

PRESENT TRUTH

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

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The Source of Wisdom.

ASK now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Job xii. 7-9.

WHAT is it that the birds and beasts and fishes will teach us?—Not how to build houses, and conduct business affairs, although men may learn many things from them in these lines; but that which we may specially learn from them is the care that God has for all His creatures, and that all the wisdom possessed by bird, beast, or man, comes from God. He teaches the birds all that is necessary for them to know; and if men were as teachable as the lower orders of creation, He would teach them all that they need to know, and more than they have yet dreamed of.

WHEN the Lord spoke to Job, to bring down his self-confidence, He asked him: "Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?" Job xxxix. 26. And of the ostrich He

said, "God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath He imparted to her understanding." Verse 17. So we see that the wisdom which the birds display is the manifestation of the all-pervading Spirit of wisdom working in them.

they act automatically, without exercising thought or reason. This is a great mistake. Animals think, and reason, and exercise forethought, just as truly as men do, and some learn much more quickly than others. The American naturalist,

Wilson, called attention to the fact that the nests of young birds are distinctly inferior to those of older ones, both as regards their situation and construction; and in species that have been closely watched for a sufficient length of time, a steady improvement in the construction of nests has been observed.

A missionary from South Africa tells of some swans that had been imported to that country and set at liberty. In their old home they had been accustomed to build their nests on the river banks, and so they did in their new location. But the rivers were subject to sudden floods, and their nests were washed away. This occurred twice, and then one wise pair conceived the idea of building a floating nest, and attaching it to something im-

movable, so that it would rise and fall with the stream, and not be carried away. Seeing the success of this scheme, other birds did the same the next year, and the year after all the swans on that and other rivers built the same kind of nests, and



suffered no further loss of their homes. Here was clearly a case of learning by experience and observation, just as men do—sometimes.

IN a book strangely named, "Illustrations of Instinct," but which ought rather to be called "Illustrations of the Reasoning Faculty in Animals," Couch tells the following story of a swan:—

"This swan was nineteen or twenty years old, had brought up many broods, and was highly valued by the neighbours. She exhibited, some eight or nine years past, one of the most remarkable powers of instinct ever recorded. She was sitting on four or five eggs, and was observed to be very busy in collecting weeds, grasses, etc., to raise her nest; a farming man was ordered to take down half a load of haulm, with which she most industriously raised her nest and the eggs two feet and a half; that very night there came down a tremendous fall of rain; which flooded all the malt shops, and did much damage. Man made no preparation; the bird did; instinct prevailed over reason. Her eggs were above, and only just above, the water."

Does not this show that what he calls "instinct" is higher than man's "reason"? Ought not the man, then, to learn from the bird? What would not the men of that neighbourhood have given to be in connection with the swan's source of information! for she did not have the knowledge inherent in herself, and must have learned from some source. How humiliating, that a bird should know more than a man! This is not as it should be; everything in man has been perverted. When man comes into full connection with God, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and is filled with "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him," he will take his rightful place as head and lord of creation, and then will the birds learn from him.

A PAPER has been handed us, which contains several articles and reports of sermons teaching the doctrine of probation after death, together with that which it always accompanies, namely, the gathering of the Jews to Old Jerusalem. The same paper contains an account of a Spiritualist meeting, in which one of the speakers, who was in a trance, "alluded to the interest being evinced in the question of salvation after death, and said they counted that as one of the healthiest signs of the times." Of course they do, because the doctrine of probation after death is nothing but one phase of Spiritualism.

A LESSON IN UNSELFISHNESS.

ABRAM AND LOT.

(Gen. xiii 1-18.)†



WHEN Abraham left his native country at the call of God, and came into the land of Canaan, he took his nephew Lot with him. For some time they remained together, Lot accompanying Abraham in all his journeyings. From the twelfth chapter of Genesis we learn that they passed through Canaan, and went down into Egypt; our present lesson tells of their return to Canaan.

"And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first; and there Abram called on the name of Jehovah." Gen. xiii. 2-4.

ABRAHAM A PREACHER.

WE see that Abraham did not forget his mission in the land, which was to preach the Gospel. Bear in mind what was said concerning the expression, "called on the name of the Lord." In the Hebrew the words are exactly the same as those in Ex. xxxiv. 5, where we read that the Lord descended in the cloud to Moses upon the mount, and "proclaimed the name of the Lord." Now it is evident that this is correctly rendered; because it is exactly what the Lord did on that occasion, as we learn from the succeeding verses; and it is equally evident that it would be most improper—absolutely impossible—to render the expression, "called on the name of the Lord," as in Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 4. Therefore we are justified in giving to the term in these instances the same rendering that it has in Exodus, where we know it is correctly rendered. So we render the last part of Gen. xiii. 4 literally, thus: "And there Abram proclaimed the name of the Lord," or, which is the same thing, "preached in the name of the Lord."

DIVISION IN THE CHURCH.

"AND Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together; for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was a strife

between the herdmen of Abram's cattle, and the herdmen of Lot's cattle; and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

"And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou wilt depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Gen. xiii. 5-9.

WE have termed this a division in the church, for Abraham's large family was emphatically a church—a congregation of believers. Abraham was "called out," which is the literal meaning of the Greek word commonly rendered *church*; and we have seen that his sole business in the land of Canaan was to proclaim the name of the Lord, and to establish the worship of the true God. The immense wealth that God gave him contributed to this end; it was simply a means of supporting the workers. Rightly used, as it was, it gave Abraham prestige among the people of the land, and assured him a hearing wherever he went.

BUT while possessions bestowed by the Lord ("for it is He that giveth the power to get wealth." Deut. viii. 18.), are designed as a great blessing (See Mal. iii. 10-12), they may, and often do, prove a source of trouble and backsliding from God. A blessing misused and its source unrecognised, always becomes a curse; for a curse is simply the wrong side of a blessing. So the first trouble in the church in the land of Canaan, even as it was in the church in the days of the apostles (Acts v. 1-10; vi. 1), was over the matter of the division and distribution of funds. In the case before us it was Lot that made the mistake, and Abraham who acted strictly according to Christian principle.

THE SECRET OF ABRAHAM'S GENEROUS CONDUCT.

THIS is found in the last five verses of chapter thirteen, together with Gen. xv. 5, 6. Abraham remembered the promise of God, that the whole earth was to be given to him and to his seed; therefore he could afford to be generous. The man who has everything can always be generous; in fact, we should expect him to be. Now the same promise applied equally to Lot, for "they which be of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham." Gal. iii. 9. We

†International Sunday-school Lesson for Aug. 4.

are also included in the promise; for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse, . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come" on us through Jesus Christ. Gal. iii. 13, 14. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. The early Christians not only gave liberally, but "took joyfully" even "the spoiling" of their goods, knowing that they had "in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Heb. x. 34.

It was this knowledge that made Abraham so generously courteous. He looked for a better country, that is, an heavenly, and whatever of temporal possessions he might have were only an incident. He knew that he was but a sojourner in the land; then why should he strive for the possession of any portion of it? All men are but sojourners, equally with Abraham, and if they recognised that truth there would be no wars. Who would not think it most foolish even in small children, to fight for the possession of soap bubbles? Yet the greater part of mankind is engaged in equally foolish and profitless work. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." It is useless to contend over that which we cannot hold, even if we succeed in seizing it. As to the everlasting possession that God gives, the fact that God Himself gives it to us shows that it is not to be gained by strife and contention; and nobody can take it from us, even though they kill us. Moreover the inheritance is inexhaustible, therefore we may be very "ready to distribute." 1 Tim. vi. 17-19.

"ALL THINGS COMMON."

If Lot had been as mindful as Abraham was, of the purpose for which God had sent them into the land, he would not have separated from Abraham in the way he did. It might indeed have been necessary for them to separate for the more extensive proclamation of the name of the Lord; but it would not have been over a division of property. Lot was a righteous man, and he did not allow his wealth to corrupt him, for his character remained pure even in Sodom; but he allowed the cares of this world to prevent him from being a missionary, and so he eventually lost all that he had. Earthly possessions are for no other purpose than to be used in the propagation of the Gospel; whoever uses them to this end will always have

"all sufficiency in all things," "being enriched in everything to all bountifulness" (2 Cor. ix. 6-11); but those who attempt to hold them for their own personal use, will finally lose everything. They may be saved, as Lot was, yet it will be "so as by fire."

On this basis, and on this only, can men have all things common, as was the case in the early church. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common," and as a matter of course there was none among them that lacked. Acts iv. 32-35. Modern Socialism aims at an equal distribution of property, but it is radically defective, and can never succeed. Its principles, while they seem to many to be Christian, are directly opposed to Christianity, as everything must be that leaves Christ out. The Christian way is for each one to say that what he has does not belong to him, but is given him in trust, to be used for the benefit of the world; the human way is for each one to say that he has a right to what belongs to somebody else, and that the world owes him a living. The former method will provide everybody with all he needs all the time; the latter loads some down temporarily with that which they cannot use, while others are destitute, and at last leaves all empty-handed, for their riches take wings of fire, and in smoke fly away towards heaven.

So we say that if Lot had not allowed his wealth to tie him up, so that he could not continue in the missionary work, but had remembered that it was not his, his life would not have been the total failure that it was.

OPULENCE AND SIN.

"Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, . . . even as the garden of the Lord; . . . then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan, . . . and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Gen. xiii. 10-13. Now read what God afterwards said to Israel—the church—when they had lost the missionary spirit, and had become like the heathen round them:—

"Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." Eze. xvi. 49.

While it is true that wealth is a blessing

from God, if received as from Him, the majority of mankind, who are poor, have no reason to complain; because poverty is a still greater blessing than wealth. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" James i. 5. Jesus said unto His disciples: "Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xix. 23. Better, infinitely better, poverty in this world, with the heirship of heaven and earth, than to have the whole world and lose our souls.

Look abroad over the world in history or at the present time, and see where the simple virtues are most prevalent, and where vice most abounds. The inhabitants of tropical and semi-tropical lands, where abundance of food grows almost spontaneously, and people can live with scarcely any exertion, are invariably of looser morals than their brethren of lands where severe toil must be put forth in order to enjoy the products of the earth. This does not apply to the natives of those regions, whose desires are moderate, so much as to those who go there because of the ease with which wealth may be gained. It is in the North, where the climate is severe, and the earth in many places yields but a scanty supply, that the Word of God finds freest course. Compare the Scandinavian countries with Italy and Spain.

In the early history of the United States, and especially in the Colonial period, when the population was mostly confined to the North-east, where the land is rocky and responds only to the most patient industry, the simple, sturdy virtues were predominant; but when wealth began to multiply from the rich farming lands and the mines of the far West, and when money literally flowed from the ground, in the oil regions, dissolution and crime increased in proportion. There is no other country on earth where wealth is so abundant, and no other country has degenerated as the United States has in the last few years. When wealth accumulates, men always decay. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 Tim. vi. 9. "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out, and having food and raiment, let us be there-with content."



THE LAW OF LIFE.

TENTH COMMANDMENT.



THOU shalt not covet."

WE come now to the last of the series. We have completed the circle, and end just where we began. We say that we end just where we began; for the first commandment says, "Thou shalt not have any other gods before Me," and in Col. iii. 5 we read that covetousness is idolatry.

THE INFINITE CIRCLE OF THE LAW.

THE law of God is a complete circle, beginning and ending in God; or, rather, having neither beginning nor end. God inhabits eternity, and the circle of His law encompasses the universe. There is nothing in heaven or earth that does not come within this circle. Its range is unlimited. "We know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law [literally, "in the the law," that is, "within the range, sphere, or jurisdiction of the law"]: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God." Rom. iii. 19, R.V.

GOING OUTSIDE THE LAW.

WHAT is sin?—"Sin is the transgression of the law."

What does "transgression" mean?—It means "a going across." Sin, therefore, is the act of going across God's law.

But when one transgresses,—goes outside the bounds—God's law, where can he go? Ah, that is a pertinent question. There is no place for one to go outside of God's law, except to go out of the universe, that is, to cease to be. "The wages of sin is death." "Sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death."

This can be made apparent in another manner. The law of God is His life, flowing in an endless stream from His throne. Now wherever the word of God has free course, there is perfect life. If we allow ourselves to be simply channels for the river of life, as we are designed to be, the life flowing through us will hold us in life. But what will take place if we put ourselves squarely across the stream? Everybody knows the result of placing any obstacle in the way of a stream of water. The first thing is a damming up of the stream; and when water is dammed up, and becomes stagnant, it breeds death, until the force of the on-coming stream breaks away all the barriers, and the waters flow on again unhindered. But that is the destruction of the thing that placed itself across the current. It is infinitely better to be in the line of life, in harmony with it,—channels for the stream of life,—than to be obstacles to be swept away.

GOD'S MERCY TO TRANSGRESSORS.

You say that there are many people who transgress God's law, and yet live. Yes there are, and that is one of the greatest marvels of the grace of God. Unbelievers rail against God, charging Him with injustice, because sentence of death is

pronounced upon the ungodly; but they forget that the infinite mercy of God is manifested every moment in keeping them in life, to allow them opportunity to come into harmony with it, so that they need not die.

This life is but a span, a moment. Long as it seems to short-sighted men, it is but the twinkling of an eye to God. We do not at once see the results of the transgression of God's law, and men fancy that because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, as *they* reckon time, they can sin with impunity. "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Prov. xxix. 1.

NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM.

THE reason why men who transgress the law do not instantly die, is that God is still in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, "not imputing their trespasses unto them." "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. God does not now impute sin to men; but takes it all on Himself. He knows that men are foolish and ignorant, and He has "compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way." Heb. v. 2. Knowing their ignorance, He does not take them at their word, when they say that they do not wish to be kept within the bounds of His life,—that they wish to be free from its "restraints," as they call it, and to live their own lives, independently of Him. His long-suffering still waits, as in the days of Noah; but by and by there will come a day when sufficient light will have shone to enable every one to make a final choice; and then those who deliberately choose to go outside of God's law, will be taken at their word, and will be allowed to go—where? Where can they go, when God's law fills the universe, and they go outside? For them there will be no future; they will "be as though they had not been."

THE SUM OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

IN the tenth commandment, more than in any other, the unity of the entire law is seen. It summarises all the commandments, even as the first of them does. It takes in the whole duty of man. "Thou shalt not covet." This precept underlies and is the heart of every commandment. In Rom. vii. 7 we read: "I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known

lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

Someone says, "I thought lust had to do with the seventh commandment." So it has, and with every other one as well. *Lust* simply means *desire*; and since in the fall the desire of mankind is only to evil, "lust" has degenerated into *evil desire*, it makes no difference for what. A desire for anything that is forbidden is lust, and is contrary to the whole law of God. "When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin."

So we see that the tenth commandment strikes at the root of all sin. The Apostle Paul takes it and makes it the summing up of the whole law. He who keeps the tenth commandment, cannot so much as think of breaking any other; he cannot have the slightest idea to sin.

SPIRITUALITY OF THE LAW.

"WE know that the law is spiritual" (Rom. vii. 14), and this commandment reveals its spirituality more clearly than any other. Men talk about enforcing the law of God,—about incorporating the divine law into human laws. They fancy that because human laws punish the person who kills another, that they are putting the sixth commandment into effect. They imagine that they are safeguarding the seventh commandment, because there are laws against adultery. It is a very common thing for people to think that they can enforce the fourth commandment. But let them try it with the tenth. How will they succeed?

Well, men have actually been so blindly presumptuous as to try to enforce the tenth commandment. There was only one way, and that was by the Inquisition, invented by the Papacy, which exalted itself to God's place, and even above Him. Men were tortured to wring out of them the secrets of their hearts, and punished for even the thought that they confessed to having harboured. But nobody but God can find out the secrets of men's hearts; and He does not have to *find them out*, because "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Heb. iv. 13. So no human power or wisdom can ever determine when the tenth commandment has been broken. When the thought of sin, which is forbidden by the tenth commandment, goes so far as to manifest itself, it comes under the head of some one of the other commandments. To take one's neighbour's wife is a violation of the seventh commandment; to seize

upon his house or goods, is a violation of the eighth.

So we see that this tenth commandment deals with that which is all within one's own mind, and is simply the drawing out and summing up of the entire ten. It shows the breadth and spirituality of the whole law of God; for as we have previously learned, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." It is not necessary that one shall have carried his wrong desire into execution, in order to have violated any one of the commandments. "The thought of foolishness is sin." Prov. xxiv. 9.

The tenth commandment is no more spiritual than any other; but it makes the spirituality of the law more apparent than the others do, in that the violation of it is wholly within one's heart, out of sight from all human eyes; yet one cannot break any one of the first nine commandments without first breaking the tenth; and as soon as one has broken the tenth, all the rest are broken.

Thus we see the utter futility of all human attempts to execute the law of God, or to punish transgression of it. Such attempts cannot be made except by those who do not have any sort of just comprehension of the law, and the nature of it; and that is why every effort to enforce or execute God's law results in a perversion of it. It is only a perverted view of the law that men have, who think to take it into their own hands, and so what they enforce is not God's law, but something directly opposed to it.

This appears when we consider all so-called "Sabbath laws." They are of course Sunday laws. Men will in the same breath talk about the sacredness of the fourth commandment, and about the necessity of rest for the body one day in seven, and of securing it by legislation in favour of Sunday. But the fourth commandment contains no reference to Sunday, except to tell all men that in it they may labour, and do their own work, and, moreover, the Sabbath of the Lord is not mere physical rest, but is spiritual rest,—God's rest—for God is Spirit.

The tenth commandment, therefore, closes up the circle of the law, and unites the two ends, and then surrounds the circle itself, bidding everybody to keep his hands off from it, and leave God to conduct the affairs of every portion of His universal kingdom, even to putting into us the desires that we ought to cherish.

(To be Concluded.)

POWER OF THE SECOND ADVENT.

GOD'S word is alive; therefore when He speaks of the future, He brings it into the living present. Faith comes by God's Word, and faith is the substance of things hoped for. The second coming of Christ is not described in the Scriptures merely as a picture of what will take place. God's Word brings the thing itself to us, and describes the future, that we may know the possibilities of the present.

The power which will be revealed at Christ's second coming is according to the power He exerts now. If He is able to subdue our hearts to Himself now, it will be no harder task for Him to change our bodies and make them like His glorious body. Phil. iii. 21. But if He cannot subject all things to Himself now, He will not be able to do it then, for the power then is according to the power now. So we may know now whether or not our bodies are going to be made glorious and immortal at His coming. If His power is insufficient in us now, it will be the same then, for the power is the same. It is idle for anyone to profess faith in the second coming of Christ and the resurrection, if his faith is not the substance of the things hoped for. Now is the time to lay hold of eternal life.

In the prophecy of Habakkuk we have a description of the scenes that attend the coming of the Lord. The everlasting mountains are scattered, the nations are driven before Him, and their dwellings tremble, the sun and moon stand still, the earth is dissolved, and nothing in all nature stands before Him. Where does this infinite display of power come from? The prophet sees bright beams coming from the side of the Saviour, "and there was the hiding of His power."

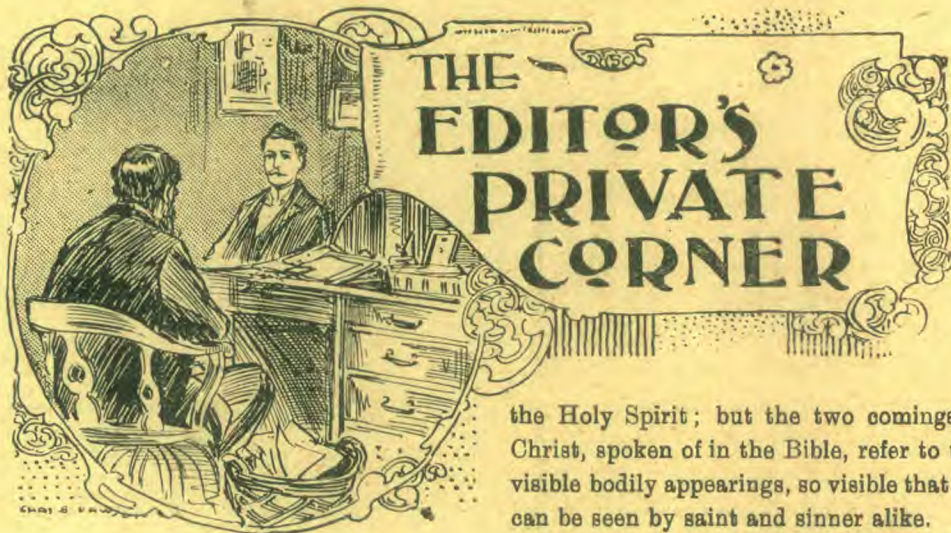
From the pierced side of Christ flows the torrent of glory that consumes the wicked and all their works. But that fountain, opened for sin and uncleanness, is flowing now, and whosoever will, may take the water of life freely. In that river of life is all the power that is needed to destroy the works of the devil, and so when we come to the cross of Christ, we come to all the power that is revealed at His second advent.

The power that will dissolve the earth in that day will work in us now to bring down "every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." Nothing in nature will stand before it then, and nothing in human nature can stay its working now. Then, when everything

earthly is moved, His glory covers the heavens and the earth is full of His praise; so now, the man who submits himself to

the power has a new song put into his mouth, even praise unto the Lord.

W. T. B.



THE COMING OF CHRIST.

"COULD you please explain to me Matt. xvi. 28 and Mark ix. 1. I think God's Word speaks as much to us now as it did when Christ spoke to His disciples when on the earth. Some say Christ is to come three times; First, when He came as a Babe; Second, when a person becomes a child of God; Third, when Christ comes to gather His own to go and dwell with Him.

"Does not Christ come into His kingdom only when He comes down in the New Jerusalem, to take possession of the new earth, after the millennium?

"When so many different doctrines are being taught in so many different ways, it makes things so dark, and it is so hard to believe."

LET Christ's own words answer your question. You know them well: "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 2, 3.

Jesus was on the earth, among men, when He spoke these words to His disciples, and therefore they meant that He would literally come "again," *once more*, to this earth.

The second coming of Christ is plainly mentioned in the Bible, as related to the first coming. "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment: so Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear *the second time* without sin unto salvation." Heb. ix. 27, 28.

These are the two comings spoken of in the Bible, and the Scriptures tell of no more. They do, indeed, speak of His abiding presence by His Representative,

the Holy Spirit; but the two comings of Christ, spoken of in the Bible, refer to two visible bodily appearances, so visible that He can be seen by saint and sinner alike.

When a person becomes a child of God, he comes to the Lord, instead of Christ coming to him. Christ by His Spirit is present with men who know Him not, striving with them, endeavouring to bring them to a knowledge of Himself. He does not hold Himself aloof from men until they become Christians, and then come to them, for if He did they could never become Christians. On the contrary, He is near them—(He is not far from every one of us, "for in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 27, 28), daily loading them with benefits, and when, like the prodigal son, they come to themselves, they come to Him. Then when He comes the second time He will take to Himself and crown as kings all those who know Him, and who love His appearing.

Now as to the events connected with the second coming of Christ. These are very many. You know that the first advent of Christ was not confined to the night when He was born in Bethlehem. It covered the whole thirty-three years of His life on this earth as a Man among men. At His first coming He worked as a carpenter, He was tempted by Satan, He went about doing good, teaching and leading the multitudes, and He was mocked, rejected, and crucified, and then rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. All these things took place at His first coming.

In like manner the second advent of Christ will cover a period of time, but much longer than the first. Let me in a few words show this from the Scriptures.

First, let us read a text or two telling what things will occur when He comes again.

"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the

Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people: Gather My saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness; for God is Judge Himself." Ps. 1. 3-6.

"It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints." 2 Thess. i. 6-10.

These texts tell us that at the second coming of Christ the righteous shall be taken to dwell with Him, and the wicked shall be destroyed; but they do not set forth the particulars. If we had nothing else, we might suppose that all would take place in a single day; but from other passages we learn the details of the second advent.

The texts quoted have spoken only of the resurrection of the righteous; but there is to be a resurrection of the dead "both of the just and unjust." Between these two resurrections a thousand years will intervene. Read Rev. xx. 4-6:—

"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them; and judgment was given unto them and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

From this we learn that, although the righteous will be taken to heaven, and the wicked will be destroyed at the second coming of Christ, there will be a full thousand years between the two events. So we know that the second advent will cover more than a thousand years. During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection, the saints will be reigning in heaven with Christ, sitting in judgment upon the wicked, all of whom will be dead. The earth will be desolate, and inhabited only by Satan, and his host of evil angels. At the end of that time the wicked dead will be raised, and, led by Satan, will go up and surround "the beloved city," in which the saints are, who will have come down from heaven with it; and then fire from God will devour all the ungodly, and purify the earth. Then the second coming will be complete.

COMING IN HIS KINGDOM.

No; Christ does not first come into His kingdom at the close of the thousand years. We know this from the fact that He has gone "to receive for Himself a kingdom, and to return," and that when He appears it will be "in His kingdom." When He returns to gather His people, He will have received His kingdom. See Luke xix. 11-15.

Moreover, when He comes and raises the righteous dead, changing the living also to immortality, taking them to Himself, He places them on thrones of judgment, and they live and reign with Him in heaven a thousand years. He will come sitting on the throne of His glory, and will say to the righteous, "Come, ye blessed of My Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the earth." This shows that He will then be reigning in His kingdom.

You say that you thought the kingdom was this earth. You are right; this earth was prepared for man's dominion from the beginning; and the saints will be reigning over it during the thousand years that they are in heaven before the resurrection of the wicked. The earth will have been given to Christ for a possession, and He will be sharing it with His saints, else they could not sit on thrones of judgment, judging the men of this world. Is not that clear?

The saints will be with Christ in the New Jerusalem, the capital of the earth. They will be in Eden, which is a part of the earth, having once been on it, and destined to be on it again, the spot where dominion was first given to man. On the

very place where man first began to reign over this earth, the dominion over it will be restored.

A WORD ABOUT BELIEVING.

You say that it is difficult to believe, when so many different things are taught, and there are so many conflicting doctrines about the same thing. This should not be. Let me tell you something: Never believe or try to believe anything that you find it hard to believe. Why not?—For various reasons, chiefly because such "belief" is not belief at all, and besides, that which is really hard to believe is not true.

Belief, true faith, is spontaneous. It comes from hearing God's Word of truth. Truth, self-evident truth, is never hard to believe. It carries conviction with it, and compels belief. Error has no real foundation, and we should not try to believe it. In short, that which ought to be believed carries its own credentials with it; and that which does not bear the stamp of truth, that which is not a plain, "Thus saith the Lord," must not be believed.

It is true that people may, by parleying with truth, and rejecting it, get into a condition where they cannot possibly believe truth. That will be the condition of all who are lost; and therefore we ought to be careful never to trifle with our conscience. When truth comes to us, we should welcome it and accept it at once, no matter how contrary to our former ways and thoughts, and it will then be our shield and defence.

EATING THE PASSOVER.

PLEASE harmonise John xviii. 28, last clause, with the third column in 'Editor's corner' of PRESENT TRUTH No. 27. Thanks for the truths already opened up."

THE article referred to, in fixing the day of the Pentecost following the crucifixion, incidentally points out that the Friday, on which Jesus was crucified was the first day of the Passover week and consequently a ceremonial Sabbath, from the morrow after which the fifty days were reckoned, and that the evening before, the night that Jesus ate the Passover lamb, and was betrayed, was the regular time for that feast, the fourteenth day of the first month.

The verse referred to reads thus: "Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the hall of judgment; and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment

hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover."

This was in the morning following the betrayal of Jesus. There are two explanations which suggest themselves. One is, that the reference is to the whole Passover week, in which unleavened bread was to be eaten, and no leaven, that is, nothing of corruption was to be in the houses or about the persons of the Jews. The whole week is frequently spoken of as the Passover. The Pharisees who were eager for the death of Jesus, did not wish to be hindered from proceeding with the festival.

It is possible, however, that in their eager plotting to capture Jesus these Jews had not had time to partake of the Passover the night before. It was still early in the morning, and they had done a great deal that night. The first suggestion seems the more plausible; but it is impossible to say with certainty which is correct, and this very fact shows us that the question is not a vital one.

THE LAW OF GOD OUR DEFENCE.

WE may eat of the trees of the garden," said Eve, "but of the tree that is in the midst of the garden we may not eat, lest we die." *Lest we die.* God had said, "*Ye shall surely die.*" Here was the loose opening in the joints of the armour. If the woman had set the *thou shalt* of God against the *thou shalt not* of the tempter it had been her safety. This is ever our defence—*His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.* This is the weapon against which no foe can prevail.

The great law of God admits of no argument; it is supreme, unalterable, eternal. See how the Lord Jesus took His stand, clad from head to foot in this suit of heavenly mail, through which no fiery dart of the wicked one could pass. "It is written, thou shalt," "it is written, thou shalt not." The absolute surrender of ourselves to God for an utter obedience is our safety. But to loosen the authority of the law is to fall an easy prey to the adversary. —Mark Guy Pearse.

For truth is ever the fitting time; who waits till circumstances completely favour his undertaking, will never accomplish anything.—Luther.

* *

We must be as careful to keep friends as to make them. The affections should not be mere "tents of a night." Friendship gives no privilege to make ourselves disagreeable.—Sir John Lubbock.



MOULDING THE CLAY.

WITHIN their tiny hands my children hold
A ball of yielding clay,
And, as they try some dainty form to mould,
I hear them softly say,
"What shall we make? an apple, or a vase?
Some marbles, or a fan?"
One little boy, a smile upon his face,
Says, "I shall make a man."

Straightway, with lengthened face, he at his
task
Begins, and 'neath the hands
Unskillful, weak, and yet too proud to ask
For aid, a form expands,
Crude, and yet not too poor to show the man
Hid in the maker's thought—
How different yet if some skilled artisan
The ball of clay had wrought!

To-day within my hands my children lie;
I shape them as I will,
And seek for aid from Him that is on high,
That He may with His skill
Teach my weak, willing hands to rightly mould
The clay that I have sought,
That in true forms of beauty may unfold
The Maker's highest thought.

—Transcript.

THE MOTHER'S CONVERSION SAVED THE CHILD.

WELL, I declare, that child is the most trying youngster that ever lived," said a mother to a neighbour who had just as poor management as herself.

"Well," said the one addressed, "I'd whip it out of her. You won't do your duty if you don't make her obey when you speak to her."

Then the mother, with boiling feelings of "duty," slapped the little four-year-old, to make her pick up some toys that she had left lying around. The little one had protested, saying, "I don't want to pick them up now;" but after receiving several slaps, she proceeded to do so, and threw them in the box, breaking several in the process. Then the mother shut her up in the bedroom.

At this punishment she both kicked and screamed, until the indignant mother said to her, "I will give you a sound whipping, if you don't behave yourself."

Very soon the whipping was administered. The little one then climbed upon the bed and cried herself to sleep, while the mother tried to quiet her disturbed conscience with the texts, "Spare the rod and spoil the child;" "Though ye beat him, yet will he not die."

Yet days and weeks of such treatment had gone by, and instead of the child growing better, she had only grown worse. What could be the matter? Surely, such rebellion must be stopped.

The neighbour went home. The mother, tired and heart-sick, fell on her knees at the bed of the sleeping, sobbing little one. The sobbing continued, and well nigh broke her own stubborn heart.

"O Lord," she cried, "I'm not fit to bring up the little one Thou hast given me."

She remained upon her knees, and rapid were the texts and quotations from the Bible, as well as suggestions from Christian mothers, that came into her mind:—

"He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." "Never let a frown gather upon your brow." "Never strike a child unless you can first pray over it." "Don't speak of your children's faults before others."

"O God," she cried, "forgive me my sins against this child! Help me to remove the stone from the door of my heart. Oh, give me Thy Holy Spirit, and let its gentle influence be felt upon the child!"

The child awoke after a while, and was moved to penitence by the mother's penitence and tears. The little arms went round her neck, the curly head nestled on her shoulder, and she sobbed, "Mamma, I want you to ask Jesus to make me a good girl."

They prayed together, then both arose, and the mother took the little one in her arms, and told her how anxious she was to let Jesus rule her own actions, so she would not speak and act so cross and sinful. She told her how it grieved the good angels and the Holy Spirit. The little one comprehended so much that the mother could not help thinking, "And He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,

and the heart of the children to their fathers."

It was nearing time to get dinner for papa; but first they knelt and asked God to give them strength to be kind to each other, and make things cheerful for the one that had toiled away from home for them. How willing the little feet now were to run on errands for mamma! How she delighted to make little loaves of bread and clean up everything! Then, with a few gentle suggestions, she helped set the table. And at times she was singing, in baby fashion, bits of her own make-up, such as, "Jesus loves me, and is making a pretty home for me and my papa and mamma, and all the good people." Again she asked questions about the home in Eden, yes, and about the home here too.

Even the cat seemed to enjoy her sunshiny heart, made so by the Spirit of God.

Parents, are our children unruly? Are we inclined to lose heart and say, "It seems the devil has possession of them"? We are told, "Ye are labourers together with God."

Is not the home the place to begin? Is there a field of labour that will exert a wider influence for good than this sacred domain? Did not the Lord say, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise"? Can it be said of us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things," if we neglect the seeming little duties of our home?

Jesus could have rolled away the stone from the grave of Lazarus; He could have taken of the grave-clothes; but no—He wanted His followers to be labourers with Him. To every parent of the household of faith He says, "Remove the stumbling-block," "Take ye away the stone." And may God help us to heed the message for to-day, that at the judgment bar of God we may be able to say, by His grace, "Here am I and the children Thou hast given me."

—Mrs. C. H. Goodwin.

THE MINERS OF CORNWALL.

THE story of the workers in the tin-mines of Cornwall, is a story of hard work, poverty, and danger—a dark picture, indeed, were it not for the "bright side" which is found in the deep and tender piety that pervades all their lives. A writer in *McClure's Magazine* pays this tribute to the Cornish miner:—

"His gentleness, his piety, his resignation, might make one forget, in speaking to him, the heroism of his daily life, the Titanic efforts that go to each daily task. . . . You rarely hear a Cornish miner complaining of his lot; and undoubtedly the main secret of his patience is his faith in God, his resignation to the dispensations of Providence. There are no truer Chris-

tians to be found throughout the British Isles than these poor, rough miners of Cornwall. God is always in their thoughts. He is always before their eyes. Going and coming, and at their work, they sing hymns. They see in every disaster and in every escape from disaster, a direct manifestation of Providence."

There is always the possibility of accidents, and the fear of them is on many of the miners. The steel cable, over half a mile in length, which holds the gig, or iron cage, in which the men are lowered down, down, three thousand feet into the earth, has more than once broken, hurling the occupants of the car to a horrible death.

"In August of 1883 a terrible fatality of this nature occurred. There were twelve men in the gig, and a thirteenth, contrary to regulation, had clambered on to the roof, and was standing there, holding on by the cable. The men had done their work, and were going home. It is reported that, according to general custom, they sang hymns as they ascended. On reaching the surface, the man on the roof stepped off, and turned round to watch the issue of his mates. But where the gig had been but a second previously was now nothing but a gaping void. The rope had snapped, and the gig, with its living freight, had been dashed to the bottom of the shaft. Not one of the poor bodies could be recognised in the mass of human debris that was brought up from below."

Rather than risk their lives in the gig, many use the "man-engine" to descend to their "level," and to rise again to the surface, though accidents with this device are by no means uncommon. Others "walk down" to their work. "They call the laborious descent of perpendicular ladders 'walking down,' and describe their ascent as 'walking up.' In the Levant Mine, to reach the lowest level, one must walk down eighty ladders, sheer for the most part, and the shortest of them thirty feet long. A man who thus walks down to the bottom of this mine in half an hour is reckoned agile. It may take him an hour to walk up."

Accidents with dynamite are rare, but they do sometimes occur. "The one of which the miners talk most readily was not an accident, but an escape, in which again they trace the hand of God. This is the story of Verran, the miner who, when a 'hole' was about to explode, sent his comrade to the surface, and knelt down in prayer, awaiting death. The explosion came, the rocks were flung up and down, and around the kneeling form, and made an arch over and about him, and protected him from the flying fragments, so that he was found safe and whole."

But the "run" or the sudden downfall of thousands of tons of rock and rubbish, is most feared by the miners. It comes almost without warning, and those working in its course rarely escape. A beautiful

incident is related in connection with one of these "runs," which occurred in 1893, burying eight men four hundred and twelve fathoms down beneath a mass of rock weighing thousands of tons. "Among them was a young man named Osborne, who, hailed by the rescuing party after forty-five hours of strenuous labour, was asked if anyone was with him. 'Nobody is here,' he answered, 'but God and myself.' He was heard at intervals again, and what he always and only said was, 'Praise the Lord!' When they reached him at last, they found only his dead body; and it was seen that he had been terribly battered by the fall of the rocks. His feet had been crushed to a pulp."

It is impossible to read of this poor Cornish lad, as he lay battered and bruised and shut in to certain death, without uplifting the heart in praise and gratitude for the great, all-sustaining, all-pervading Love that is able to take the sting from so terrible a death, and fill the heart of the sufferer with the joy of that perfect peace that the world can neither give nor take away.

A SINGLE IDLE WORD.

"I WAS not a bad young man," said an elderly gentleman lately, "but was given to fun, enjoyed a good time, and, while not usually vulgar or low in my conversation, had a keen sense of the ludicrous, and could not always resist the temptation to make an apt rejoinder, even when it involved some coarseness."

"A party of us were camping, mostly young fellows, but one or two were middle-aged men. We had a good time, and there was only one thing to regret, and that I have regretted all my life. We sat around the fire the first evening telling stories, and a story which one of the older men told suggested an obscene comment, which I uttered before I thought twice."

"I could have bitten my tongue off the next instant. The man simply looked straight at me for a moment across the fire, and I knew that he judged me by that remark. I knew that I did not deserve the opinion which in that instant he formed of me; but I knew also that I had given him just cause to estimate me as he did. That one careless word did not fairly represent me, but I could not deny that it was my own."

"All that night I lay looking up at the stars and thinking over what I had said. I could almost have counted on my fingers all the other sentences of like character that I had ever spoken. I was not habitually vulgar, but for that one word, and all like words and thoughts, I despised myself."

"I determined to be so careful during the remainder of the week as to redeem myself in the sight of that man; the others knew me better. But a telegram called

him back to the city next morning, and I saw him infrequently after that."

"He always treated me civilly when we met, but I never saw him without feeling that he still measured me by that word. I had opportunities to show him that I was not wholly bad, but they were too few to give a comprehensive view of my character, or really to influence his opinion of me."

"In a strange way, after a year or two had passed, my name was mentioned for a position which was desirable, and which I seemed likely to secure, but this man was one of three to decide the matter. Without positively knowing how it came about, I could never doubt that a quiet intimation that he considered me unfit was what defeated me."

"Later I found a situation which, although a good one, was in a very different line of work from what I had chosen, and I have never doubted that my whole life was changed by that idle word."

"Did I learn the lesson? Yes, I did! My habit, now almost lifelong, has made impurity, even in its milder forms, repulsive. The memory of that incident has stopped many a hasty utterance, and in the years that followed it the warning of the Divine Teacher has added a sense of responsibility to the sense of shame. 'I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.'"—*Youth's Companion*.

HOW DO YOU TREAT THE CHILDREN?

As the boys grow up make companions of them, then they will not seek companionship elsewhere.

Respect their little secrets; if they have concealments, worrying them will never make them tell, and patience will probably do the work.

Let the children make a noise sometimes, their happiness is as important as your nerves.

Allow them, as they grow older, to have opinions of their own; make them individuals, not mere echoes.

Remember that without physical health mental attainment is worthless; let them lead free, happy lives, which will strengthen both mind and body.

Bear in mind that you are largely responsible for your child's inherited character, and have patience with faults and failings.

Talk hopefully to your children of life and its possibilities; you have no right to depress them because you have suffered.

Impress upon them from early infancy that actions have results, and that they cannot escape consequences even by being sorry when they have acted wrongly.—*Talmage*.



WILLIE AND THE PEAR.

LITTLE Willie stood under the pear-tree old ;
The fruit was all glowing with russet and gold,
Hanging temptingly low ; how he longed for a
bite,

Though he knew if he took one it wouldn't be
right !

Said he, "I don't see why my father should
say,

'Don't touch the old pear-tree, Willie, to-day ;'
I shouldn't have thought—now they're hanging
so low—

When I asked just for one, he should answer me
'No.'

"He would never find out if I took but just one,
And they do look so good, shining out in the
sun ;

There are dozens and dozens, and he wouldn't
miss
So paltry a thing as a pear like this."

He stretched forth his hand, but a low, mourn-
ful strain,
Came wandering dreamily over his brain ;
In his bosom a beautiful harp had long laid
That the angel of conscience quite frequently
played.

And he sung, "Little Willie, beware, oh, be-
ware !

Your father has gone, but your Maker is there ;
How sad you would feel if you heard the Lord
say,

'This dear little boy stole a pear to-day !'

Then Willie turned round, and, as still as a
mouse,

Crept slowly and carefully into the house ;
In his own little chamber he knelt down to
pray

That the Lord would forgive him, and please
not to say,

"Little Willie almost stole a pear to-day."

—Selected.

THE KING'S GARDEN.

HONESTY.



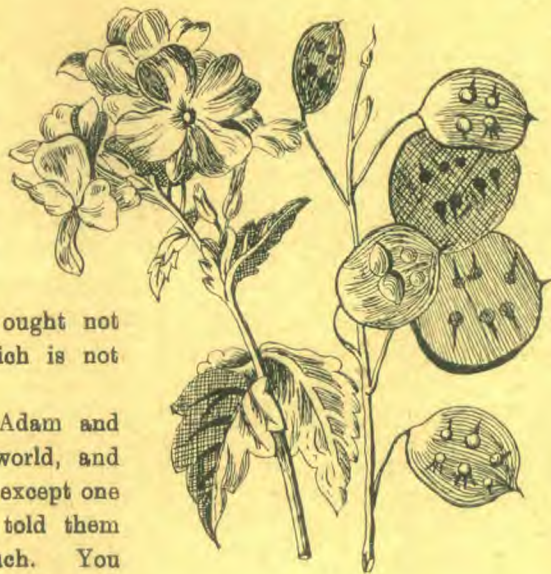
HONESTY is the name given
to the plant in our picture.
The seed-case is very pretty,
and looks something like a
pearl or silver coin. Bunches
of these are sometimes used
to ornament rooms.

We have chosen this plant because of
its name, to stand for the flower of Honesty
which springs from the seed of the eighth
commandment—"Thou shalt not steal."

Everyone, even a very little child, knows
that it is wrong to steal,—to take something
that belongs to someone else. This is be-
cause God has put the seeds of His truth
into the heart of
every little child
that is born. He
writes His law
in the members
of our bodies,
and so even the
heathen who
have never
heard His name,
know that they ought not
to take that which is not
theirs.

God gave to Adam and
Eve the whole world, and
everything in it except one
tree, which He told them
not even to touch. You
think they ought to have
been very happy and contented with a
world full of beautiful things, and so they
were for a time.

Then Eve began to long for the one
thing that God had not given them. She
looked at the forbidden tree, touched it,
and at last "took of the fruit thereof, and
did eat, and gave also unto her husband
with her, and he did eat."



They broke the law that God had
written in their members, and they thought
that they had gained a great deal. But do
you know that one "can receive nothing
except it be given him from heaven." We
may try to get what God has not given to
us, but this is the surest way to lose it
altogether.

All that God sees is for our good, He
will give us when the right time comes ;
for "your Heavenly Father knoweth what
things we have need of." So let us trust
in Him, and then we shall never want to
steal,—to get by dishonesty what He has
not given to us. We may seem to grasp
and hold it for a time, but "the wages of
sin is death," and that means the loss of
everything.

Listen to the advice which Paul gave to
young Timothy : "Godliness with con-
tentment is great gain. For we brought
nothing into this world, and it is certain
we can carry nothing out. And having
food and raiment, let us be therewith con-
tent. But they that will be rich fall into
temptation and a snare."

There are other ways of stealing, besides
putting forth our hands, as Eve did, and
taking for ourselves what is not ours. Did
you ever hear Shakespeare's lines :—

"Who steals my purse, steals trash ; 'tis some-
thing, nothing ;

'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to
thousands ;

But he that filches from me my good name,

Robs me of that
which not en-
riches him,
And makes me
poor indeed."

"A good
name," God's
Word tells us,
"is rather to be
chosen than
great riches," so
if by our words
we steal away
the good name
of another, we
are doing him a
greater injury
than if we took
his money or
any of his goods.

We can also steal the *time* of others, by
giving them unnecessary work to do for us.
When you are careless or untidy in your
habits, or when you need constant watch-
ing in order to be kept at your work or
lessons, you are stealing the time of your
busy mothers, and older brothers and sis-
ters, and robbing others of the work that
they might be doing for them,

The Bible tells of those who "rob God." Perhaps you do not know how we can do this. God has kept for Himself one-tenth of all that He gives to man. He leaves it to us to give Him back a faithful tithe—a tenth part—of all that He gives us. So if we do not pay Him that which He plainly tells us is His own, what are we doing?—Robbing God.

He says that those who thus rob Him are "cursed with a curse," but those who bring Him all the tithes will not have room to receive the great blessing that He will give them. Would you not rather have nine parts with God's blessing, than to keep all ten parts and have a curse instead?

Besides the tithe, God has kept for Himself one of the seven days of the week.

This—the Sabbath—He calls "*My holy day*." Then if we use this day for our own work or pleasure, are we not robbing God of His holy time?

But God says to us, "Thou shalt not steal," and His Word is Spirit and life, able to fulfil itself, and to keep us from doing anything that He tells us not to do. So when He says, "Thou shalt not steal," there is the

same power in that Word as when He said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

His precious Word of power will keep out of our hearts every seed of the evil weeds of dishonesty, and fill them with the sweet, fresh flowers of honesty and perfect truth.

IN THE WOODS.

GOD has made everything beautiful in its season. He has also fitted each thing perfectly for the surroundings in which He has placed it.

Watch the fish, how easily and swiftly they dart about in the water! This is their element, for God has made them to live there; but take one out of the water into the air, and how helpless it is, and how soon it dies.

The birds which float in the air would be just as helpless, and lose their lives

just as quickly, if they were put under the water. Their light bodies and buoyant wings were made to fly in the open firmament.

There are some creatures that can live under the earth, like the mole, and the earthworm, because God meant that for their home.

It is a wonderful study that will last you all your life, to see how beautifully each creature is exactly fitted by God for its place in His kingdom.

"O Lord, how manifold are Thy works!
In wisdom hast Thou made them all,"

and we may learn wisdom by studying the wonderful works which God's wisdom has planned and formed.

In this world of sorrow and death, where "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth

But there are some creatures which seem to have no other means of defence, that look so much like their surroundings that it is almost impossible to distinguish them. You have heard of the chameleon, which changes its colour to suit its surroundings; of caterpillars which are able to make themselves look just like pieces of dry stick; and of insects which take the exact shape of the leaves on the trees where they live.

Things quite as wonderful and interesting are going on at your feet and over your heads every day that you walk in the fields or woods. The busy bee goes buzzing loudly among the flowers, in full sight, for its sharp sting keeps other creatures from being too free with it, as you may know to your cost, if you have ever tried it.

But the gentle, harmless butterfly flits silently from flower to flower, and though it can easily be seen when flying, it folds its wings and settles like a petal of a flower upon the grass or shrubs. Have you not often mistaken one for a flower leaf? And no doubt other insects and birds are often so deceived.

This morning when I was walking in the forest, I saw

some deer whose light brown coats—a pretty contrast to the deep green foliage all around them—made it very easy to watch them. But how fleetly they bounded away among the trees when my footsteps startled them. Their light flying feet are their means of self-defence.

I sat down to rest at the foot of a tree, and presently heard a slight rustling sound about a yard away from me.

Looking in the direction of the sound, I saw what

I am sure I should not otherwise have noticed: the pretty head of a little brown mouse slightly raised from its hole, so that it could look round and see if it was safe to venture out. It was the exact colour of the ground, and would never have been



observed by anyone who was not watching for it, as it waited "as still as a mouse," till it was satisfied that there was no danger. Then it came up out of its hole, and started in search of food, but catching sight of me, it scampered quickly home again, and did not come out as long as I was there.

A short distance farther on, I saw what I took for a tree-toad, that I had disturbed, dart into a heap of dead leaves. I searched for it carefully where I had seen it fall, but I had some difficulty in finding it, because it was so much like the leaves among which it lay motionless, as though it knew that its only hope of escape was in being mistaken for one of them. And indeed, its wrinkled yellow skin was a perfect match, and its mouth looked exactly like the curled edges of the dry leaves.

I lifted the toad gently several times with a stick, but it flopped limply back among the leaves without a sign of life, its tiny "hands" spread out like little bits of dry, yellow leaf stalks. When I had scraped away the leaves all round it, it gave one lively hop into the midst of another heap, where it lay as limp and motionless as before, and did not move again, though I waited for some time.

My way home led me past a pond in the wood, and as I walked down to the water's edge, about a dozen creatures darted at once from almost under my feet, and splashed into the water. Every step disturbed others, which hastened to join their comrades in the pond. I looked closely to see what it was that had escaped my notice, but at first could see nothing. Then I saw that what I had mistaken for green leaves floating among the green scum on the surface of the water, were the heads of small green frogs, which had been lying among the grass, at the water's edge.

I looked for others, but could see them only when they moved, although I must have disturbed at least fifty in the space of a few yards. Both on the land and in the water their bright green bodies were so much like the grass and rushes and leaves among which they lay or floated, that it was difficult to see them, even when looking for them, until one's eyes became used to seeing them.

In any ordinary country walk you will, if you make use of the eyes that God has given you to read in His great Book of Nature, see much that will teach you of His love and wisdom in caring for His creatures, and lead you to put your full trust in Him.



MUSICAL BEETLES.

THE researches of Mr. C. J. Gahan show that while the structure of the musical or stridulating organs of beetles is extremely simple, they sometimes possess contrivances for varying the pitch. The general structure of such an organ is a hard surface covered with striations, over which some other member of the body furnished with a rasping edge or area is rubbed. When the striated surface is divided into parts with finer and coarser markings, variations of pitch can be produced. The organs occur in various species on the head, the legs, the wing-cases and the hind body. The katydid and the cricket, which produce musical tones in the same way, do not belong to the beetle family.

THE GREAT SILK-PRODUCERS.

CHINA still easily leads the world in the production of raw silk, Europe ranking next with about half the production of China, and Japan making a close third. In 1899 the exports from China were 16,986,443 pounds, and from Japan 7,808,693 pounds. The entire production of Europe was only 8,829,075 pounds, divided as follows: Italy 6,814,070 pounds, France 1,234,576 pounds, Austria-Hungary 608,470 pounds, and Spain 171,959 pounds.

ANTS THAT GROW MUSHROOMS.

PROFESSOR W. M. WHEELER, in the *American Naturalist*, describes a species of ants which raise "mushrooms" for food. They first cut leaves into small pieces and carry them into their underground chambers. Then they reduce the leaves to a pulp, which they deposit in a heap. In this heap the mycelium of a species of

fungus finds lodging, and, the subterranean conditions favouring such a result, minute swellings are produced on the vegetable mass. These are the "mushrooms," which constitute almost the sole food of the colony of ants that cultivates them.

WASPS, THE INVINCIBLES.

FROM early ages to the present time the "fiery darts of the wasps" have furnished illustrations of invincible attack. In the Bible the Lord uses the hornet to help clear a way for the chosen people: "And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites." Not only have armies been dispersed, but cities have been abandoned because of the onset of hornets. In "Wasps and Their Ways" many interesting examples are cited.

In "Cruden's Concordance," in the introduction to the subject of hornets, we read that "a Christian city, being besieged by Saporos, King of Persia, was delivered by hornets; for the elephants and beasts, being stung by them, waxed unruly, and so the whole army fled."

Moffet says: "If we will credit *Ælianus*, the Phasilites, in times past, were constrained to forsake their city, for all their defence, munition and armour, all through the multitude and cruel fierceness of the wasps, wherewith they were annoyed."

A more modern incident is this: "Eight miles from Grandie the muleteers suddenly called out, 'Marambundas! Marambundas!' which indicated the approach of wasps. In a moment all the animals, whether loaded or otherwise, lay down on their backs, kicking violently, while the blacks and all others ran in different directions, all being careful to avoid by a wide sweep the swarms of tormentors that came forward like a cloud.

"I never witnessed a panic so sudden

and complete. The alarm was not without good reason, for so severe is the torture inflicted by these pygmy assailants that the bravest travellers are not ashamed to fly the instant they perceive the host approaching, which is of common occurrence in the *campos*."

A SKULL-BORING INSECT.

PROFESSOR PYERS and Mr. F. L. Wolford, who have been investigating the work of the mound-builders in the Batchua Mountains, along the Amazon River in South America, have discovered a new and terrible insect which, for want of a more scientific name, they call the skull-borer.

The Batchua Indians, says the *New York Press*, are punished by branding and banishment, and the two explorers noticed that they invariably returned insane. This excited their curiosity, and they examined the bodies in the graveyard where the insane are buried, and found that the skulls were penetrated as if by a small caliber bullet. Then they went to the table-lands to which the banished men wander, and there they found an insect similar to the "jigger."

Apparently this insect was common and harmless enough, but under the glass his bone-boring propensities were manifest. The entire edge of his circular shell was a miniature saw. When disturbed he turned round and round, and quickly sank into the hard wood to which he was clinging, leaving a clean hole behind, filled with the fine dust from his borings, completely screening him in his course. The effect of the operations of the skull-borer on men is thus described:—

"We closely scrutinised several of these 'possessed' Batchuas, who roamed at will through the crowd that surrounded us, and found the insane symptoms as varied as those to be found in any asylum for the demented.

"Some of the men had special hobbies. Some were continually calm and pensive, attempting no violence in any form. Others were continually vicious, and others were vicious only at times. Others were upon imaginary hunting trips, and hid for game behind the huts. There was no trace of physical weakness."

THE INTELLIGENCE OF WASPS.

THE greatest display of wasp intelligence I ever saw manifested was by a queen in early spring. A little earthen bird-house was fastened under the eaves in the rear of the house, and she selected this snug retreat as a fitting place to rear the future colony.

She had commenced work when a pair of blue birds disputed her right to the

house. The queen is necessarily absent much of the time scraping weather-beaten boards or posts to get material to make her paper cells, and during her absence the birds were busily at work carrying in material for their nest. But soon I heard them making a plaintive noise. They stood on the edge of the roof, the female with the mouthful of straw, and whenever she attempted to go to the house the wasp would dart toward her and drive her back. But this state of affairs could not last long. The queen must go on with her work, and no sooner was she gone than the birds recommenced the building, and were fast filling up the house. And now this wise queen went to other queens—who probably had not yet commenced to work, as it was April—and made them understand the dilemma she was in, and five sisters came to her aid, and remained on the outside of the little house while she went to and fro on her journeys, and each time the birds came near they would dart at them. This continued until the birds were driven from the field and obliged to take another house. And now the five queens disappeared, leaving their sister in peaceful possession of the property.—*Wide Awake*.



THE *Catholic Times* says that "in Holland the Catholics not so many years ago were ill-treated and powerless," but that "at the elections which have just taken place in that country the Catholics were so successful that they are now, like the Catholic members of the German Reichstag, the dominating Parliamentary factor."

THE Pope has written a very indignant letter concerning the French legislation against "Associations," which is merely that Roman Catholic convents should be under Government supervision. This is called "persecution" on the part of the State. There is no doubt but that such supervision is necessary, since enough occasionally comes to the light to show that in many convents and Roman Catholic asylums a regular system of slavery exists.

TRUTH is none the less true by being told by those who ordinarily pervert it, and so the following from the *Catholic Times*, entitled, "The World in the Church," may be read with profit by all. The tendency toward giving the people what they naturally desire, instead of only what they need, is so great that all Christians must be on their guard against it. The *Times* says:—

"We had been accustomed to think that churches were buildings into which the world came in order to be made other-worldly. But, apparently, we were mistaken. The world is to be introduced for its own sake, and on its own terms. So at least it would seem if we may accept the statements given by the daily papers last week. Mrs. Brown-Potter, an eminent American artiste, has been declaiming beautiful poetry in a certain Anglican church, at the request of the clergyman in charge. Vast crowds assembled to hear the dis-

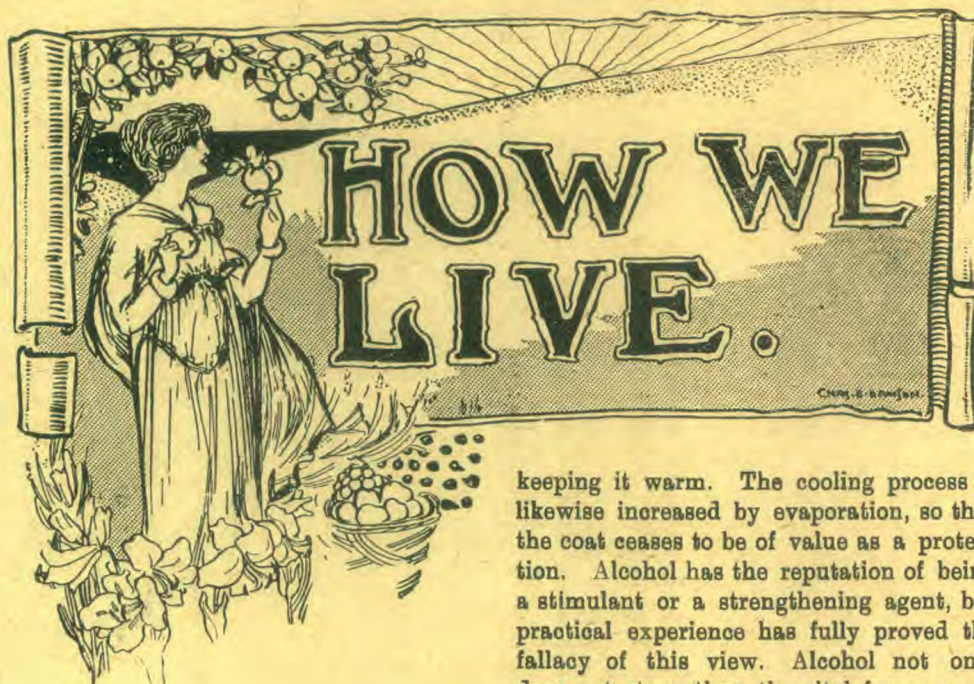
tinguished lady recite, and we have no doubt the occasion was a great success. But what is the Establishment coming to when such dramatic recitals are tolerated in places of worship? Is there no authority to prevent the Anglican churches from being converted into merely secular amusement halls? Of late there has been a great variety of entertainment in Protestant and Dissenting places of worship. One man gives magic lantern shows; another lectures on the poets; another surrounds his pulpit with relics of Waterloo; yet another serves out hot coffee in the porch. It may be all very well, but it does seem as if the people could no longer be attracted to church by means of religious services alone. It appears to be evident that the National Church has lost its hold on the nation, and that it can no longer manage to get a congregation. And we venture to add that not even by these worldly means will it succeed in keeping a congregation. The novelty soon wears off, and then people who have been used to come to church from motives of worldly curiosity or worldly pleasure will cease to come at all. By all means get the world into the church, but as a sinner, not as a sight-seer; to be converted, not to be amused."

The Gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation," and it is the only thing that has power.

It is said that the new Federal Defence Bill in Australia "can hardly be described as conscription," but it is certainly not far removed from it. It provides that in case of war or other emergency, all male inhabitants who are British subjects, who have been resident in the Colony for six months, and are between eighteen and sixty years of age are liable to compulsory service. It is estimated that on this basis 970,000 men would be available in time of war. The great proclamation among the nations is beginning to be, "Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near." Joel iii. 9.

THE Evangelists of the London City Mission say that it is a familiar scene to see a drunken woman staggering through the streets with a baby in her arms and one or two little ones clinging to her skirts. What the future of the little ones must be cannot be put into words. Some of them will surely be saved from the pit, but what of the rest? With their inheritance of sin, and their training in vice from infancy, they will help to make the times perilous. And the case is not much better when we turn to the middle and upper classes, only that the plague spot is better concealed. A morning paper, speaking of the women of those classes, says that "they drink alcohol in a way that would have shocked their mothers fifty or even twenty or thirty years ago." Undoubtedly it would, since such a thing was almost unknown then.

Two professors in the Medical department of the University of Michigan (U.S.A.) have discovered a most powerful antiseptic in organic acid peroxides, which they are able to prepare in any quantity. They have demonstrated that these peroxides become decomposed in water, giving solutions which, even when containing only five-thousandths of 1 per cent. of active oxygen derived from hyperoxides, are fatal to all bacteria, while a solution of ten times that strength will destroy spores. The hyperoxide used is benzolactyl hyperoxide, which may be safely taken internally in large doses without poisonous effect. Every person has to a large extent the essential element of this antiseptic at his own command, in the air, if he only cares enough for his health to use it. Pure air in abundance, pure water, and heaven's sunlight will preserve one free from the ravages of almost any sort of microbe.



WESLEY ON HEALTH.

IT is well known that John Wesley lived to a good age, and during his whole life worked very hard and preserved excellent health; but not all who know this consider that his good health and ability to work was the result of careful attention to hygienic rules. Here is some of his teaching, which is as good now as when he wrote it:—

We may strengthen any weak part of the body by constant exercise. Thus the lungs may be strengthened by loud speaking or walking up an easy ascent; the digestion and the nerves, by riding; the arms by strongly rubbing them daily.

The flesh-brush is a most useful exercise, especially to strengthen any part that is weak.

Those who read or write much should learn to do it standing; otherwise it will impair their health.

The love of God, as it is the sovereign remedy of all miseries, so in particular it effectually prevents all the bodily disorders the passions introduce, by keeping the passions themselves within due bounds. And, by the unspeakable joy and perfect calm, serenity and tranquillity it gives the mind, it becomes the most powerful of all the means of health and long life.

ALCOHOL A WET OVERCOAT.

SOMEBODY has suggested that alcohol may be aptly compared to a wet overcoat. An overcoat is useful when dry, although its extra weight may under some circumstances prove a burden; but a wet overcoat is not only a heavy burden to carry, but it is also a good conductor of heat, and hence cools the body instead of

keeping it warm. The cooling process is likewise increased by evaporation, so that the coat ceases to be of value as a protection. Alcohol has the reputation of being a stimulant or a strengthening agent, but practical experience has fully proved the fallacy of this view. Alcohol not only does not strengthen the vital forces or in any way facilitate vital work, but, on the contrary, it exhausts the energies of the body, while adding a burden to the liver, kidneys, and other eliminative organs grievous to bear. It is truly a wet overcoat.—*Good Health.*

STRAWBERRIES AND GOUT.

A WRITER in *Nature* speaks of the cruel medical tyranny which banishes the strawberry from the diet of the gouty, and quotes what Linnæus had to say about the curative properties of this delightful fruit. The great naturalist was persuaded to take strawberries during a severe attack of sciatica, with the result that a sweet sleep ensued, and when he awoke, the pain had sensibly subsided. On the next day he ate as many strawberries as possible, and on the following morning the pain was gone, and he was able to leave his bed. Gouty pains returned at the same date in the next year, but they were dispersed as soon as Linnæus was able to get strawberries.

FRESH AIR FOR CONSUMPTION.

THE breathing of fresh air, by night and by day, in all seasons and weathers, is now acknowledged by every scientific physician to be the only effectual means of checking the great white plague, as consumption has been aptly called, says a writer in the *Medical Times*. "The patient must sleep with the windows wide open, and spend his days out of doors, guarded only against exposure to storm and draft. Under this treatment it is found that the most delicate sufferers, even in the advanced stages of the disease, gain vigour almost at once, and recover entirely whenever sufficient long tissue is left to build upon.

"The question naturally arises (though we do not remember having seen it discussed in print), why a mode of living which is so beneficial in the case of subjects reduced to almost the lowest ebb by the most formidable of chronic maladies, should not be equally suitable for defending well people from its attacks. If fresh air is an almost infallible cure for phthisis, when a cure is in the nature of things possible, does it not follow, *a fortiori*, that it must also be the best agent for preventing the development of the disease in the healthy, and finally for abolishing it entirely? The dangers from exposure having proved to be wholly imaginary, so far as the frailest invalids are concerned, is it not simply absurd for people in good general condition and with lungs as yet untainted, to shut themselves up and breathe over and over again their own and each other's bodily emanations, according to the present civilised custom?

ENLARGED LYMPHATIC GLANDS.

THE cause of enlarged lymphatic glands is usually tuberculosis, but in the majority of cases recovery takes place spontaneously. This is because the glands are good fighters in the first place. It is their business to resist germs. They are policemen placed about the citadel of life for the purpose of protecting it. Suppose there were a row of police—a hundred in line—standing in front of a house, and that burglars were compelled to fight every one of those policemen before they could get into the house; it would stand a very good chance of remaining unmolested. In just this way the lymphatic glands are policemen. If a splinter lodges in your finger, and a nest of germs attacks the body, then the lymphatic glands in the neighbourhood come to the rescue from every direction, and the nearer we approach the centre of the body, the greater number of glands we find to oppose the germs. They must fight their way through a long procession of glands before they can obtain a foothold.

But when germs get into the glands themselves, the power of the latter is vastly crippled. If they become seriously affected, they should be removed; yet people are often in too great a hurry to remove the glands, which are exceedingly useful, for when once removed, the natural barriers of the body have been taken down, and there is nothing to prevent the germs from marching on.—*Good Health.*

WHOEVER eats too much, or of food which is not healthful, is weakening his power to resist the clamours of other appetites and passions.

* *

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WHEN asked his opinion as to the secret of happiness, Mr. Carnegie, the Scotch-American millionaire, replied: "A good conscience and a good digestion; and poverty is favourable to both."

It has been well said by Lord Rosebery that "vanity is a centipede with corns on every foot." The reason why some people are continually being "hurt," or "having their corns trod on," is their excessive vanity. Sensitiveness is another spelling of selfishness.

LIFE is action. A young man who had suicidal mania was sent to a lunatic asylum where all manner of occupations, exercises, and amusements were provided, and who recovered his mental balance by learning to play cricket, at which he became expert. Any other employment that would have engaged his attention, and kept him active, would have done as well. It seems strange, but it is true, that the only people who kill themselves are those who think a great deal of themselves. The man who thinks more of another than he does of himself will never take his own life. The man who has the most to do, especially if he be doing it for somebody else, will have the longest and the happiest life.

WHAT a difference between the way the Sabbath question is treated by Sabbath-keepers and the way that Sunday-observers handle it. Ask one of the latter about it, and he will begin to talk about "the custom of the church," and quote from the uninspired writings of men who are called "Fathers," for what reason nobody can tell; or he will begin negatively by saying that he does not believe that we are now required to keep the old Sabbath, but are free to do as we please. But ask the Sabbath-keeper, no matter in what part of the world you find him, and he will promptly reply, in the words of the Lord:—

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do

all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

What is the chaff to the wheat?

It will doubtless be remembered that a few weeks ago we asked where the "precept" for keeping Sunday holy is to be found (meaning where in the Bible, of course), stating that we should be glad to publish it if it were sent to us. Someone has sent us, by way of furnishing the desired information, a paper in which certain texts are referred to, which mention the first day of the week, but which contain no semblance of a command for its observance, or the slightest intimation that it is any different from other days. We fear that our friend misunderstood us. The article also contains some quotations from some of the so-called "Fathers," and from writings attributed to them, and thinks those doubtful sayings of men will take the place of the commandment of God. It will not do. What saith the Lord?

FLEEING FROM SAFETY.

THE other day a little sparrow fell, or rather, fluttered down into a narrow court. It could use its wings, but was not strong enough to make the directly upward flight necessary for it to get back to its nest. The mother flew down to it, chirped a few encouraging words, and then flew up, to show it how to do it, repeating the action several times, and then the little one bravely made the attempt, but could not accomplish it. They were in sore distress, and several other birds from neighbouring nests came about to offer advice and sympathy.

Then came the thing most feared and dreaded—a terrible man! The mother bird flew away in despair, yet hovered near in great anxiety, while the little one fluttered along the pavement, trying to escape this horrid monster that was surely seeking to devour it. The mother chirped down to it a few short, sharp directions, but its own fears guided it, first into the dark corner, behind the boxes, and then, when its relentless pursuer discovered it there, back to the

other end, then in through the open door, under the great printing-press. Instantly the machinery was stopped, the little thing was driven from its place of refuge, and soon the awful man had it in his hands.

How its little heart beat for fear! Once it managed to escape, as the opening for its head was made a little too large, but the hand was quickly over it again as it crouched in the corner of the stairway, and it uttered a wild shriek as it found itself once more a prisoner. Only for a minute, however. There was a hole just under the roof, and as the hand that held it approached that place, and opened, the little bird flew out with a note of triumph, and was quickly with its friends, telling of its wonderful escape.

Ah, thought I, how much we resemble that bird. We are away from home, and unable to lift ourselves up. A Friend sees us, and pities our fallen, helpless condition, and comes to help us. But we do not recognise our Deliverer. In that trouble that overtakes us, and in that forced captivity for a season, we do not recognise the Father's hand, and we struggle to be free.

The bird could not possibly get back to its nest unless I carried it in my hand; I was desirous only to save it, and would not have hurt it for any consideration, yet its frantic struggles to get away compelled me to hold it more tightly than I would otherwise have done. Thus any pain that it might have felt was self-inflicted. Its place of safety was in the hand that kept it a prisoner, for away from that it would become an easy prey to a really cruel cat.

It is sad that there is such misunderstanding and fear of one another among God's creatures; it was painful to know that the little bird regarded me as an enemy, and my kind efforts in its behalf as attempts on its life; but far sadder is it, that the highest of God's creatures do not know their Creator, who lives only for their welfare, as He died to save them. To-day, as of old, Christ is seeking to gather His lost ones into His strong arms, yet but few know the time of their visitation. The Jews of old thought that Jesus would surely cause their ruin; how often should we, if we only had spiritual discernment, see that the cloud which we think is about to overwhelm us, is only the shadow of our Father's hand, and not the shadow of death. Let us learn to rest in the everlasting arms that are already underneath us, and be glad that no one can pluck us out of His hand.