the death of Mary, the daughter of Elder Andrews. Under this severe stroke our dear brother has the comforting assurance of the deepest sympathy of a large circle of friends, and far more than this, that God made good his promise and was near to him and his beloved child even in the trying hour. Our hearts would have had it otherwise, but "God knows." We bow to his will.

WE publish in this paper the address of the officers of the General Tract and Missionary Society of S. D. Adventists on the subject of "Vigilant Missionary Societies," with the Constitution of such societies and rules for their organization. We call the especial attention of churches on the Pacific coast to this address. The churches in California will very soon be visited, and this subject will come up for consideration and action.

An Important Decision.

A WILL was recently contested in San Francisco, one provision of which was as follows: "I give and bequeath to the Colored Episcopal Church of the city and county of San Francisco, the sum of \$400." The Court held that "By the law of this State, no religious corporation, body, or society can take, under a will. [Civil Code, Sec. 1275.] Therefore the clauses of the will attempting to give property to the Church, are void."

Let this be noted. All gifts to religious corporations of any kind must be conferred within the life-time of the giver. We cheerfully "accept the situation." We think it is much the best plan, if not too long neglected.

Stocks Hopeful.

IT is reported that there is a better showing in the Nevada mines, and there is a prospect of the stocks being firmer. Why not? The mass of stock holders, under heavy assessments were compelled to sell at ruinous prices; the managers have everything in their own hands; and now it is time for them to raise the stocks, and put them on the market again. A Philadelphia paper said that, compared to stock brokerage, gambling is a regular and legitimate business. Dr. Guard, in his thanksgiving sermon at the union service in Oakland, speaking of the recent transactions in the stock market, said it was "an extreme manifestation of the gambling spirit." But men and women, greedy of sudden gain, will not be warned. They will soon be as eager as ever to risk their all in the hands of stock brokers. It is no wonder that so many go insane in California, under the influence of such strong sordid passions, and such constant unhealthy excitement.

North Pacific Conference.

I LEFT my home in Salem, Oregon, on the 30th day of July to commence work in the eastern part of this Conference. On arriving at Walla Walla, Brother W. L. Raymond joined me and we soon began meetings with the tent. After the weather became too stormy and cold to use the tent, we continued our work in the churches of Walla Walla, Milton, and Dayton. Up to date, we have held one hundred and twenty meetings.

Our effort with the Dayton church resulted favorably. The church previous to this time had not been fully organized. We completed the organization, withdrew fellowship from three disorderly members, and received two into the church by baptism. This church now numbers nineteen, and they never were in a better condition.

We moved the tent about thirty miles from Dayton to a new place, and after three weeks labor, ten began to keep the Sabbath. These all remain firm.

In the Walla Walla church we labored at a great disadvantage on account of the members being so scattered; but few of them could attend. We had to withdraw from six, but still the church numbers forty-eight. The good Elder of this church, Brother Maxson, being away on a visit East, made it even more difficult to do all for this church which they so much needed. If this church would adopt the plan of concentrating their strength by settling near enough to Walla Walla, that they might maintain meetings, instead of doing as they have done, scattered away, it would be far bet-

ter for the cause. But sometimes when our brethren move they do not consider so much the welfare of the cause, as they do their own selfish interests. Let the members of this church all make an effort to situate themselves in this life so they can concentrate their strength to carry on the cause in Walla Walla, and the condition of things would be far different than what we now see. But let no one think that the cause is dead in this church. Far from it.

The church in Milton is still strong. Five united while we were there; three by letter and two by baptism. The members of this church have so far kept their strength united, and the result is, a growing interest continually. The church now numbers thirty-four. The prospect before them is favorable.

On the whole the cause is moving onward in this part of the Conference. All the friends of the cause seem to be wide awake and anxious for a camp-meeting next spring. Such a meeting will be of great benefit to the cause here. We want at that meeting a thorough stirring up on the T. and M. work. We shall solicit the aid of some one of the ministering brethren who is thoroughly posted in this work to help us on that occasion. There is a large field for work in that direction in this Conference. We all need to wake up and to show more diligence in this branch of the cause.

I. D. VAN HORN.

Dayton, W. T., November 15, 1878.

San Jose and Gilroy.

I MET with the churches at San Jose and Gilroy according to appointment. Found the companies very much reduced by removals. At San Jose they were quite discouraged, their leader having removed to Woodland last spring. We held three meetings with them, and organized a vigilant missionary society, which subscribed for sixteen copies of the SIGNS. We felt encouraged to see them enlist so heartily in the work. If the rest of the churches in the State do as well our missionary work will be doubled during the coming year. At Gilroy we held one meeting. All but four members have removed to different parts of the State. These are doing what they can in the missionary work.

M. C. ISRAEL.

Pacheco and Lafayette.

ACCORDING to appointment, I met with these churches last Sabbath and Sunday. The object in visiting them at this time was to more fully enlist them in the tract and missionary work, and to organize vigilant missionary societies, if practicable, in both places. After setting the matter before them, a society of this kind was formed in each place. And, though there are but eleven members in these two churches, a club of thirty-three for the SIGNS was raised. This exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and should all the churches in California come up to the work as fully as these have done, the circulation of our good paper would be increased more than twenty-two hundred in this conference alone. And should all the churches on this coast do correspondingly well, three thousand would be added to its circulation! It was a source of great pleasure to me to see how heartily these dear brethren entered into this good work. Even the children caught the spirit, and brought their offerings and cast them into the treasury of the Lord. May God bless them, and encourage their hearts to continue faithful unto the end. E. R. GILLET. Dec. 2, 1878.

Sabbath-Schools.

WE request the superintendents of the Sabbath-schools to send their names and addresses to the secretary, Mrs. Alice Papworth, SIGNS OF THE TIMES Office, Oakland, Cal., so that blanks can be sent to each. A full report is wanted by the commencement of the year. Let all our schools be in time in sending for a full supply of the weekly Instructor.

Schools having libraries or parts of libraries on hand which they would like to exchange should make it known to the executive committee. Books which have been read and laid aside will be gladly received by those having no libraries. Those wishing new books can find a choice selection, that will be found unobjectionable in point of doctrine, and at very reasonable rates, at the Office of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. M. C. ISRAEL, President Cal. S. S. Association.

Health Annuals.

THE Pacific Coast edition of the Family Health Annual is ready for delivery, and the quotas for the several tract and missionary districts have been forwarded, so far as ordered. Districts desiring to increase their orders, or individuals wishing to procure on their own account, are reminded that the State secretary has on hand an extra supply from which they

can draw, at the rate of \$4.50 per hundred. As the new year is at hand, there is no time to lose in the distribution of these valuable documents.

E. R. GILLET,

Vice-President Cal. T. and M. Society.

Appointments.

THE Lord willing, I will meet with the church in Vacaville on Sabbath, December 7, 1878, at the usual hour of holding meetings. I shall be pleased to meet all the brethren and sisters at this meeting. Will Brother Saunders meet me there? E. R. GILLET.

NO PREVENTING providence, I will meet with the church at Napa Sabbath and Sunday, Dec. 7, and 8, 1878. Meeting on Sabbath at the usual hour, and on Sunday a business meeting will be held at 10:30, A. M. I should be glad to see all the brothers and sisters at these meetings. Will Brother Mavity meet with us there? M. C. ISRAEL.

Health Publications.

The Uses of Water in Health and Disease. Bound. 160 pp., 50c. Paper covers, pp. 136, 25c. The Household Manual. Brief, plain directions for treatment of common sicknesses, etc. Bound, 176 pp., 75c.

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